

Laurel General Housekeeping

- ❖ Back to School Guide: New this year and filled with a plethora of useful information! Keep your copy by the phone to have important CMP guidelines at your fingertips. Let's look at it!
- ❖ Volunteering: The beginning of the year is a great time to get those "ducks-in-a-row" by getting all CMP requirements in to the office (See Back to School Guide) We welcome you into our classroom and to assist with daily reading groups, student help lists, tasks, and field trips, but please note that all requirements must be met first. Please see our Parent Job Opportunity List and always be sure to log in your hours into the parent binder in the office. Lastly, please have a back-up person in place if you are unable to come in for your scheduled volunteer time. We rely heavily on our wonderful volunteers and realize that sometimes last minute schedule changes occur. Without a back-up volunteer to come in, it becomes cumbersome to change our lessons and/or activities in order to accommodate a last minute cancellation.
- ❖ Communicating with Mr. Tom & Ms. Witwer: We always appreciate face-to-face meetings and encourage you to schedule time to meet with us before or after school. During class time, you may call, but your call may be transferred to voicemail as we are busy working with students. We will return your call as soon as possible. Email or a note on your student's work planner is the best way to communicate for basic info exchange. Please note that right before school or in passing is not a good time to discuss concerns, as we may not have time to give you our full attention. Further discussion of issues can instead be done via a mutually agreed upon scheduled meeting.
- ❖ Teacher Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 3:30pm-4:00pm
- ❖ Weekly Communication: It is vitally important to read all Laurel and School newsletters. Laurel newsletters are on the flip-side of the weekly student planner. There are always essential items of interest on both the weekly newsletter and the student planner: recaps on what students are learning, field trip info, a special person column,

classroom needs, and many other pieces of knowledge that all families should be aware of. *Student weekly planners need to be reviewed each night and must be signed so that Mr. Tom and Ms. Witwer are clearly able to communicate students' individual needs as well as what is taking place on a daily basis. Newsletters and announcements are posted on www.cacmp.org/cmpss for convenience and reprinting purposes. In addition, green folders are handed out on Wednesdays. Make sure to look in your student's green folder to find important school-wide information. If your family chooses to "go green" and receive school and class newsletters via email, only very select forms will be issued in your student's green folder.*

❖ **Planners:** *Planners go home Monday through Friday each night and need to be initialed by you. Planners ensure consistent and clear communication between students, teachers, and parents regarding student progress, and can alert us to any questions or concerns you might have. Along with daily work info, there is a place to write a quick note, and also a section to list which books your student may have read so that they can remember to take an Accelerated Reader quiz no more than three days after finishing their book.*

❖ **Homework:** *Please support your student's academic success with completing weekly homework assignments! The purple homework folder goes home each Monday, and is checked in and recorded on Friday morning. 1) Please have your student read to you or read with your student at least 20 minutes each night. 2) Spelling and Mathematics and Math Facts will be assigned as well. 3) A weekly suggested Care of Environment job is listed in the homework section of the Laurel Newsletter. Please see the Laurel Newsletter for any updates or changes.*

❖ **Absences and Tardies:** *Please call the office if your child is going to be sick or absent. When arriving late, students must first receive a tardy slip from the office. If you need to check your child out early, please stop by the office to sign them out.*

❖ Behavior Issues & Discipline: We take a proactive approach to discipline by teaching good communication and problem solving skills using the Love and Logic approach. We are very diligent in looking for the signs of problems in both the classroom and on the playground. Getting to know students in a Montessori environment is also key, as we soon become well aware of students' individual personalities and emotional needs. Our hope is to get to the issue before it becomes a problem.

One of the ways that we communicate to students is through non-verbal communication. When a student has shown that she/he is off task or perhaps talking during a designated silent work time, we may write a pencil "X" on the student's planner for that day. The "X" is simply a reminder to return to the task at hand, and as such, there is no consequence to follow. A second "X" **in the same day** signifies that the student has already had a reminder, and needs to make a plan to help themselves refocus on the task at hand. The student will then be given a "Recovery Card" and will go to a neighboring classroom until they are ready to return and have their best minutes with us. This is a self-monitoring approach. We always like to catch students doing the right thing and we let them know that as well. The first two "X"s may be erased by the student at the end of the day without any consequence in class. We also ask for your **support in not providing a consequence at home** at this point. Should there be a third recurrence of misbehavior **in the same day**, a third "X" will be written in pen, and all previous "X"s changed to pen as well. A third "X" indicates obvious disregard for previous warnings and a lack of respect for those around. At this point, we do ask that there be a discussion and a natural consequence at home. We also make sure to notate on the planner so that you will be aware of the issue. **Please note that each day means a fresh start in Laurel.**

❖ Technology in 2/3: We use several computer programs to track and monitor student progress, as well as to expose students to foreign language practice and keyboarding skills:

