



**Making a World
of Difference**

Fernwood Family Newsletter #2, 9/3/24

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Schedule of Events

- ~Tuesday, September 3, 2024, **First Day of School**, all returning K4-8th Students
 - ~Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 6:00pm, **PTO Meeting**, Fernwood library and virtual <https://meet.google.com/xyx-wwnz-czu>
 - ~Saturday, September 14, 2024, 10am-12pm, **Fernwood Fest**, West Playground
 - ~Tuesday, September 17, 2024, 6:30pm, **Fernwood Fund Meeting**, Fernwood library and virtual, email brett.mytys@gmail.com for link
 - ~Wednesday, September 18, 2024, 7:45am-12pm, **Picture Day**
 - ~Thursday, September 26, 2024, 5:30pm, **School Engagement Council (SEC)**, virtual <https://meet.google.com/tir-huzv-ikc>
 - Tuesday, October 1st, 2024, 6:00pm, **PTO Meeting**, Fernwood library and virtual <https://meet.google.com/xyx-wwnz-czu>
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Welcome!

Ready or not, school has started! Welcome to the 2024-25 school year! I am Ms. Meredith, the Parent Coordinator at Fernwood Montessori. I am also the mom of two Fernwood superstar students (I am you, you are me)! Please read below for information about staying connected at Fernwood and please reach out to me with questions at genricm@milwaukee.k12.wi.us. I am here to coordinate with all of you!

Each Tuesday a newsletter will be sent out to the email address you have listed in your Parent Portal account (these newsletters will get shorter, I promise!). Weekly newsletters will have information about upcoming events in our school, resources for families, and information about ways to get involved in Fernwood. If you need to update your email address, please reach out to our school secretaries. New topics will be listed at the top and older topics will move down the document. There will always be a schedule of events at the top of each page and a table of contents.

Our newsletter can also be found on our [website](#). The website is also a great resource for staff contact information, agendas from SEC meetings, and a Fernwood calendar.

If you would like to receive the newsletter by text, you will need to opt in to the MPS text messaging system. To opt in to receiving Fernwood and district text messages, please text 67587 with "Y" or "Yes."

Fernwood has a Facebook group for current Fernwood families to communicate with other Fernwood families called Fernwood Montessori Community. Please note that this group is not for communicating with Fernwood staff or administration, but to speak with other families. Please keep topics relevant to Fernwood and lead with kindness.

Fernwood Calendar

Fernwood Montessori follows the MPS traditional calendar. Please click on the link for the [2024-25 MPS Traditional Calendar](#).

Fernwood Family/School Manual

Fernwood Montessori has updated our Fernwood Family School Manual. This manual has tons of information about family engagement, procedures, dress code, staff contact information and so much more. It can also be found on the homepage of our website.

[Fernwood Family-School Manual 2425 .docx](#)

New and Essential Pick up and Drop Off Info

Here is some additional information about drop of and pick up that is for newbies and veterans! Please read and note that these adjustments are essential for keeping students accounted for and safe.

1. If parents are picking up prior to the end of the school day, they must come into the building and sign the student out. We ask that families refrain from early pickups after 2pm; dismissal at Fernwood is a big process and it is very hard to locate children after 2pm, unless prearranged. If you arrive after 2pm for early pick up, we will ask that you meet your child outside.
2. School staff is expected to verify the person's ID if they do not know the individual.
3. Anyone picking up a student must be listed in Infinite Campus as a household member or non-household relationships. Please contact the office if you'd like someone added to the contact list for your child.

4. Please do not visit a classroom without first checking in at the office and getting a visitor badge. This also includes dropping your student off at their classroom in the morning.
 5. Students will be brought into the office at 2:26pm if there is no parent to pick them up, where you can retrieve them. Please make sure you are on time. We understand things come up, but should this be a recurring situation, the school will charge to supervise the student.
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Arrival and Dismissal Procedure

Daily Schedule:

Office Hours 7:00 a.m.-3:15 p.m. Office Phone: (414) 294-1300

Student Start Time

School begins promptly at 7:25 a.m. each morning.

Early Arrival

Children are not to be dropped off at school before 7:20 a.m. There is no supervision for children before 7:20a.m. unless they are coming in for breakfast at 7:05 a.m. Students who arrive early to school and are not eating breakfast, will have to wait outside unsupervised.

