

Tips for Primary Families

Chicago Campus

Welcome to Intercultural Montessori's 2015-2016 academic year. Thank you for joining us! This document is full of parent tips intended to help you prepare for your child's camp experience. Please feel free to contact Program Coordinator Heather Craig-Somerlot with any questions at 312-265-1514 x203 or hcsomerlot@interculturalmontessori.org.

Supplies your child needs:

- **Soft-sided lunch bag** or lunch box: even if you are ordering Gourmet Gorilla, your child should have this as it is used to send communication home to parents. Please don't bring backpacks to school as they are unnecessary at this age and too large for the primary cubbies. The lunch bag will take the place of a backpack. **Please avoid cartoon characters or superheroes.**
- **Small cloth placemat and cloth napkin:** the napkin and placemat should come every day in your child's lunchbox, clean and ready to use. Try to get or make placemats from fabric selected by your child but **avoiding cartoon characters/superheroes**. If you would like to purchase them we recommend looking on Etsy.com.
- **Toiletries:** two child-sized toothpastes, a toothbrush (**avoiding cartoon characters/superheroes**), a small hairbrush and comb.
- **Change of clothes:** (underwear, socks, shirt, pants or dress). Try to provide items that are weather appropriate and that your child is able to put on and take off without assistance. Please put them into a labeled zip lock bag and label each piece of clothing with your child's name.
- **Indoor shoes:** a pair of closed, slip-on indoor shoes or slippers that have a toe and heel (**avoiding cartoon characters/superheroes – no crocs, flip-flops, glitter or light-up**). Vans, Foamtreads, Toms, or ballet/gymnastics slippers are good examples. Be sure to label both slippers.
- **Outdoor shoes:** your child should come to school wearing a pair of closed toe, sturdy shoes appropriate for recess each day. Please, no flip flops or sandals. We encourage independence and recommend that those children who have not yet learned to tie their shoes wear shoes that are either slip-on or have Velcro fasteners.
- **Nap items:** if your child will nap (3 years to 4 ½ years old): one XXL (2' x 2.7') Ziplock big bag (available at Target), a sheet, blanket, pillow, a snuggle buddy if needed (please be sure it doesn't make noise or light-up). All nap items will go home on Fridays for laundering and should be returned on the following Monday.
- **Book for the class:** a hard cover book with real pictures/images to be donated to the class library. The book should be in the target language or a bilingual selection.
- **Indoor plant:** a small plant to be donated to the classroom.

PLEASE NOTE: avoid bringing items to school that have cartoon characters or superheroes on them. Please label everything so it may be returned if misplaced. A great location is on the tag with your child's initials. A supply checklist is provided on the last page of this document.

Provided by the school:

- **Red Intercultural Tote Bag:** your child's tote bag will be given to you at the new parent orientation or on your child's first day. Children will take work home in their red bag on Fridays. Please empty the bag

over the weekend and return the bag on Monday with your child. (Replacement bags may be purchased at the information centre.).

- **Red Intercultural t-shirt:** Intercultural t-shirts will be given to you at the new parent orientation or on your child's first day. They are to be worn on field trips. (Replacement t-shirts may be purchased at the information centre.).

Lunch:

- **Packed or Catered:** Children should either bring a nutritious lunch from home or use Gourmet Gorilla catering service. A Gourmet Gorilla link for each season will be available at the information centre.
- **No nuts: please keep in mind that we are a NUT FREE SCHOOL. Please no peanut or tree nut products of any kind.**
- **Healthy foods** are recommended. Please do not send candy or snack foods in your child's lunch.
- **Three items** are generally enough – for example a sandwich or other “main” course, a fruit or vegetable, and a yogurt or cheese sticks.
- **Reusable lunch bag:** please use re-usable soft-sided lunch bags (which the child can open by himself/herself) rather than throw away bags.
- **Drinks** are not necessary. Milk and water are provided by the school. (If your child requires a special beverage please send daily in a small container).

Snacks:

In addition to milk and water, the school provides non-perishable snack foods for the children every day. We ask parents to contribute perishables, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, baked goods, and dairy items, on a rotating schedule. Every family will have the opportunity to donate snack items roughly twice each year. You will receive a note attached to your child's lunch box and/or an email, the **Thursday** before the snacks are due. Snacks are due each **Monday** throughout the year.

Drop-Off/Pick-Up:

Before care:

7:00 am – 7:50 am - Please use the main lobby door.

- School opens at 7:00 am for before care. (Contact admissions@interculturalmontessori.org if you wish to enroll in before care.)
- Please bring your child into the school and sign them in at the information centre, then walk them to the designated before care classroom.

Morning arrival:

7:50 am – 8:30 am - Staff assisted, please use the south entrance near Adams.

- Staff members will be available outside to assist with regular drop-off time from 7:50-8:30.
- If you are driving, please pull into the car line in the school's loading zone on Racine. Continue to pull forward as the line moves.
- When you reach the front of the line, a staff member will open your child's car door and assist your child from the car and into the school.