- *Accelerated Reader (AR):* At the beginning, middle, and end of each year, students are given a *STAR Reading Assessment* to provide individual baseline reading information. This is one of the ways that we are able to track and monitor your student's progress and needs in Reading. Using your student's *ZPD*, or *Zone of Proximal Development*, appropriate books can be found at www.arbookfind.com which will provide a challenging read without frustration. Each time your student reads a book (preferably at his or her appropriate reading level or above), she/he takes a *comprehension and vocabulary quiz* to help both themselves and teachers to track and monitor progress. Each month, an update will be sent home in the green folder so that we can share your student's progress.
- *Accelerated Math (AR Math):* Accelerated Math will be used to 1) initially assess each student, and 2) will only be used on an intervention level for extra support. This program is much like AR, and provides another facet to progress monitoring through computer based diagnostics.
- *Rosetta Stone:* Each student receives a Rosetta Stone account upon entering CMP and may choose a language to study other than English. Though it is optimal for students to focus on the same language year after year, students may choose to change languages at the beginning of each school year. Rosetta Stone operates in a way that is synergistic with the Montessori Method of teaching, in that it follows the child, whether progressing slowly or quickly. In Laurel, students rotate in groups in order to provide time for foreign language study every few days.
- *Typing Instructor:* This game-like program allows students to practice keyboarding skills. Students in Laurel may use Typing Instructor after finishing their Rosetta Stone lesson.

❖ Dress Code and "Logo Friday": We have been very fortunate that most parents understand the Dress Code and the importance of dressing appropriately for school. Thank you for making our job with enforcing the Dress Code easy! We do not like to be "the dress code police"! The last Friday of the month, the students all look forward to wearing their favorite logo.

- ❖ Appreciations: Appreciations are positive messages that Willow students write to each other and are delivered via our appreciation tree.
- ❖ Silence: In the Laurel classroom, silence is a very sacred part of the day. Our official silence period is at the very end of our morning circle, and is treated as a time for everyone to quiet their minds and bodies, reflect on their behavior, and to bring in the day with a sense of calm.
- ❖ Birthdays and Sharing: We love to share a simple birthday celebration with your student. You may send a nutritious snack for your student to pass out at the end of the day. Kids get just as excited about cheese, crackers, or popcorn as they do with heavily frosted cupcakes. Please be mindful of our Handbook for dietary guidelines. Also remember that invitations are not allowed unless you are planning on inviting the entire class to the party. Feelings at this age can be crushed very easily.
- ❖ Me Museum and Person of the Week: In the Laurel class, we have a person of the week. 1) The Person of the Week gets to bring in several things of importance to them that they would like to share with the class. Items will be displayed in our "Me Museum" which is an average sized fish tank. Items brought for sharing must fit into the Me Museum. 2) The Person of the Week should bring a Personal Time Line of My Family. On the timeline there should be a picture of each member of the student's immediate family in chronological order with a paragraph describing each family member's successes in life. 3) The Person of the Week should also bring a bouquet of flowers on Monday of her/his week that will be used to decorate the work tables.
- ❖ Scholastic Book Orders: Book order forms go home in the Green Wednesday Folders.
- ❖ School Lunches: Order forms go out monthly and must be returned to the office by the due date with a separate check. You may write one check for all siblings. The price is \$5.00 per meal and is used by the middle school as a fundraising opportunity for their immersion trips. Please keep a record of the days you have ordered food. Choices include: Taqueria Tuesday, Pizza Wednesday, Deli Thursday.

❖ Warm Ups: We do not mind warming up a student's lunch, but we must limit the warm up to 1 minute or less. Food must be in/on a microwave safe container or plate as we are prohibited by law from touching students' food. Students are responsible for putting their warm up in the warm-up tray before 11:00am, so please remind your students if they have a warm up.

❖ Snack Recess: New this year, 2/3 classes will be having a fifteen minute, mid-morning snack recess. Students should pack a healthy snack to eat during this time. Students will also be able to take care of restroom needs and water drinking at this time.

❖ The Classroom Meeting Agenda Book: If an issue arises, ask your student if he or she has petitioned for it to be written in the Classroom Meeting "Agenda Book". This is where a student can talk to a teacher about petitioning a concern they have in regards to the whole group. We use this tool to empower students to communicate and resolve their issues at our classroom community meeting.

❖ Porch (drop-off and pick-up):

Our class begins at 8:45am. Students may arrive as early as 8:30am. Students arriving before 8:30am are directed to Club M for supervision. School ends at 3:15pm. Students are ready for pick up at 3:20. It takes a lot of energy to get our 2nd and 3rd grade students ready for take off. Thanks for your patience in this department!

We are honored and delighted
to partner with you
in your student's
Montessori education.