Student Entry Procedures

Students will be allowed to enter the building at 7:25 a.m. To alleviate congestion when entering the building please have your student enter the correct door associated with their room number. Please assist your child in making a smooth transition to school in the morning by saying “good-bye” at the door to the school. Staff will be available to help your child find his/her classroom. Parents will not be permitted to enter the building with their student during the morning entrance.

~**Lower and Upper Elementary** students in Rooms **21,22,24,31,32, 33,34, and 35**, will enter through Door #1 (Northeast entrance) in order to avoid the first floor.

~**Lower and Upper Elementary Students** in rooms **250,251,252, and 253** will enter through Door #6 (Northwest entrance).

~**Upper Elementary students (in rooms 25, 27, 37)** and the **Adolescent** students will enter through the Falling Heath Place entrance (Glass Doors).

~**Primary students (K3-K5)** will enter through Door #2 (Southeast entrance) with siblings, if needed. For the first couple of weeks, primary students will line up on their classroom numbers and be escorted into the building by their teachers.

After 7:25 a.m. the Falling Heath Place entrance will be used for parents and visitors to enter the school. All people entering the building must report to the office to sign in and receive a visitor's pass. **

Students in room 26 should come in through the Falling Heath glass doors where Ms. Toni will be available to supervise.

End of the School Day for K3 and K4

K3 and K4 children end their school day at 10:20a.m. Please wait on the East playground to pick-up your child(ren). The teacher will escort each group out of the building.

End of the Day/Dismissal K5-8th

K5 through 8th grade students finish at 2:25 p.m. Parents of children who do not ride the bus meet them on the East playground. Do not park on Pennsylvania Avenue or Falling Heath Place. This is dangerous and interferes with the safety of the children who ride the buses. Students start boarding buses from 2:20 p.m. to 2:25 p.m. Buses will begin pulling from the school at 2:30 p.m. Our school's primary responsibility is to ensure the safety and well-being of your children. We need your cooperation, assistance and support to ensure students' safety especially during arrival and dismissal.

Fernwood parking/driving guidelines:

*Do not park or drop off students on Pennsylvania Avenue or Falling Heath Place. These spaces are reserved for buses only.

*Please have your student cross the street at the intersections with a crossing guard.

*To ensure the safety of all students please avoid double parking, which causes heavy traffic congestion. It is unsafe for your child to run between vehicles.

* We need to respect the rights of our neighbors. Do not park or drop off students in front of their driveways.

*The school parking lot is restricted and not open to the public. The parking lot is for staff members only. Please do not have students walk through the parking lot or use the parking lot as a space to pick up students.

Essential Attendance Information

Please review the attached letter from Ms. Kristy regarding attendance for this school year.

[Attendance Letter 24-25](#)

PTO-curious? First PTO Meeting of the Year!

Did you know that *everyone* is welcomed and encouraged to join a PTO meeting?! Join us on the 1st Tuesday of every month in the Fernwood library (or virtual if that's easier) at 6pm. Bring your kids, ideas, snacks, or all 3...meetings are fun and casual! You also don't have to make every meeting. You can show up when time and your schedule allows!

Meeting reminders go out in the Tuesday newsletter and on the [Fernwood Montessori Community Facebook](#) page. Don't hesitate to reach out to Melissa Rabiego (PTO President) if you have any questions: melissarabiego@gmail.com

Hope to see you on September 10th for our first meeting of the year!

District Parent/Guardian School Engagement Survey

Please take a few moments to provide some feedback to the district and our school! The District Parent/Guardian School Engagement Survey is your opportunity to provide the school with information on how you might like to get involved and barriers to involvement. The school is provided with the data and it helps us to plan for our year. The survey takes just a few minutes and is available in many languages. Survey and flyer are linked below.

mpsmke.com/spcssurvey

 School Engagement Survey FLYER 24-25.pdf

Art Room Letter

Please see below for a welcome letter from Art Teacher, Ms. Laura Makula Zimmerman.

 Art Letter from Ms. Makula

Music Program Letter from Mr. Zhang

Greetings to students and parents! My name is Eric Zhang, and I am the new Orchestra and piano teacher here at Fernwood Montessori and Fairview Elementary. I graduated recently in December 2023 with a degree in Instrumental Music Education from UW-Milwaukee. Outside of music, I love to play chess and table tennis.

