



Director’s Corner September 2017

Dear Fraser Families,

I want to welcome all new and returning families to Fraser School’s 2017-2018 school year. While we are a year-round school, September is still a time of transitions for us. Our new school calendar starts this month. New tuition rates start this month. In addition, we have some new or revised policies that will start this month. The 2017-2018 Parent Handbook is at the printer and will be ready mid-month. We will give a copy to all families at that time. In the meantime, I will highlight some of the important changes in this newsletter. Please feel free to contact me with any questions that you have.

One policy that I like to highlight each fall is the late pick-up and early drop-off policy. Each child is scheduled for a specific time for drop-off and pick-up. We arrange our staffing patterns around the children’s schedules to ensure that we meet our adult/child ratios for licensing and accreditation. Families are not allowed to drop off early or pick up late because this may put us out of ratio. If families do drop-off early or pick-up late, there may be a substantial fee involved.

At the beginning of each school year (September), each family receives 45 minutes of grace periods per child for picking up late between the hours of 11:30 AM and 6:00 PM. If a family is late picking up, the classroom staff member will write an extra fees form that states the child’s scheduled pick-up time and the time that the child was actually picked up. The staff member asks the parent to sign the form and then gives it to me (the director). I keep track of the 45 minutes of grace periods for each child. If the family uses all 45 minutes of grace

periods, we start charging for late pick-ups. The charge is \$1.00 per minute for the first 15 minutes and \$5.00 per minute for the 16th and subsequent minutes. This charge will appear on your future tuition bill.

There are no grace periods for early drop-off. If you arrive early, you are welcome to come into the classroom with your child and stay until your child’s scheduled arrival time. If you leave your child, the same charge for late pick-up applies.

There are also no grace periods for late pick-up after 6:00 PM. Fraser School closes at 6:00 PM and our DHS license does not allow for us to care for children after that time. If you pick-up your child after 6:00 PM, the late pick-up charges will automatically start.

Finally, we added a portion to the revised Parent Handbook that stipulates that a child’s schedule may be limited or a child may be discharged if a family demonstrates a pattern of early drop-offs or late pick-ups. Thanks so much for adhering to this policy.

Thanks for sharing your children with us,

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Schedule Changes

In the past year, requests for schedule changes have increased immensely and are now taking a tremendous amount of staff time. As of the writing of this newsletter (August 30), there have already been 45 schedule changes that have been routed to take effect in the month of September.

For each schedule change, Colleen Polson (intake/billing coordinator) completes a schedule change form that she routes to each affected classroom, the school coordinators, and other clinical staff that sees the child. Then, she changes the child's schedule in an excel document that she keeps to ensure that classrooms are not booked over licensed capacity. This excel spreadsheet includes any new or transitioning children that are scheduled into the classroom in the future but are not in our database. She then manually enters all the changes for the child's schedule and, possibly, tuition rate in the school's child care database. At the beginning of each month, Colleen runs a sign-in and sign-out sheet for each classroom that lists all children and their schedules. When a schedule change occurs mid-month, all of the sign-in and sign-out sheets are outdated and incorrect.

If appropriate, Colleen provides the Fraser accounting department the paper copies of the original tuition due along with the revised tuition due. The Fraser accounting department then changes the tuition in their database and reissues a statement to mail to the family.

To help us reduce the number of schedule changes, we have instituted some new policies.

The fee for schedule changes has increased from \$30 per change to \$50 per change. This change was announced on the 2017-2018 tuition rate sheet and will take effect on September 5, 2017.

In order to reduce the changes in billing and reissuance of tuition statements and the confusion on the sign-in and sign-out sheets, **all schedule changes will now take effect on the first business day of the month instead of occurring mid-month.** If a family needs extra care during the month, they can request extra hours until a permanent schedule change can occur. **Because this is the first time that this new policy is being publicized, we will institute this policy starting October 1, 2017.**

We also request that families be certain of their needs before making a schedule change. There have been many cases where a family makes a schedule change, only to change the schedule again a few days or weeks later. Schedules changes are meant to be long-term.

Thank you for your understanding and your cooperation with this revised policy. We definitely want to maintain our flexibility so that families have control over the number of hours that their children are in our care. We hope these new limits are positive for Fraser School staff and families. If you have questions or feedback, please feel free to contact me by phone or email.

