

Dear Parents,

November feels like a good time to reflect and provide an update not only regarding safety measures, but also on our successes and the challenges with operating the school full-time through this pandemic. The natural question for many has been, "What lies ahead?" Here is what I know for certain.

The holiday season is a traditional time of gratitude. Through this summer and fall, we have especially had so much to be thankful for within our community. We are grateful for our teachers for their creativity in the classrooms, our students for their love of learning and connection, and our families for their efforts in supporting their students in all they do at DGM. The children have found joy through events such as the Ice Cream Social Ice Breaker, Harvest Day, and Spirit Week (this week!). As a community, we have been able to continue to creatively host important moments such as Coffee with the Director, Parent-Teacher Conferences, and DGM Moms and Dads' Clubs, too.

Many of these amazing moments have been made possible by continuing our commitment to follow our health and safety policies. While we are always brainstorming and trying to create additional ways to bring students, staff, and families together, we need to proceed with caution as our ultimate goal is for **in-person learning to remain available to families**. We must continue to take an incremental approach toward expanding student programs and opportunities for these reasons:

- The safety, health, and well-being of our teachers and staff is critical in order to serve our families
- Winter is predicted to have higher rates of infection as people stay indoors and often engage in holiday visits and travel
- The possibility exists that an increase infection rates would necessitate a move to all-virtual learning. We absolutely do not want this to occur.

During this time, our primary objectives remain the same: stay safe, stay healthy, and stay in session with in-person learning. With winter approaching we cannot let our guard down. We all need to do our part to reduce rates of transmission and infection, so we can continue on our path toward greater normalcy.

- Please exercise an abundance of caution when you return from Thanksgiving Break. If you believe you may have been exposed, keep your child home and seek medical advice as needed.
- **Your outside activities directly impact the school and our entire community.** If you believe you are exposed through sports, social gatherings, or other activities — stay home.

There is no denying the challenges of these times. There are many bright moments, though, in our community's response to necessary adjustments, in students' ability to adapt and innovate, and in our faculty's continued connection with students and their passion for their subjects. By working together, everyone in our community has risen to meet these challenges.

As I shared last week, over the last three weeks, we have seen a significant uptick in illnesses within our Lower and Upper Elementary classrooms. While these illnesses have not been related to COVID-19, please continue to follow our health and safety policies. Please also continue to report symptoms and illnesses as soon as they arise.

Here are your weekly campus and COVID-19 updates:

TRAFFIC PATTERN CHANGE – PLEASE SEE ATTACHED MAP

In partnership with businesses at the Medical Building, we have revised the traffic pattern to greatly improve drop off/pick up efficiency for our parents. This change will be made effective this week.

- Parents who only have MYHS students may now exit to the right immediately after the medical building. If you have no Infant – Upper Elementary children, please use this new exit.
 - Observe the cone barriers and **exit only through our main entrance**. Please do not attempt to exit directly in front of the medical building.
 - MYHS traffic must yield to the main curb line traffic.
- If you are returning to school after illness, and have not emailed your doctor's note to support@desertgardenmontessori.org, you must have it in-hand as you arrive to DGM. **Please use the right lane** and present your doctor note to the SM (Staff Member) upon arrival.
 - Students and staff members without doctor's notes will not be permitted to re-enter campus.

LOWER & UPPER ELEMENTARY

- Due to increased illness and absences, all students and staff in Lower and Upper Elementary classrooms must wear masks while indoors.

DGM SICK POLICY (NON-COVID-19 DIAGNOSIS)

In the instance of an [illness symptom](#), a child may return to school if all of the following conditions are met:

- Medication and symptom-free for 48 hours
- Doctor-provided note detailing the student may safely return to school

PHONE NUMBERS & SUPPORT

- **Main Office / Front Desk (live attendant):** (480) 496-9833
- **Attendance Line (24/7 voicemail):** (480) 893-6516
- **Email:** support@desertgardenmontessori.org
- **Classroom Curb Text Number:** Located in Transparent Classroom (varies per classroom)

In health,



Shetal Walters
Executive Director

DGM 2020

Drop Off/Pick Up Map

All parents **MUST**
Enter through 51st street

Must Exit through Warner
NO LONGER an ENTRANCE

Med Bldg Staff/Patient Parking



Reserved Parking spots
Only per approval from DGM Admin



• North Entrance

- Classroom 1
- Classroom 2
- Classroom 11

• Tower Entrance

- Upper Elementary

• Central Entrance

- Classroom 3
- Classroom 4
- Classroom 5
- Classroom 6

• South Entrance

- Classroom 7
- Classroom 8
- Classroom 9
- Classroom 12

• North Entrance

- MYHS



51st Street
ENTER

Desert Garden
Montessori