

SCHOOL NEWS

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College Park UMC Primary School & CDC
Mary Massey, M.S., Principal



MASSEY'S MESSAGE

I am excited about our fast-approaching new school year! We are changing a few things in the next few weeks; but, I want to assure you that all decisions are made based on what is best for the children here. That really has to be our focus in order to continue to provide the highest quality learning environment possible. We are moving our PreK-4/5 classes to the Primary School. The classrooms are larger and the setting is more conducive to that age group. That move has opened up an additional spot for toddlers and, because of potty training, we have changed toddler room assignments. Babies coming from the Baby House will go into Room #11. As they develop and grow, they will move into Room #3, then Room #2, then Room #1 and then they will travel on to Rooms #7 and #8, etc. In assessing the overall growth and development of our students, we believe these moves will only serve to improve our program. Some parents, with children in each of the affected age groups, may have to drop their children off at two different spots next year. I am sorry if that poses an inconvenience to parents; however, as I said, our decisions are made, based on what is best for the children and we must remain true to that premise. We will, also, remain true to our teaching philosophy, focusing on experiential learning, hands-on activities, and active lessons. As we continue to see more and more budget cuts, resulting in teacher cuts and cuts in music and art programs in the public schools, I encourage you to check out our Primary School. The Christian Education, along with a 10/1 student/teacher ratio and curriculum based on current brain research for developmentally-appropriate lessons and activities, makes for an educational environment that is hard to beat. There's a good chance your child may do alright in public school; but, the real question is, will he/she have the opportunity to reach his/her full potential? Check out our website and see what the advantage of going to the Primary School can afford your child.

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PARENTING TIPS

Developing Social Skills

As children come through the front office I am thrilled to hear parents encouraging their little ones to respond in an appropriate and mannerly fashion when they are spoken to. This daily routine will be very effective in establishing for your child behaviors that are appropriate in other social situations. Be careful, however, when your child refuses to respond appropriately, that you follow through with your instruction in order to keep it consistent. Avoid saying:

- "Are you being shy?"
- "I know you're tired."
- "Are you not feeling well today?"

By making these statements, you are, unwittingly, teaching your child that inappropriate behavior or, in this case, rude behavior is acceptable if they are shy, tired, or sick. Usually, praise and affirmation when a child responds appropriately, is enough encouragement to reinforce those behaviors. Also, modeling appropriate responses, when others speak to you, will teach the children what is acceptable in specific social situations. Remember, you are your child's FIRST teacher. He watches you and learns by your example. Someone told me once that children are like little mirrors, running around after you, reflecting all that you say and do. Now that's quite a sobering thought!

**SCHOOL
CLOSED**

**Friday
August 15th**

**TEACHER
TRAINING**

TEACHER DEDICATION AND OPEN HOUSE

We're on the Web!
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The new school year is right around the corner! We are getting excited about our annual "kick-off" weekend. On Friday, August 15th, school is closed and teachers will participate in Teacher Training activities all day. They will return on Saturday for Pre-planning and a time to work in their classrooms. Janey Frost, my youngest sister, will be traveling from Pensacola where she serves as Minister of Music and Women's Ministries. She will lead us in a personal Bible study, designed to strengthen our faith walk and help us recommit to our calling, to minister to young children and their families.

You will not want to miss our Annual Teacher Dedication Service on Sunday, August 17th, at 10 a.m. This is a special time to honor our teachers for the work they do every day. Immediately following the service, we will host our Annual Open House. Please visit the Baby House, CDC, and Primary School that day in order to get a grasp of the "big picture" of what great things are happening here, every day of the week!

A Welcome Reception will be held in Wesley Hall from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Please drop in for some refreshments and an opportunity to visit with staff, as well as parents. See you there!

NEW SCHOOL YEAR!

The first day of our new school year is Monday, August 18th. Teachers will have their classrooms set up and they will anxiously await their new students! Children will be a bit apprehensive; but, once they see their friends, they will rush into their new classrooms, ready to learn together. Parents will blink back a few tears, wondering where the years have gone and another great adventure begins!!

TEACHING TIPS

Fine Motor Skill Development = Prewriting Skills

Like any skill our children learn, there are "prerequisites" that make developing that skill much more natural for them and for you, as a parent. Writing is one of those skills. The "prerequisite" to writing is the development of strong fine motor skills. The small muscles in the hands must grow strong enough, not only to hold a writing utensil, but strong enough to control that utensil. I have listed below some activities, in which to engage your child on a regular basis, in order to help strengthen his/her fine motor skills and, thus, begin the journey to good writing skills and habits:

- Playing with PlayDoh
- Fingerpainting
- Picking up small objects (thumb to index finger)
- Putting together puzzle pieces
- Building with blocks and Legos
- Counting with manipulatives
- Playing an instrument (keyboard, recorder)
- Stringing cereal (Cheerios) or beads on a string
- Role-playing on an old typewriter or computer keyboard
- Playing with an old rotary dial telephone