

October 7, 2013

Dear Walden Green Community:

I would like to start by thanking each of you for your warm welcome to Walden Green Montessori. I have greatly enjoyed meeting the staff, students and families that are all so instrumental in establishing and securing this beautiful nurturing environment that our students benefit from each and every day. I am thrilled to be here and hope that you will continue to introduce yourselves in the coming weeks. As you can imagine, learning each of these new names and faces may take me a while.

For those of you who may not know, I want to share a bit of my background with you. I was most recently the principal of Drummond Montessori School – the first public Montessori school of Chicago. As the city's first public Montessori school, it was important to assure all types of success. We needed to secure a vibrant and healthy learning environment that supported curiosity, creativity and passion. We needed to establish a trusting environment for families where they felt both welcome and involved in their children's education and most importantly, we needed to foster a curriculum which was driven by Montessori practices and principles but also met and exceeded the state standards – the two are not mutually exclusive. In my short time with Walden Green thus far, it is easy to recognize this same potential for academic growth and community involvement, providing a rich Montessori environment for our students.

Often, when a change occurs, community members worry about losing what has already been established. I want to assure each of you that I do not have any intentions of making any significant overhauls to the Walden Green School faculty or to its curriculum. My plan is to help grow and to foster the best aspects of our school community and to collaborate on where we, as a learning community, need to focus our time and energy to provide the best experiences for our students moving forward.

In closing, I want to thank John Weaver and Mitri Zainea for their commitment to Walden Green Montessori these past few months. These gentlemen stepped in at a difficult moment and have assisted the school community in countless ways, all while preserving the Montessori environment that we all embrace. I very much look forward to my time here at Walden Green Montessori. I feel lucky to be given this opportunity to work with this faculty, your children and you, the Walden Green Family.

Sincerely,

Mark Neidlinger  
Director  
Walden Green Montessori

Please read the items below to keep yourself well informed of the happenings at Walden Green Montessori.

MEAP:

Starting tomorrow morning at 9 a.m. all of our students' Third grade through Eighth will be taking the MEAP standard exams. You can look at the MEAP schedule here.

All of us want to see our students do well on these exams without adding any necessary pressure. Please share with your child that the MEAP exam is their opportunity to show the state of Michigan just how much knowledge they already have. I think it is important to let your child know that we only expect them to put forth their very best effort – no more, no less. Additionally you can assist your child by making sure they receive a good nights sleep over the next couple of weeks and having a healthy breakfast. The single best thing any of us can do for our student is to build up their self-esteem by letting them know how much we believe in their potential and their ability.

Walden Green Montessori has a new website:

I want to thank Angela Stanford-Butler and Lesley Vega for the countless hours that they have devoted to building our new website. Please pay a visit to [www.waldengreenmontessori.org](http://www.waldengreenmontessori.org) where you will be able to link to important dates, Walden News, classroom pages and enrollment information. This site is a really valuable tool for our families to keep themselves well informed on all things, Walden.

Farewell Janelle:

Janelle Nuvill, our Special Education teacher has recently resigned to take a position at Three Oaks Charter School where she will be teaching Mathematics. I am sorry to see Janelle leave Walden Green but I also clearly understand her passion for mathematics and wish her the best in her future endeavors. You can read Janelle's kind words here.

To be certain that our students do not miss out on the supports that are needed, we have called for assistance with the CTC (Comprehensive Therapy Center), the agency we partner with for our itinerant providers. We have also welcomed Trent McCoy, a certified sub and friend to Walden Green students who will be assisting us through the MEAP exams to provide consistency to our students. In the meanwhile, I will be interviewing to fill this position. We have posted the position on our website as well as three other sites with the expectation of finding a strong teacher to join our team of educators. I look forward to announcing our new Special Education teacher once we have found the best candidate for our students.

Family Fun Night:

Please come and celebrate the fantastic families we have here at Walden Green on Friday, October 18<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 8 p.m. There will be a number of fall activities to

get involved in. We welcome costumes for students and would encourage each family to bring along a home-carved pumpkin to add to the festivities. Kids will also delight in the face painting activities, the pie auction and the fun games that will be on hand.

Please contact Amy Hart at [a2hart@gmail.com](mailto:a2hart@gmail.com) or Kathy Betts at [kbetts01@yahoo.com](mailto:kbetts01@yahoo.com) should you have any questions.

Important Dates:

October 8 – 25<sup>th</sup> 9 a.m. MEAP testing

October 18 - 8:25-9 a.m. Family Breakfast. At 9 a.m. please meet Mr. Neidlinger and our Ancillary Teachers in the common area to hear about their programs.

October 18 - 5:30–8 p.m. Family Fun Night

October 21 - 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting

October 25 - Half-day, school is dismissed at 11:30 a.m.

October 25 - TREK for TECH walk-a-thon