- For the safety of all of our students and staff we ask that car seats be positioned so that children may exit on the curb-side.
- We ask that you please stay in your car and allow the staff to assist your child out of the car. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated as it will help us keep the arrival process as safe and smooth as possible. If you need extra time or want to come into the building during this time, please park outside of the pick-up/drop-off zone. You may pull into our school's parking lot on the south side of the building and double-park behind the cars parked along the brick wall or pull into a spot labeled "Montessori."
- Each family will receive a car placard to be displayed on the rearview mirror. If your child attended Intercultural Montessori during the previous school year, please use the same car placard you were issued. Please display this placard during every drop-off and pick-up time to help with the arrival and dismissal procedures.
- If you are walking your child to school you may drop them off to the staff members located at the entrance of the arrival door. Please carry your placard with you for the first few weeks.
- Buggies and bicycles are not allowed on the street or the curb in the arrival/dismissal zone. Please use the sidewalk.
- Arrival ends promptly at 8:30 am so that class can begin. Please arrive no later than 8:30 am.

Late arrival:

After 8:30 am – Please use the main lobby door.

- Please make every effort to arrive on time. We understand that lateness cannot always be avoided, but late arrivals are disruptive to the other students' work so we ask for your best efforts on this point.
- If you do arrive late, please park and escort your child into the school through the main door. Sign him or her in at the information centre. A staff member will escort your child to their appropriate classroom.

Afternoon Pick-up:

Staff assisted dismissals, please use the south entrance near Adams.

- Half-day dismissal – 12:30 pm
- Full-day dismissal – 3:00 pm

PLEASE NOTE: In the interest of security for all of the children, your child will only be released to adults you authorize in writing to pick up your child. You can authorize pick-up at time of enrollment on the emergency contact/pick-up authorization form, or on an occasional basis with a note or email to the information centre.

- If you are driving, please pull into the car line in the school's loading zone on Racine. Continue to pull forward as the line moves.
- When you reach the front of the line, a staff member will open your car door and assist your child into the car seat.
- For the safety of all of our students and staff we ask that car seats be positioned so that children may enter the car on the curb-side.
- We ask that you please stay in your car and allow the staff to assist your child into the car. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated as it will help us keep the pick-up process as safe and smooth as possible. If you need extra time or want to come in to the building during this time, please park outside of the pick-up/drop-off zone. You may pull into our school's parking lot on the south side

of the building and double-park behind the cars parked along the brick wall or pull into a spot labeled “Montessori.”

- Each family will receive a car placard to be displayed on the rearview mirror. If your child attended Intercultural Montessori during the previous school year, please use the same car placard you were issued. Please display this placard during every drop-off and pick-up time to help with the arrival and dismissal procedures.
- Buggies and bicycles are not allowed on the street or the curb in the arrival/dismissal zone. Please use the sidewalk.
- If you are going to be late for afternoon pick-up, please call or email the school and let us know: chicago@interculturalmontessori.org. Emergency care costs are charged for latenesses over 15 minutes at a cost of \$10 per hour. If you do not call to give us advance notice you will be charged an unauthorized late pick-up fee at a cost of \$10 per 15 minute increment. When you arrive for late pick-up, please use the main lobby door and pay the fee upon your arrival by cash or check at the information centre (we are unable to accept credit cards at this time). If your child will be picked up more than 15 minutes after their originally scheduled time, they will be escorted to an after care classroom. The information centre will direct you to the appropriate room when you arrive.

Aftercare pick-up:

3:00 pm-6:00 pm – Please use the main lobby door.

- Please come into the main lobby door to pick-up your child and sign them out at the information centre. (Contact admissions@interculturalmontessori.org if you wish to enroll in after care.)
- The building closes promptly at 6:00 pm. Please be sure to exit the building with your child before 6:00 pm so the staff can close the building.
- Late pick-up beyond 6:05 pm is charged a fee of \$10.00 per five minute increment. When you arrive for late pick-up, please pay the fee upon your arrival by cash or check at the information centre (we are unable to accept credit cards at this time).

Absences:

If your child is going to be absent, please call or email the school and let us know:

chicago@interculturalmontessori.org.

Extra-Curricular Activities:

Extra-curricular activities are offered as a convenience to parents whose children are enrolled at Intercultural. They are taught by outside providers in three sessions per year: fall, winter, and spring. Parents are invited to contact them directly if you would like to enroll your child. An email will be distributed shortly after school begins as to who the providers are, what days and times they offer their classes, and how to enroll.

Your child's belongings:

Your primary child has a cubby located inside the classroom or a locker just outside the classroom, which is used to store season-appropriate spare clothes, slippers, lunch bag, etc. Daily work completed by your child in the classroom will go home in your child's red bag on Fridays.

Field Trips:

Information concerning field trips will come to you via email and by paper attached to your child's lunch bag.

