



Dear Families,

Welcome to a new year at Morning Meadow!

I trust your summer is going well and that your families are having fun in this glorious weather. It's been a bit wet, but glad to see the Sun almost every day and our rivers need the rain.

Please review the information regarding the upcoming school year and feel free to email me at morningmeadow9@gmail.com with any questions. Responding to phone calls in a timely fashion is a nearly insurmountable task, so electronic correspondence is the best way to reach me, as I check it daily.

Here are a few things to help us navigate a new school year.

PHYSICAL EXAM

All children will need a current physical exam and immunization form. If your child is not immunized, please go to the health department for the official exemption form and return this with your child's physical on or before the first day of school, Wednesday, September 2.

If you prefer to get this done before that date, please mail your child's current forms to the school, or you can scan them, send them to me in an email, and I will print them out. Thank you.



WELCOME

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the returning families for their continued support. To our new families: we are so glad you have chosen Morning Meadow, and we welcome you to our wonderful community of loving parents and outstanding children.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

The following information is provided to help inform you of the daily rhythm at Morning Meadow so that you and your children will know the activity as well as the snack on the days they attend. For our returning families, this will be a reminder.



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| Monday | Snack: Brown rice, black beans and carrots
Gnomes Activity: watercolor painting
Bluebirds Activity: coloring
Bumblebees: Watercolor painting |
| Tuesday | Snack: Oatmeal and seasonal fruit
Activity: Modeling with natural beeswax
(this activity supports fine motor skill development and creativity)
Bumblebees Coloring |
| Wednesday | Snack: Millet with sweet potatoes
Activity: Bread baking for all three classes |
| Thursday | Snack: Seasonal fruit with the bread baked the previous day
Gnomes Activity: Sewing, seasonal crafts, bean bag exercises
(to support healthy balance and integrate vertical and horizontal midlines)
Bluebirds Activity: watercolor painting
Bumblebees: Beeswax modeling |
| Friday | Snack: Noodle day with steamed broccoli.
Activity: large movements outside, jump rope and games
Gnomes Activity: creating their own coloring book that will go home at the end of the year. Sewing as well as art projects
Bluebirds Activity: Cleaning and simple crafts
Bumblebees: Flex day, art projects, cleaning, or an outside activity. |

Each class has either a story or a circle time that offers seasonal songs and fingerplays, with movement to support brain development and build social community.

REGULAR HOURS

Bluebirds and the Bumblebees: 8:30 am to 1:30 pm
Gnomes: 8:30 am to 2:00 pm

Note: The staggered pick-up time helps with parking lot congestion.

EXTENDED DAY CARE

All children not picked up at dismissal have a 15-minute grace period before aftercare begins.



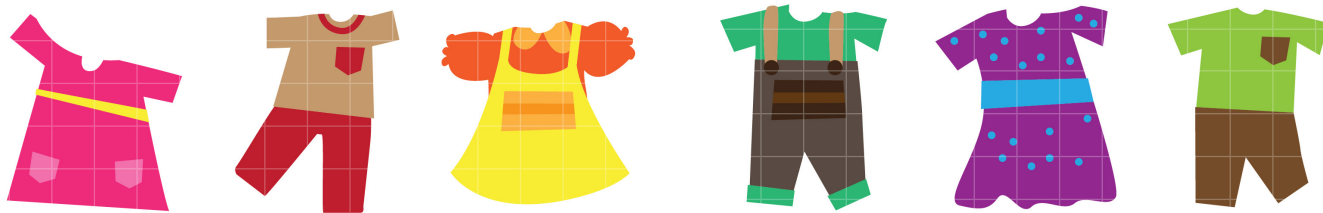
Children under 4 who are in aftercare will be napping. I know that in the past several families have expressed that naptime can be problematic as it makes it harder to get children down for bed in the evening. We hear you. At the same time, we see a difference for children who do not nap and must “power through” for an additional 3 hours before they are able to go home. In the interest of supporting families and keeping as our focal point what is best for the child’s development, we are looking at how to adjust naptime to be earlier. With that in mind, we ask parents of Bees that will not be napping, to PLEASE arrive on time so the nappers can begin their nap time as soon as possible. I wanted you to know we hear your hope for earlier nap time while at the same time meeting the needs of your little ones’ healthy development. 5 or 8 hours of social interaction and activity without a sensory break is very difficult on the growth forces of our children. Once in awhile is okay, but consistent inability to rest and recalibrate our organism is difficult to ignore. So we are hoping to adjust to meet your needs as adults while supporting the children’s need for rest.

AFTERCARE PRICING

If your child is in aftercare until 3:00 pm, the price is \$10.00 per day.

If they are in aftercare anytime after 3:00 PM up until 5:00 pm the cost is \$15.00 per day.

CLOTHING



All children in the school need a complete change of clothes that can stay at school in their cubby (please include socks and underwear) with their name marked on all items. They also need a water bottle with their first and last name on the water bottle that comes to school freshly filled in the morning every day (this is a health care requirement).

We ask that you please support us by sending your child with clothing and shoes that do not feature TV characters, superheroes, Hello Kitty, etc.

LUNCH

Please send a lunch with your child. Parents often ask if we can warm up their child's lunches; we can do this occasionally. If you have a thermos that can help us keep their food warm, that would be helpful for both staff and children waiting for their food to be warmed up.