I am excited and cannot wait to start working with students in class. I will be starting a brand-new orchestra program here at Fernwood Montessori. We will have classes every other Wednesday, Thursdays, and Fridays. Orchestra will be an ensemble class. Students will not only learn how to play individually but will also learn to collaborate with peers in a group setting. There will also be piano classes offered as well. Piano will focus on the students individually playing as well as playing in a group.

Let's have a great year!

Eric Zhang

zhangz@milwaukee.k12.wi.us

Letter from Mr. Comp in the Gym

Please see the attached letter from Mr. Comp, our Physical Education teacher.

 Mr. Comp Letter.docx

Letter from Ms. Bianca our School Counselor

Please see the attached letter from our School Counselor Ms. Bianca.

 Ms. Bianca Letter.docx

Support Group for Individuals with Autism and their Families

Please see the attached information from our Special Education Supervisor, Ms. Canady, regarding the JCrew Foundation Inc. and the support it offers for individuals having Autism (along with other disabilities) and their families. This is a virtual parent support group session opportunity.

 **JCF Parent Support Group Sept2024.pdf**

Message from Cub Scout Pack 179

Is your K5-5th grade child interested in outdoor exploration, hands-on learning, and fun? Then consider learning more about Cub Scout Pack 179. We are a co-ed Pack that serves Greater Bay View Neighborhood families and children. Cub Scouts is a great way to strengthen family bonds, learn valuable life skills, foster an appreciation for nature, and build community. There are two upcoming opportunities for you to meet other Cub Scout families and consider joining in the fun! The first is a night hike on Wednesday, September 11th at 6:30pm at Seminary Woods. Meet in the parking lot of the Saint Francis Civic Center (3400 E Howard Ave, St Francis, WI 53235). The second, is our first Pack meeting on Wednesday, September 18th at 6:00pm on Fernwood's West Playground. This also serves as New Scout night and parent orientation. Scouts and interested children will rotate through stations learning camping skills like knot tying and setting up a tent while parents learn what scouting is all about. If you have any questions, please contact info@fernwoodpack179.org

Futura Spanish Enrollment-Now Open Online

Enrollment for after school Spanish classes with Futura is now open online. Follow the link to enroll.

<https://futuraadventures.com/WISCONSIN-REGION/>

[Futura Fernwood Spanish 2024-2025 flier .pdf](#)

Character Kids Enrollment-Now Open Online



Come explore the wonderful world of theater with Character Kids! Students will play theater games, learn stage skills and explore popular Broadway musicals while developing imagination, social skills and confidence. We'll be offering 2 different fun-filled after school classes at Fernwood this year!

FALL SESSION:

- Grades 1st-3rd: Mondays, 2:30-3:30 pm (September 23 - December 2 (10 weeks, no class 10/21)
- Grades 4th-6th: Wednesdays, 2:30-3:30 pm (September 25 - December 11 (11 weeks, no class 11/27)

Parents are invited to a special performance on the last day of class! [Visit our website for more info or to register.](#)

Music Vacancy

Unfortunately, Mr. Miller, our former music teacher, resigned his position late in the summer. We are working to develop a plan to make sure students have access to high quality music education. If you know of anyone who is fully licensed looking for a music position (that does not currently work for MPS, as we cannot take from another school at this point in the year), please have them reach out to Kristy Lowell. This position is full time, working primarily with K5-6th grade students with general music classes, and

also teaching a few music specialty classes to our 7th and 8th graders. Ideal candidates would have experience with choir or vocal performance.

Breakfast and Lunch

All MPS students are eligible for free breakfast and lunch each day.

Breakfast

Students that would like to eat breakfast may report to Door 2 or the Falling Heath Doors between 7:05am and 7:30am to be buzzed in by the secretaries. Students will report directly to the cafeteria for breakfast. Breakfast will be served from 7:05am-7:35am. Students will not be allowed into the building until 7:05 or after due to supervision.

Lunch

If a student would like to have a hot lunch, they will sign up each morning in their classroom. The menu can be found on the MPS home page. Please note that the meal served may be different than the planned meal due to supply issues.

