



## Welcome Back!

Welcome to the 2018-19 School Year! We are ready and excited to begin working with your children over the next few days. As you prepare to bring your children and to start a new school year, please keep in mind the following tips. These will ensure that we all start off school in just the right way.

**1. Remember to keep your goodbyes short and sweet.** Hopefully, you have already talked with your child about what the separation routine will look like. Now is the time to stick to it. Give them kisses, hugs, and a last love at the gate, then make a strong exit. Our staff is well equipped to deal with children in all states, and we promise to help your child settle into the flow of the school routine as swiftly and smoothly as we are able. You are welcome to call and check on your child's progress at any time. Our main number is **303-322-0972**.

**2. If your child is in the Primary class and you are late, please walk your child in through their class gate** (Ward Hobbs enter Northernmost gate, 440 enter Southernmost gate), then escort them through the main office door and walk them to their class. Please refrain from walking children through the center gate while the Toddlers are on the playground as seeing people come and go can be quite disruptive for the Toddlers, especially when they are just learning the routines of school.

**3. Please refrain from lingering at the gates during drop off and pick up** in order to make space for other parents needing to park during these times. If there is no room in the loading zone, consider parking and walking with your child from up on fifth street or along fourth street. Sometimes a brief walk allows for some quiet one-on-one time between parent and child. Want to connect with other parents? Consider strolling down to a nearby coffee shop or a neighborhood park.

**4. Remember to hang up your cell phone before signing your child in or out.** This gives you a moment to chat with the teacher at the gate and your child a chance to talk to you directly as they transition in or out.

**5. If your child has allergies or diet restrictions,** please notify Catherine Ramey at [cramey@cgmontessori.com](mailto:cramey@cgmontessori.com) so that she can make sure that all the proper papers are in order and that everyone who needs to know is notified. We want to make sure that all children in our school are safe, and Catherine does an excellent job of communicating this information with all effected parties.

**6. Remember that we are located in a community.** Help us to maintain a positive relationship with our neighbors by respecting their property. Parking can be tight, so avoid blocking their driveways with your cars. Additionally, congregating at the gate makes it difficult for pedestrians trying to get by our school. The sidewalk is a busy thorough fair, stay alert for people trying to just walk through. Support their beautification efforts by reminding your children to keep their feet on the sidewalks and to use their eyes only when looking at the various plants.

We look forward to seeing you all this week!

---

### Communication Protocols



As much as we love chatting with all of you, the Gate is not always the best place to have conversations. There is a lot going on during transition times, and ensuring that your children are safe is our utmost responsibility. For that reason, please take the time to write down any information you need to share. You are welcome to use the space beside your child's name to note a change in pick up. Better yet, feel free to hand over a note with important information so that the whole teaching team will have the opportunity to see what you are trying to communicate. Feel free to email the classrooms:

Ward Hobbs: [wham@cgmontessori.com](mailto:wham@cgmontessori.com)  
440 AM: [440am@cgmontessori.com](mailto:440am@cgmontessori.com)  
440 PM: [440pm@cgmontessori.com](mailto:440pm@cgmontessori.com)  
Extended Primary: [xp@cgmontessori.com](mailto:xp@cgmontessori.com)

**The teachers check email once a day, and will get back to you within 24 hours.** Refrain from texting or emailing teachers at their private emails. They work in teams and it is important that all of the team members have access to important information.

If time is of the essence, please feel free to email the administrative staff, and we will pass your message along.

Catherine Ramey: cramey@cgmontessori.com  
Bekke Howell: bhowell@cgmontessori.com  
Jamie Boes: jboes@cgmontessori.com

Finally, you can always call and speak to one of the administrative staff. Again, we are more than happy to pass along any information you need. Want to speak directly to a teacher? We are happy to step in when appropriate, or have them call you back when the classroom is just too busy.

---

## The Art of Doing Nothing by Kelly Tyrer

“You should sit in meditation for twenty minutes everyday - unless you are too busy; then you should sit for an hour.”

-old zen adage

With the close of a teachers summer, comes the obligatory question of what-on earth-did-you-do-with your time off. Vacation, paddle boarding, hikes, pool days, and lazy lunches usually top the list for me and my kids. As much as I enjoy these small adventures with my family, the spaces in between are some of the most enjoyable. The big, fat nothing. We did a lot of nothing. And unapologetically, we loved every minute of it. And as luck would have it, it turns out that nothing is really something.

Dale and I returned from our glorious NY conference in April with a renewed sense of how to most effectively teach young minds. Strategies involving yoga, mindfulness, and language were central to the discussion. Quieting the mind, it seems, is truly the secret ingredient to sharpening the mind. We were deeply encouraged by the echoes of Montessori in each of our key note lectures and break out sessions. Unintentionally, each key note reinforced concepts that are part of the natural rhythm of a Montessori classroom; the meditative quality of some of the work on our shelves, the ability for our children to move their bodies, the time we allow them to truly focus and explore a concept, and the right to honor their minds desire to take a break. Christine Carter, author of *Raising Happiness; 10 Simple Steps for More Joyful Kids and Happier Parents*, coined the phrase “strategic slacking.” This quickly became our new mantra. Jokingly, we planned to come home and explain away any lack of productivity on our part as “strategic slacking” (jokes aside, we are never unproductive) and reassure Bekke that it was necessary for the greater good of our work performance!

Strategic slacking is exactly as it sounds. Strategically allowing yourself to slack. Mindless free time, the space in between, is where the magic happens. Allowing your mind the break it needs to soak up and sit with concepts or ideas that have already been presented, as well as rejuvenating the mind for the concepts and lessons to come, are critical to learning, productivity, and quality of work. Carter argues that “strategic slacking has enabled me to dramatically increase both the quality of my work and the amount I get done in a given day.” She states that for every 52 minutes she works, she gives herself a 17 minute recess. The time you allow yourself to zone out, take a walk, sip a coffee, chat with a friend, or do anything that your soul would like to snack on, is beneficial to your mind. Quality over quantity.

As we head back into the school year, the mental juggling of schedules, activities, appointments, and other responsibilities starts to take hold. Panic sets in and eventually leads to downright fear. How on earth are we going to get all of this done? Math is not on our side as we add up the hours it takes to get things done. The stress becomes too much to bear at times. So, I have decided in the interest of increased productivity, a better work product, happier children and a greater quality of life, I will do as Christine Carter does. You can find me and my children happily and strategically, slacking.

August 27 or August 29--First Days for Students  
August 31---No School, Staff In-service Day (CPR, etc.)  
September 3-No School, Labor Day  
September 21--No School, Teacher Work Day  
September 25--Toddler Back-to-School Night  
September 26--WHAM Back-to-School Night  
September 27--440 Back-to-School Night

\*\*\*A quick note about Back-to-School nights. Ward Hobbs and 440 have the same basic program for their back-to-school nights. If you have a child attending XP or have a child in each class, please feel free to attend the night that works best for you.

Children's Garden Montessori School Phone 303-322-0972 Website [cgmontessori.com](http://cgmontessori.com)