



**Washington Montessori
Public Charter School**

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July 17, 2019

Dear Secondary Families,

We hope you are having a restful and relaxing summer. At school, it has been awkwardly quiet with the students away, but we are finalizing our plans to make next year an amazing year. So far we have been well underway in planning for the school orchard and greenhouse as well as finalizing the curriculum maps and project guides for the upcoming year. The Secondary I building is progressing and we are making progress with an expected completion date around the end of January.

This year we are managing summer reading a bit differently than in years past. In Secondary I and II, the students are asked to read one book, without restrictions, and write a 2 to 4 page paper. In the paper, students are to establish a thesis statement with three discussion points based on the book's theme(s), developing the three points in the paper. If your student is planning on participating in Honors level courses in Secondary II, they are required to read two books and write two papers over the summer. The assignments will be submitted electronically based on the guides' discretion as early as the first day of school.

The 2019-2020 calendar and Supply List are enclosed and are available on the school's website. As a reminder, the school day in Secondary I is from 8:15-3:15 where the day runs from 8:30-3:15 in Secondary II. Secondary's delayed release is to aid with traffic flow and for the safety of the lower school. We encourage you to take advantage of the extended time and pick up your students closer to 3:30; this will help you avoid long wait times and ease traffic flow.

Final registration forms are online; the link is posted on the WMPCS website at the 2019-20 Parents' Page. This provides you the opportunity to fill out the paperwork at your leisure. Please complete the online registration by August 15th.

Completing the paperwork early will also allow you to enjoy Open House with your student; this year Open House is scheduled for Thursday, August 22nd from 4:00-6:00. You may choose to bring your student's supplies at that time or on the first day of school on Monday, August 26th. As in past years, we will have a welcome booth set up between Buildings 1 and 2 where you may pick up this year's spirit shirt for your child(ren).

We would also like to introduce our Secondary Guides for the 2019-2020 school year. We feel very fortunate to have the pleasure of working with them as they guide your student's learning. While the guides are separated by level (Secondary I and II), we are planning monthly meetings between the two levels to ensure a cohesive and responsive curriculum and experience for your student.

Secondary I:

Caitlyn Andrews, Guide for Social Studies and English, is a Washington, NC, native and a former K-8 student at WMPCS. She attended UNC-Chapel Hill, graduating with a BA in Political Science in 2018 and a Master of Arts in Teaching in 2019. In her free time, she enjoys reading a good book on the beach and traveling. Caitlyn currently holds a NC teaching license in Middle Grades Social Studies.

Jon Lewis, Math Guide, has worked with WMPCS for the last two years teaching middle grades math where he holds NC teaching licenses in math and science. Jon and his wife, Jennifer, have two children, one of whom attends WMPCS and the other will be entering Children's House next year. Jon is in the process of finishing his Montessori Secondary I and II credentials.

Lynn Harrington, Science Guide, has a NC Teaching license in middle school science and a BS in Horticulture from N.C. State University. Before joining WMPCS, she taught sixth, seventh, and eighth grade science at P.S. Jones Middle School. She and her husband, Picott, have two daughters who attend WMPCS. Her hobbies include gardening, cooking, and spending time with family and friends.

William Mitro, Sec I Support Guide, graduated from Appalachian State University with an undergraduate degree in Social Studies and a Master's certificate from UNC Charlotte. He has a NC teaching license in middle grades social studies. William relocated to Washington in 2018 with his wife, Brittney, and has a daughter who is attending our Children's House.

Secondary II:

Amy Smigel, Secondary II Coordinator, Post-Secondary Counselor, school-wide Child/Adolescent Study Coordinator, and Guide for Practical Life and Psychology, has been at WMPCS for 10 years. Before joining the Secondary II team four years ago, she was an Upper Elementary Guide. Amy graduated from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA, with a Master of Arts degree in Psychology. She has also received Montessori teaching credentials for the Upper Elementary, and Secondary I and II levels. Amy is married to Austin and has two children; one is in the Secondary II level and the other graduated from WMPCS last year.

Lisa Barmer serves as an Exceptional Children's Guide and team teaches in the Secondary program. She has served in many capacities at WMPCS over the years. Lisa has been part of the Montessori community for eleven years and holds multiple teaching licenses including Elementary Education, Exceptional Children, and Secondary Math. She lives in Washington with her husband, Greg, and has two adult children.

Reid Brodie, Guide for Mathematics, is a graduate of Purdue University with a degree in Civil Engineering. He served for four years in the US Navy nuclear powered surface ships program and then two years in Vietnam with the Navy Civil Engineer Corps. He has worked in the commercial construction industry and privately tutored students in all grades of Math. Reid and his wife, Sally, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this summer. They have three children and eleven grandchildren. In his spare time, he repairs cane-bottomed chairs.

Nicholas Griekspoor, Guide in English, has a bachelor's degree from Appalachian State University in literature and a graduate certificate in Curriculum and Instruction. He holds a NC teaching license in

English. Nicholas was a graduate of WMPCS when the school was a 3 year old through 8th grade institution.

