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Dear Families,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! It is with great pride and excitement that I welcome our students, families, and staff to another wonderful year at Bennett Park Montessori Center. I would also like to extend a special welcome to the families who are joining our school community for the first time. As we begin this new school year together, we look forward to partnering with you in supporting each child's academic achievement, personal growth, and overall success. I hope your summer was filled with opportunities to relax, recharge, and create lasting memories with family and friends.

Our dedicated team of educators is eager to begin the year and has been working hard to prepare for a successful start. Throughout the summer, staff members have been finalizing class placements and schedules, participating in professional learning, refining instructional practices, and reviewing classroom routines and expectations. These efforts are all focused on creating engaging learning experiences while fostering a strong sense of belonging and connection for every student. We are also deeply grateful to our custodial staff for their commitment to preparing our building and ensuring our school is ready to welcome everyone back. In addition, our clerical team has worked tirelessly to support a smooth and organized opening for students, families, and staff.

Bennett Park Montessori Center is truly a special place where children learn, grow, and thrive. We take great pride in our school and maintain high expectations for all students. Our learners are kind, compassionate, and enthusiastic about learning, and our staff is committed to helping every child feel valued, respected, accepted, and safe. Guided by our Montessori motto, **"Community Means We Are One,"** we remain dedicated to providing a rigorous, joyful, and inclusive learning environment. Together, we will continue to inspire curiosity, encourage meaningful engagement, and nurture a lifelong love of learning in every student.

We recognize the importance and remain committed to addressing unfinished learning and closing academic gaps, support students as they strengthen foundational skills, and we are dedicated to providing the support needed to accelerate growth and thrive academically.

During the 2026-2027 school year:

- We will be working with the **National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector (NCMPS)** to evaluate the fidelity of Montessori implementation in our public school. Their focus will be on helping our school assess classroom environments, measure student engagement, and help guide continuous improvement.
- **Data-Driven Instruction (DDI)** approach – Our teachers will engage in an ongoing cycle of data collection, progress monitoring, analysis, and action planning to continuously refine teaching practices and respond to student needs. Rather than relying solely on curriculum pacing guides, this process allows us to tailor instruction based on each student's strengths, areas for growth, and individual learning needs, ensuring all students are supported in reaching their full potential.

- **Depth of Knowledge (DOK)** approach – is how deeply students must think to answer a question or complete a task to apply what they are learning. It is not how difficult the work is, but the level of thinking required. Students move from recalling facts and basic skills to explaining their reasoning, applying concepts in new situations, and solving complex problems. By engaging in tasks at varying DOK levels, students develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and the ability to make meaningful connections between ideas.

- **In-House Professional Development** – Staff will continue to have access to ongoing professional development opportunities designed to deepen their understanding of Montessori philosophy, strengthen instructional practices, and cultivate a collaborative learning community. These learning experiences will support staff in staying current with best practices, enhancing collaboration with colleagues, and receiving targeted support to meet the needs of both educators and students.

- **Communication Plan** - During the upcoming school year, we will provide families with regular updates and important information to keep them informed, engaged, and connected to the school's goals, initiatives, and activities. Through consistent, intentional, and targeted communication, we aim to strengthen family engagement, support improved student outcomes, and foster stronger partnerships between the school and the broader community.

We will continue partnering with staff and families to strengthen our focus on school culture, diversity, and belonging. Our ongoing commitment to the school's mission and vision will further reflect and reinforce the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. As an extension of our Montessori Peace Education program, all staff and students will participate in community circles and monthly activities that celebrate culture and diversity while promoting social-emotional learning, fostering a welcoming and inclusive school community for all.

We believe that a strong home-school partnership is essential to student success. By working together, we can support students' social and emotional transition into the new school year. Recognizing that some students may experience anxiety during this time, we will continue to prioritize social-emotional learning and building a positive classroom and school community. Families are encouraged to stay informed and connected through our school website and communications via email, text, Facebook, and Seesaw.

As we begin a new school year, we look forward with excitement and purpose. Welcome back! **Together**, we will embrace the opportunities ahead, celebrate successes, overcome challenges, and continue building a thriving learning community where every student can succeed.

We are excited for the year ahead and value our partnership with you as we work together to make the 2026–2027 school year a positive, memorable, and successful experience for all.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions/concerns you may have.

Respectfully,

Principal
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