- **For safety reasons**, please have your child wear closed shoes on field trips. Please no flip-flops or sandals.
- **Brown bag lunches** are used on field trips. Please send all disposable items on these days. Remember to pack small bottled water in the lunch bag as drinks will not be provided on field trips.
- **Red Intercultural t-shirt** for field trips. Please send your child to school wearing his or her Intercultural t-shirt on field trip days. (T-shirts for new students will be given to you at the new parent orientation or on the first day of school.) Replacements for lost t-shirts may be purchased at the information centre.

If your child is sick:

- **When to keep your child at home:** In an effort to prevent the spread of illness, children with active colds should remain at home. If your child has a fever of 100 degrees or more, vomiting, diarrhea, or a contagious disease, please keep him/her home until they are symptom free for at least 24 hours. A child who comes to school should be well enough to participate in all regular school-day activities.
- **Contagious disease:** Please notify the school if your child has been diagnosed by their doctor with a contagious disease so that we may notify the other parents.
- **Absences:** Please notify the school every day that your child is absent. The school office staff will alert your child's teacher of his/her absence.
- **Sick child at school:** If your child becomes ill while in school, the office staff will try to contact you or the persons listed on your Emergency Contact Form so they can be picked up. We ask that you pick up your sick child as soon as possible and no later than one hour after you have been successfully contacted.
- **Medication at school:** If your child needs to take medicine at school please fill out a "Permission to Dispense Medication" and give it directly to a staff member. Contact the school to obtain a copy. For the health and safety of all children we ask that you please do not send medication to school with your child. Instead we ask that an adult hands medication directly to a staff member with the "Permission to Dispense Medication" form.

Show & Tell:

Something special to your child is always welcome in the classroom during show and tell so he or she can share it with their friends. Show and tell is usually held on Fridays. Ask your teachers about the appropriate days and times to bring an item to school. Some examples might be a souvenir from a trip, an item from nature found on a walk, a picture of a time they enjoyed or person they would like to talk about. Toys and electronics are not appropriate for show and tell and are not allowed in school at any time.

Birthdays:

- **Contact the teacher:** Birthdays are celebrated according to each community's requirements. We ask that you consult with the teacher at least one week before your child's birthday.
- **PLEASE NOTE – NO BIRTHDAY LUNCHESS:** Because of the many dietary restrictions we ask that parents not provide lunch for the class. If desired, parents may provide a nut-free dessert or a non-food treat for their child's classmates to be enjoyed after their regular lunch. We are unable to serve any food item which specifies it has been made in a facility that handles nuts.

- **Birthday form:** Please fill out the birthday celebration form at the information center if you will be bringing an item to be shared with the class.

Parent Communication:

Information is communicated to parents in several ways.

- **Notes home** in/on the child's lunch box. Please check your child's lunch box daily.
- **Monthly calendar:** a monthly calendar will be emailed to parents. A Google calendar is also kept up to date online: <http://bit.ly/ChiCal>
- **Announcements** are sent out via e-mail. e.g., if a field trip or sprinkler day is postponed or cancelled due to inclement weather.
- **Emergency announcements:** when serious weather conditions cause the school to close or alter scheduling, emails, texts, and phone calls will be sent out and our website will be updated on the "News" page.

To learn about Montessori and Language Immersion:

- Please attend the Parent Education nights that occur periodically throughout the year. Check your academic year calendar for dates.
- Read the Intercultural Parent Handbook
- Read *Tomorrow's Child*, a publication of the Montessori Foundation, and *Bilingual Family Newsletter*, a publication of Multilingual Matter Press

If you have questions:

The school office is open from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please feel free to stop by with any questions or concerns, or you may call the Chicago Campus at **(312) 265-1514**.

Staff Contacts:

- Chicago Information Centre: chicago@interculturalmontessori.org
- Frances Limoncelli, Admissions Office: admissions@interculturalmontessori.org
- Heather Craig-Somerlot, Program Coordinator: hcsomerlot@interculturalmontessori.org
- Mehreen Alvi, Academic Program Coordinator: malvi@interculturalmontessori.org
- Kimberly Norwood, Billing and Business Office: businessoffice@interculturalmontessori.org

SCHOOL SUPPLIES CHECKLIST

PRIMARY - 2015-2016

- Soft sided lunch box (even if your child is having Gourmet Gorilla the lunch box is needed)
- Fabric placemats and fabric napkin
- 2 child size toothpastes and a tooth brush
- Small hair brush and comb
- Weather appropriate complete change of clothes: underwear, socks, shirt, pants or dress.
- Indoor shoes or slippers (close toed slip on & no flip flops, crocs, glitter or light up)
- Closed-toed, sturdy outdoor shoes to wear to school each day, appropriate for recess. Please, no flip flops or sandals.
- Hard cover book with real pictures and images to be donated to the class library (the book should be in the target language or bilingual).
- Indoor plant

Required Items for Nap

- Sheet
- Pillow
- Blanket
- Snuggle buddy
- Change of clothes
- XXLarge Ziploc Bag (2 x 2.7 ft.)

All Nap items go home on Friday for laundering and to be returned on the following Monday.

Please make sure all of your child's items are labeled with Child's name.