Kevin Hardy, Guide in Practical Life, Carpentry, and Landscaping and Design, received Montessori training for Children's House in 2017, is completing his Secondary I and II credentials this year and is entering his fourth year at WMPCS. Kevin and his wife, Laura, have two children in the Elementary program at WMPCS.

Amanda Holton serves as an Exceptional Children's Coordinator/Guide for WMPCS. She completed Montessori Training in 2015, has been a part of the WMPCS guide community for five years, and has worked in public education for over 20 years. Amanda holds dual Masters degrees in both Curriculum/Instruction as well as Educational Leadership. Amanda lives in Creswell with her husband, Kevin, and has two children at WMPCS, one in Upper Elementary and one in Secondary II. She holds numerous NC teaching license in Special Education and team teaches in the Secondary programs.

Meredith Loughlin, Guide for the Visual Arts, photography and multidisciplinary guide assistant with a focus on design, craftsmanship, and project integrity, will be working with students to help them visually communicate their unique message or findings on any given topic in a professional way. Meredith has a Bachelor of Arts from East Carolina University. Together with her husband, Neal, she helps manage their gallery, Lone Leaf Gallery and Custom Framing, in downtown Washington. Their daughter will be entering the Lower Elementary level this year at WMPCS.

Jennifer Lewis, Guide in Math, has been a part of the WMPCS community since 2017 as a Secondary II Mathematics guide. She graduated from ECU in 2003 with her Master of Arts degree in Mathematics and has taught at the college, high school and middle school levels. She currently lives in Chocowinity with her husband, Jonathan, and their boys, one who will be entering Lower Elementary this year and the other joining Children's House next year.

Rebecca McKnight, Spanish Guide, graduated from NCSU in 2013 with a Master of Arts degree in Spanish. Rebecca is passionate about the Spanish language, culture, and traveling. She has spent time in Chile, the Dominican Republic, Spain and Costa Rica and looks forward to sharing her experiences with her students. She and her husband learned to sail on the Pamlico years ago and are excited to move back to the area with their two daughters (ages 4 and 22 months). Rebecca is a NC licensed Spanish teacher.

Darla Prescott, Co-head of School, Elective Guide in History, Literature, and Practical Life, received a BA in English from Meredith College. Prior to serving as a Co-head of School, Darla was a Guide in Upper Elementary/Curriculum Specialist for 8 years. She has Montessori training credentials in every level of Montessori Education and is a NC licensed English teacher. In addition to working at the school, Darla has been a Montessori Teacher Trainer at the CMTE-NC. She is married to Tim and has three daughters.

Austin Smigel, Co-head of School, Elective Guide Business, Economics and Finance, and Practical Life, received an MBA from Marymount University with concentrations in Finance and Strategic Management. This will be his 8th year at WMPCS and his 6th year teaching in the Secondary II program. He is Montessori-credentialed as a Guide in Secondary I and II. In addition to working at the school, he has created training courses for the Center for Guided Montessori Studies

Administrative program. Austin is married to Amy and has two children, one of whom graduated from WMPCS last year.

Jocelyn Swanson, serves as a consultant to the WMPCS Secondary program. Jocelyn is also the director of Montessori Secondary training and certification for the Center for Guided Montessori Studies. Former founder and director of the Williamsburg Montessori Middle School and the Williamsburg Field School (high School), she specializes in Humanities, both at the Secondary I and II levels. She shares life on her farm with her husband, David, and a variety of animals and crops. The Swansons practice sustainable living and offer educational programs for children and adults. They are proud parents of three grown children, two of whom are Montessori alumna.

Crystal Swindell, Guide in Chemistry, Biology and Environmental Science, earned a Bachelor's degree in secondary education from The University of Scranton in Pennsylvania. Prior to coming to WMPCS last year and teaching in Upper Elementary, she taught biology, AP biology, anatomy and physiology, chemistry, and physical science at Pungo Christian Academy, Washington High School, Northeast Elementary, and Columbia High School. She lives in Belhaven with her husband, Cameron, and two daughters, who attend WMPCS, with whom she enjoys spending time on the water and making family memories. Crystal currently holds NC teaching licenses in middle and high school science.

Connor Wilkins, Guide in History and Civics, graduated from East Carolina University in 2018 with degrees in both History and History Education with a NC teaching license. This will be his second year teaching, as he spent his first year teaching 8th grade Social Studies and coaching both football and baseball. Outside of school, he is an avid tennis player and competes all across the state on the adult tournament circuit. He is excited to join the team at WMPCS and looks forward to embracing new teaching styles to better educate the future leaders of the world. Connor holds a NC teaching license in high school history.

We look forward to introducing you to our new team members; we will be contacting you in August to invite you to a meet-and-greet with the Guides prior to the start of school.

If you have any questions regarding the program, please do not hesitate to contact either of us over the summer. Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to a productive, educational, and successful year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Darla & Austin". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Darla and Austin