We ask that you please not send sugary snacks such as cookies, soda, chocolate-type granola bars, pudding, Nutella, or fruit bars to school. While this may seem unnecessarily strict, understand that when the temptation of a tasty treat lingers at the ready children are hard-pressed to finish their "growing food" (Fruit is a perfect alternative to sugary treats). Thank you for your cooperation.

Please send your child's lunch in either a basket or a non-television character box. We are a community, and as such we hope to support and to respect everyone's choices about TV in addition to supporting the school's values of a non-commercialized environment for the children. Thanks!

FEE SCHEDULE

Morning Meadow's fee schedule is a monthly bill and is as follows:

- Two days a week: \$500.00/month and \$325.00 materials fee for the year
- Three days a week: \$600.00/month and \$400.00 materials fee for the year.
- Five days a week: \$750.00/month and \$475.00 materials fee for the year.

The annual materials fee can be split into two equal payments if necessary; just please let me know.

OUR TEACHERS

We welcome back many of our lovely teachers and welcome some new friends into the Morning Meadow family.

Bumblebees: Ms Emilia will return as a Bee teacher offering her well-lived experience with the wee ones of our school. We welcome Ms Brittany, our new bumblebee teacher, to work alongside Ms. Emilia, who has experience with children as she worked at the Ithaca Waldorf School before returning to Gainesville last year.

Bluebirds: Ms. Lisa and Ms Ashlee, both with many years at Morning Meadow, return with their special brand of fun and love.

Gnomes: Ms Amy returns to work as a Gnome teacher. havnig completed her second year of Teacher training this summer.

Aftercare: The lovely Ms. Nazari returns with support, when needed, by Katie, her lovely mother. Ms. Joyce will round out our team as a substitute when needed.



OPEN HOUSE

We will have an open house for ALL new families. If you are new to Morning Meadow please join us for a private meeting with your teacher. You will meet your child's teacher, see their classroom, and see where their cubbies are, along with sign in sheets and general info about our school. It will also help your child see the space before the first day of school when there will be more children.

Our open house is August 28th, Friday, 10:00 am to 1:30 pm. PLEASE email me with a time you would like to come and visit.

WORK DAY

Getting a school ready is a LOT of work. We are planning a work day and are asking families to please join us and help us get the school ready.

Our work day is Sunday, August 23, from 9 am to 4 pm

It would be very helpful to have some help with a few outdoor jobs:

- Pressure washing the front of the building
- Blowing leaves out of the parking lot
- Painting the sign out front
- Washing windows

If you have time to volunteer for any of these jobs, please text or email me so we can plan for a robust work crew. Other jobs will be indoor painting and cleaning.

I also need a helper to create a more contained sandbox. Ms Lisa has a vision and will need several folks to help her complete the project. Drills that can drill through tires are needed that day, as a circle with tires will be made, and we need to both attach them and make sure water is not sitting in them. We are also making a little art studio, and a helper who can help us build this structure would be most appreciated. If you can commit to helping with either project that day, PLEASE email me, as we would not have many more days to complete the job before school begins.

FESTIVALS:

Festivals are an integral part of Waldorf education and Morning Meadow. It is a time we come together to support community, recognize the larger, more cosmic occurrences in our yearly rhythms and form opportunities for parents to be part of both your child's school but the larger community that supports and enhances Morning Meadow. Morning Meadow's intention is to approach festivals that are inclusive and secular, ensuring that celebrations are both universal and harmonious with each family's own beliefs.

Many of our festivals come from the original Waldorf school parent-driven impulse, and others are inherent to America and the festivals we find meaningful. We also hope to have festivals in the classroom that help the children understand the many other wonderful cultures that help us make a diverse and rich humanity. If you have a family festival that is important, please feel free to reach out to me so we can explore the possibility of bringing that to our classrooms. PLEASE read the following information from another school that helps to showcase the reason we have festivals in our schools.



Rooted in Rhythm: Festivals in the Waldorf Curriculum. When Rudolf Steiner founded the first Waldorf school in 1919, he urged teachers to shape education around the natural rhythms of life rather than fixed routines alone. Festivals, he explained, help connect us to both the cycles of nature and to our cultural traditions. In Waldorf education today, festivals still mark the rhythm of the year – living experiences that nurture reverence, imagination, and joy. By observing the changing

seasons and honoring traditions old and new, children encounter the mysteries of nature while developing a deeper sense of belonging, both to the natural world and to the community that surrounds them.

A Rhythm for Early Childhood: Connecting With Nature's Cycles

In our Early Childhood program, the cycle of the seasons is experienced through daily rituals and joyful celebrations. Festivals in the autumn bring light to the darkening days, while the Maypole in spring embodies renewal and growth. Birthday celebrations and moving-up ceremonies honor significant life transitions and give children a sense of courage to meet what lies ahead.

These traditions help young children feel secure within a world that's ever-changing. Through age-appropriate songs, stories, and activities, their awareness of the natural world and its rhythms grows year by year.

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With that as a backdrop, I am forming a parent Festival committee. The festivals are rich, diverse, fun, and A LOT of work! Especially Halloween. I am seeking several parents who are interested in joining a festival committee that will help us plan and execute successful festivals. If you are interested and able to gift the school a few hours in advance of the festivals, PLEASE email me, and I can add you to our list. Thank you in advance for your support. Our first meeting will be in early September to plan Halloween as well as check in for Michaelmas in case there is additional support needed.

Thank you, everyone. Looking forward to seeing you at the Meadow!

Warmly,

Ms. Sylvia and the Morning Meadow teachers.