Dear MRASP Families

Hope you all are having such great summers- full of relaxing, adventures, and good time with your family. Fall is fast approaching, and I wanted to get a handful of details and reminders out to you all. This is a long & important email worth reading start to finish. It’s also posted on our website here for later reference.

Schedules & First Invoices

The typical billing cycle we work off of is an emailed invoice that goes out between the 15th-20th of the month before the month that the tuition applies for *ex August 15th-20th for September Tuition, September 15th-20th for October tuition etc.*

With this in mind, September tuition invoices will be going out in the coming days (although this first one might be more like the 21st or 22nd as there are still changes being worked through). If you have any changes you are looking to make to your enrolled days at MRASP, let me know ASAP. We have waitlists in some grades for some days, so not everything is possible, but feel free to ask!

These invoices are payable through an ACH Bank Transfer via a link in the email. Credit cards are not accepted at this time. You certainly may pay by check/cash as well either by mail or dropping off payments with myself/Carra in the Octagon or in the check box in the Hut office. The online payment system will let you pay either the invoiced amount or less than the invoiced amount, but never more than the invoiced amount. If you find yourself in arrears and owing more money than one month tuition, you either need to find past invoices to pay online or write a check for the larger amount. Invoices are due by the 15th of the month they are covering tuition for (September 15th for September tuition etc.)

New Staff Updates

We want to give a big MRASP welcome to Alyssa Kirk as our new K-1 Program Coordinator! Alyssa was a K-1 Teacher in our program for the 21-22 school year and the first half of the 22-23 school year. She comes in with a great background in early education, a wonderful demeanor with kids, and a ton of enthusiasm for the role. Tyler Leach will return as Program Coordinator for the 2nd Grade Component with the Centre as home base, Paul Kielb will return as Program Coordinator in 3rd Grade with classroom space as a home base, and Jonathan Kilchherr will return as Senior Program Coordinator over at the Hut. We also want to thank Bridget Struth who wonderfully lead our K-1 program these past two years, and wish her the best with the next step in her career! I’ll have other introductions to bring you of the new teachers joining the program in the coming weeks. We’re excited for you all to meet the new additions to the MRASP team.

Transition to the Hut

As is understandable, we get a number of questions every spring and summer from 4th grade families around the program and building across the field which house our 4th & 5th grade program. I’m going to try to break down some answers here to help make the transition as smooth as possible! The first handful of days of the year our teachers will greet all 4th & 5th grade MRASP students at the back playground door/4th grade modular door after the school day to collect the group. Together they will walk over to the Hut together and teach what that walk should look like as the students will independently handle through the school year. As for the building itself, it is an old church that was renovated many years ago into recreation center controlled by the department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture that we rent for the program. The exterior is actually getting a facelift as we speak with new paneling going up (hopefully ready for the start of school!). The interior features two small classroom spaces and a gymnasium. While the building itself certainly is in need of even further renovations, we are so thankful to have access to the dedicated space and the clubhouse atmosphere it has. If your incoming Hut student is feeling any anxiety around the new building, let me know and we can schedule a visit beforehand!

Walking Home & Self Dismissal Policy

4th & 5th graders are permitted to self-dismiss from the program on their own as long as A: we have written permission from the family (either long term plan *every Wednesday at 4:45 Timmy will self-dismiss* or an email day of saying *today Timmy will walk home at 4:00 for soccer)* and B: it is still light out when the student is getting home. This means that the walking home window for winter months can be quite short. Finally- your 4th/5th grader is also welcome to come pick up a younger sibling in the program as well if you’ve both given written permission and it is still light out/a safe walk.

Student Absences

If your child is going to be absent from the program (whether attending school that day or not) you must let us know ahead of time. This can be via an email (joshuafriedman@mrasp.org), via a phone call (MRASP Office 617-244-7260 or Hut Phone 617-244-9434). The transition into our day is the busiest 15 minutes of the entire program, and any time we are spending running around chasing classroom teachers to hear about dismissal or making phone calls to you is taking away educators from the program. Excessive uncommunicated absences will be billed in the same format as our late pickups are- which brings us to…

End of Day Pickup

You are welcome to pick up your child at any point during our program hours (school dismissal-6 pm). All K-3 pickups are handled here at Mason-Rice and all 4th-5th grade pickups over at the Hut (69 Tyler Terrace). The front door of the school features a doorbell, which one of us will buzz you in. Right inside the door will be a white board which *should* accurately display roughly where each grade level group is.

When you pick up your child, make sure you A: sign out on the clipboard with the group and B: check in with any teacher in the group to say hello and note you’re picking up. Note on picking up more than one sibling in the program: when light permits you are welcome to give a call over to the Hut phone to send an older sibling over to the Octagon door to meet up with a younger sibling and make pick up a little less effort on your end. That all said, know that it might not always be possible as a working teacher is the one picking up the phone over there, and that the timing has to be worked out so the older sibling isn’t hanging around for too long in a group they’re not with. Once they leave the Hut they are “dismissed” for the day and not under our supervision anymore.

**As for the very end our programming day we are switching things back to how they were pre-pandemic and having students remain in their program groups up til 6 pm- *not* all going up to the front lobby.** The combination of high numbers of pickups in the 5:50-6:00 range and not enough space in the lobby paired with the lack of phone access up there from our main office number made that a challenge last year. At 6 PM all late pickups will be walked down by a teacher to the Octagon/MRASP office space until they are picked up. Per policy, late pickups will receive a warning before lates are billed on the following months invoice. Late Hut pickups will remain over at the Hut and warned/billed identically to K-3 late pickups.

Other New Policies

Nothing too drastic here, but a few small new policies I wanted to send out in writing ahead of the school year. First- should a student be “sent to the office” (at Mason-Rice site or the Hut) they will be required to complete a new “Taking Responsibility for Choices” think sheet. This isn’t anything too new, but is a modified worksheet we crafted with some outside guidance. Any time one of these sheets is completed, we’ll notify you (usually at pickup, rarely with a phone call if something larger/urgent).

Second, on the rare occasion that a parent is called after a substantial dangerous or destructive behavior requiring the parent/guardian to physically come to the program, the child is not able to return to the program that same day and must exit the program with the parent/guardian.

Paperwork

Last, but certainly not least, all paperwork for enrollment for next year must be completed ASAP! Legally children are not allowed to start in the program without their enrollment forms and signed contract on hand. Practically, we need access to enrollment forms even sooner than that as we need to print them all, log all medications/allergies, develop our pick up and contact lists, etc. Most people are in good shape on this, but if you know you haven’t completed the enrollment forms for each child or signing a contract, complete these as soon as possible. We will also be sending our direct reminders on these in coming days. Lastly, if you put down any sort of medical situation/allergy requiring medication, we will need either a set of medication paperwork (on website here) or a signed waiver form from a doctor (located here). Please and thank you.

That’s about it for this long-winded reference-able email! If you have any questions let me know, and while I’m sure I’ll put this last piece in a separate health and safety email in the fall- if your child is sick (Covid symptoms or otherwise) don’t send them to the program. There are certain protocols we follow from the state around certain symptoms, but the more we can avoid any sickness in the program, the better for everybody. As always, we all are in this together, and the more we can do to take care of each other in everything we do, the stronger this community will be.

Thanks again for taking the time to read this, and see you all soon,

Josh