



September 2023

THEMES: Intro to School, All About Me, Bugs

IMPORTANT DATES

Labor Day - September 4th

First Day of School - Thursday September 7th

Defeat of Jesse James Days Float decorating - September 9th, 9-11am

Defeat of Jesse James Days Parade (walk/ride) - September 10th, 2:00pm

First FULL week of school - September 11-14

St. Olaf Prairie visit TBD (October)



Drop Off and Pick-Up

During September we ask that you bring your child over to the gate and have them wait on the bench so we can all go in together. We find that a quick drop-off is best, even when children are sad when their grown-ups leave.

Usually we are able to engage the children in playtime quickly which distracts and comforts them.



School Gear

We are planning to start our year with a fully outside program. Yay for fresh air and sunshine! Please have your child bring a full water bottle to school each day. This will come home with them in their bag or backpack. We can get some warm September days so water is important. If you would like your preschooler to wear sunscreen please apply that before coming to school. We suggest a larger backpack than the "preschool size", or you can send an additional reusable bag once the weather warrants snow pants...we send the snowpants home in the backpacks and it is hard to fit shoes/slippers and snowpants (and lunch boxes for Extended Day kids) in a tiny backpack. Some families like to send a change of clothes to be kept at school too, in case of a spill or accident. We have extra clothes on hand but some kids prefer to wear their own.



Parade Float Decorating

Your whole family is invited to help assemble the ODP parade float on Saturday September 9th from 9-11am at Ms. Heidi's house - 8821 100th St. East, Northfield. The work will be minimal - lifting some big wooden blocks onto the trailer, making handprint art to decorate the float and enjoying the late summer country setting! You can also meet the goats, chickens, and the giant turkey, Kevin!

DJJD Parade - Walking/Riding

If you love a parade you might like to ride or walk with the ODP parade float on Sunday September 10th from 1:00-3:00pm (parade at 2:00). If children want to ride the float they will need a parent/guardian to ride with them on the flatbed trailer for safety. Parents can walk without their kids, too! Some families have parked at Bridgewater Elementary School and walked across the athletic fields to the high school parking lot where the floats line up. The parade route is from Northfield High School to the Public Library and we do understand if that feels like too long a walk for your preschooler. We also love to have friendly faces to give a high five to along the parade route if that is more your style!

Quickbooks

If you have any trouble with Quickbooks please let the director know. So far it has been pretty smooth for most families but sometimes there are unexpected issues.



Preschool Screening

If you haven't already had your child in for Early Childhood Screening it's not too late! Minnesota requires all children to be screened before entering kindergarten and the earlier the better! It is a short session that includes a check of hearing & vision, height & weight, large and small muscle work, thinking, language and communication, as well as social & emotional development. There is no pass/fail - only the benefit of connecting families with area resources and programs. Please call 507-645-1200 or email screening@northfieldschools.org to schedule your child's screening. Each child gets a prize and Open Door gets a prize when all our students are screened! Woo hoo!

Substitutes

If you have friends or family members who might be open to volunteering as an ODP substitute please send me their name and contact info. They don't have to plan or facilitate anything, as the other ODP teacher will do that. This can be a great thing for grandparents or others with flexible schedules :) Reach out for more info. Thanks!



Dressing for Success

We would like to spend as much time as comfortably possible this fall and clothing is key to comfort. A good rain jacket, and rain boots can make a big difference in how much a child enjoys his/her time outside. If you are in need of these items and would like assistance acquiring them, please contact a teacher. In addition, rain pants and even rain mittens can be wonderful ways to extend the outdoor fun, especially in the later fall and in the spring. That said, if it is raining hard or the playground area is wet enough to cause problems for the students and staff, we will be inside.

NOTE: We encourage children to put on their own clothing. It helps us greatly if you encourage your child's self-dressing skills at home, including getting sleeves right-side out, putting on hats and shoes, and working with zippers and buttons.

FYI: <https://us.reima.com/> and <https://www.polarnopyretusa.com/> are resources for quality kids outdoor gear.



Birthdays at Open Door

At Open Door we celebrate birthdays with some fun traditions, including lifting the birthday child up in the 'teacher chair' as many times as the age they are turning. It is quite a thrill. Of course, no child has to participate if they are not comfortable with the lift. We also try to have a "special" but still healthy snack on birthdays. In addition, some families wish to purchase an item for the school, such as a book. Although there is no pressure whatsoever to do so, ODP has Wishlists at Content Bookstore downtown Northfield and also on Amazon.

Process Art



Your children are proud of their artwork. We hope you will keep in mind that at ODP, we do not concern ourselves with the finished product, but with the processes involved. We would like to remind you that sometimes a painting isn't anything and encourage you to focus on the colors used, how your child did it, and most of all, the fun of it? We are hopeful that by omitting value judgments and by accepting all artwork equally, parents can help children feel encouraged and excited about their own unique piece of art. A great way to have an open-ended reaction is, "Wow! Tell me about it!" Every child is an artist! 😊

“Play is the highest form of research.”

-Albert Einstein