Restricted Services

Families that are behind on their monthly tuition or copayments, have a payment agreement that they are not following, are delinquent in turning in their child's medical records, or have not complied with a request for new emergency medication will have restricted eligibility of services. If your family is not in compliance, you cannot:

- Request extra hours
- Change your child's permanent schedule (unless it is to decrease your child's hours)
- Enroll another family member

Extended Absence Policy

For many years, Fraser School had a “summer off” retainer fee for families that wanted to keep their child out of school for the summer but did not want to lose their child’s fall placement. This year, we have redesigned this policy to be more flexible. It can be used throughout the calendar year and can be for absences up to 60 days or up to 90 days. For example, if a family wants to take their child out of Fraser School for 6 weeks to travel to India to see family, they can pay the retainer fee and guarantee their child’s placement in Fraser School. Please contact Colleen Polson if your family wants to take advantage of this service.

If a family does not want to pay the retainer fee but wants to have an extended absence, they can also withdraw their child from Fraser School. If you want to re-enroll your child, you will need to pay all applicable application fee and deposit. You are not able to re-apply until after your child’s discharge date. A child’s re-enrollment is not guaranteed if a family withdraws their child.

Classroom Contacts

This is not a revision but a reminder of a Parent Handbook policy. Each classroom has a voice mail and email for non-emergency contacts. These are checked once daily and teachers will return messages within 24 hours.

In Fraser School, teachers check emails on their classroom desk top computers. Due to Wi-Fi issues within the building, teachers are unable to check their emails on the classroom iPads. We want our teaching staff to engage with the children, especially during the programming times, and not have their backs to the children while they repeatedly check emails. If you would like to know how your child is doing, you can email any of the coordinator team and we can check for you.

In addition, none of the classrooms have phones. To check messages, teachers need to leave the classroom to check the voice mail. If you want to speak to someone by phone, you can call the front office (612-861-1688) and ask to speak to a coordinator. We can get a message to the classroom.

Below is the contact information for all of the coordinators and which classrooms they supervise:

Krista Shaw, Health Services Coordinator
612-798-8325

Krista.shaw@fraser.org

Supervises the kitchen and Ducklings classroom

Colleen Polson, Intake/Billing Coordinator
612-798-8324

Colleen.polson@fraser.org

Supervises Bees, Bears, Cats, and Frogs classrooms

Elizabeth Eng, Education Coordinator
612-798-8316

Elizabeth.eng@fraser.org

Supervises Dinosaurs, Hummingbirds, Fireflies, Ladybugs, Elephants, and Monkeys classrooms

Cyd Brunmeier, Special Education Coordinator
612-798-8358

Cynthia.brunmeier@fraser.org

Supervises Platypus, Butterflies, and Chameleons classrooms

Kristin Caquelin, Staffing Coordinator
612-798-8322

Kristin.caquelin@fraser.org

Supervises all float staff

Carol Barthelemy, Volunteer Coordinator
612-767-7208

Carol.barthelemy@fraser.org

Oversees placement of all volunteers

This month's events

> No School

September 4, 2017
Labor Day

> Family Fun Night

September 28, 2017
6:30-7:30 PM

Upcoming events

> No School

October 19 & 20, 2017
Parent/Teacher Conferences

> No School

November 23 & 24, 2017
Thanksgiving Break

Family Fun Night

Our first Family Fun Night for the 2017-2018 school year is scheduled for Thursday, September 28, 2017. The evening starts at 6:30 PM with a group reading of the book. This time the book will be *Barn Dance!* written by Bill Martin and John Archambault and illustrated by Ted Rand. Following the story, parents and children are invited to go to the various activities that have been planned. At about 7:20 PM, we will have a culminating activity and the festivities will end by 7:30 PM.

All are invited to attend these fun family-oriented events. The dates for all of the Family Fun Nights have been determined so please make sure to mark your calendars:

Thursday, September 28, 2017	6:30-7:30 PM
Thursday, January 18, 2018	6:30-7:30 PM
Thursday, May 17, 2018	6:30-7:30 PM

Our Family Fun Nights are based upon the concept of the SPARK curriculum. SPARK stands for Skills Promoted through Arts, Reading, and Knowledge.

In the SPARK curriculum, the teachers read the same book every day throughout the entire week. Each day, they focus on different concepts from the book. They plan art, dramatic play, music and other activities centered on the concepts and theme of the book. This is one reason that Family Fun Nights are scheduled on Thursdays. The teachers have read the book to the children Monday through Thursday and the children have already explored many concepts. The Family Fun Night is the culminating activity for the week.

The SPARK curriculum website is hosted by the Department of Special Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and was funded by the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education. The premise of the curriculum is that children are more actively engaged in activities that hold their interest. The goal of the curriculum is to teach developmental skills through these motivating activities. The curriculum was actually designed specifically for either self-contained special education classrooms or for inclusive classrooms. It is specifically geared towards the early childhood ages. We only utilize this curriculum during Family Fun Night weeks and not on a regular basis.