Fernwood Fest!

The PTO is excited for our annual back to school family fun event! This year Fernwood Fest will be held on Saturday, September 14th from 10am-12pm. There will be popcorn, face painting, bounce houses, food trucks and a special appearance by the Milwaukee Fire Department! All families are invited to come to meet new families and connect with old friends.

We are looking for lots of volunteers to make this day a success. Please consider volunteering for an hour! [Volunteer Sign Up](#)

[Fernwood Fest 2024.pdf](#)

Sports at Fernwood

Welcome back Fernwood Families! I am the new Sports Coordinator for Fernwood Athletics and am excited for the new school year and the Fall season to get underway. I have been a Fernwood parent and fellow coach for the last 11 years.

Beginning in 1st grade, there are lots of great opportunities to participate in sports at Fernwood. All opportunities will be listed in the Tuesday newsletters at the start of each new season. Fernwood sports programs are coordinated by Milwaukee Recreation. Each team is led by a volunteer parent coach who determines the one time per week practice. Games are usually on the weekends. Please stop to see me at the open house. There you can learn more about what sports are available each season, volunteer to coach, and enroll in Fall sports.

Registration for co-ed soccer (grades 1-3/4-5), girls' basketball* (grades 4-5/6-8) and Cross Country (grades 6-8) is open. Teams fill up fast and we do have a limit so please turn in Athletic forms and payment (cash or check made out to Fernwood) at the time of registration. **Forms are provided in this newsletter.** The forms and payment can be delivered to the school office. All athletes/parents will have to fill out a MPS rec packet that includes the concussion protocol, however, that will all be in electronic form and sent from the individual coaches.

*Please note that if you join fall girls' basketball you will not be able to play winter coed basketball. Coed basketball and Volleyball registration will open mid-October so please keep a look out in upcoming newsletters.

We are in need of a soccer 1-3rd coach and possibly 4/5th soccer coach. If you are interested in coaching any of the sports teams, please reach out to me for more information.

Thanks for making Fernwood Athletics such a success!

Chanda Miller

Cell: 414-202-5255

chandamiller@hotmail.com

[Fall Soccer \(2024\).doc](#)

[Girls Basketball \(2024\).doc](#)

K5 Daisy Girl Scouts

We will be starting a Fernwood K5 Daisy Girl Scout Troop this fall. Girl Scouts is a great opportunity for kids to make friends and try new activities in a supportive environment. Katrina McNamara and Darcy DuBois will lead our troop. We will meet once a month at Fernwood from 4:30-5:30 pm on the third Tuesday of the month.

Girl Scouts maintains ratios for troops and we can have up to 12 girls in the troop for this age group. Registration will be taken through the Girls Scouts of Southeastern Wisconsin website on a first come, first served basis. Interested families may register right [here](#). Or you can go to this [site](#) and search troop number 37935.

Thanks to special funding, there is no cost to join Daisy Girl Scouts this year. Please note, once the funding runs out and in future years there is a yearly registration fee through Girl Scouts. This year, there will be an additional cost to purchase the Daisy Vest and initial badges (information will follow on these items).

Throughout the year, we will have multiple opportunities for families to be involved and support the troop and our activities. We will have a brief family meeting following our first meeting on September 17th to share more logistics about the troop and ways to volunteer.

Our School is Cool!

There's always something COOL going on at Fernwood! What is this COOL thing pictured below, you ask?



Is it an elaborate and verdant jail for unruly adolescents? Are we communicating with alien life forms? Is it a meditation space for teachers to use on their lunch break? None of these ideas are TECHNICALLY correct but the sphere has multiple uses! The official answer* is that the biosphere is a sustainable way for city dwellers to grow their own food! See the link for details.

<https://www.designboom.com/design/ikea-space10-the-growroom-flat-pack-spherical-garden-02-20-2017/>

*Please note, the biosphere is most often used as a lounge space for adolescents that want to look COOL.

This biosphere is super COOL because it was made by former Fernwood classroom teacher and current Greenhouse Program Director, Mr. Matt “Best Ponytail in the Building” Ray. He worked with 7th and 8th graders to cut wood, prepare the wood, and construct the sphere. The project also included lessons on sustainability, botany, and nutrition. COOL!