

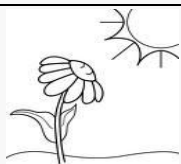


Academy for Children

A Montessori School

Child Care Center

AUGUST 2026 Newsletter



Dear Parents,

It is hard to believe that we are entering the last month of our summer program! Not only is it true, but it also signals that we must prepare for our fall programs and inform you of all pre-fall event dates! We are so excited to see all the new children and our returning children too!



AUGUST THEMES

Aug. 3 – Aug. 7	Campfire Medleys
Aug. 10 – Aug. 14	Pirates Ahoy!
Aug. 17 – Aug. 21	Child Care
Aug. 24– Aug. 28	Child Care

2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR INFORMATION

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27th



Back to school night will be on Thursday, August 27, from 6:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m. at the Academy. This night is designed for all returning parents to pick up the current school year forms, see their child's classroom and meet the teacher.



NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28th

New Student Orientation will be held on Friday, August 28th from 7:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m. Parents who are new to the Academy should call prior to Friday to set up a time to meet their child's teacher. This will also be a time for children to meet the Academy staff and see their classroom.

Fall Information

Tuition Full Time and/or Contractual Childcare Agreement

Please complete and return the enclosed contract agreement to the office as soon as possible. For those families that have signed up for a twelve-month full-time contract, your tuition agreement would have been sent out with your June statement. The first payment is due before August 10th. Subsequent monthly billings will be made starting September 1st. A late fee will be assessed after the 10th of each month.

2026-2027 Supply Lists

A list of supply items that your child will need to bring with them on or before the first school day is enclosed (You may bring these items on the Back to School Night or New Student Orientation Day).

2026-2027 Facility Calendar

Please refer to the calendar to be informed of and help plan for all upcoming events. All current families will receive the School Supply List and Calendar by email by August 1st. If you do not receive an email, please contact the Academy office to ensure you are on our current email listing.

**The Academy will be closed on Monday,
September 7th Happy Labor Day**



**1st Day of School is
Monday, August 31st**

Elementary Sleepover

The elementary students will once again have their annual sleepover at the Academy. The event will take place on August 7th from 8:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. All children who have been in our elementary program during the summer are eligible to attend. The cost of the event is \$55 per child or \$70 per family.

Food Prep Class

The preschool and elementary children have continued to have a hands-on food prep class during July. Some of the fun snacks that they have created were cake pops, cookies, ice cream, mini pies, fruit wands, edible paint pallets, and more! Each snack has gone with the summer theme for the week. The children have enjoyed preparing their own snack while learning some food prep safety techniques.

Elementary Field Trips

Please mark your calendar for the following events:

August 4 – Tea & Crepe 1:30-3:30pm

August 6 – Downtown Square

Group 1: 10:00-11:30am

Group 2: 12:30-2:00pm

August 11 – Rooftop Picnic at Black Building

12:30-1:30pm

August 12 – Fargo Theatre (Rent a Movie!)

12:30-3:30pm



Swimming

The Academy will conclude swimming lessons on Wednesday August 5th. The Preprimary 2 students will continue to do open swim until Wednesday, August 19th. The Elementary students will continue to do open swim until Friday, August 21st. Please be sure to continue bringing your child's suit each Monday. We want to thank the YMCA for allowing us to swim there this summer. The children greatly enjoyed it!

Classroom News

Elementary News – Ms. Shay

Our first July theme, “Andrés Valencia: Artist Like Me,” inspired our young artists to explore creativity and self-expression. We learned about color, style, and famous works of art while creating our own vibrant masterpieces, including colorful guitar-inspired artwork. Our class enjoyed reading “Maybe Something Beautiful” and “The Dot,” which encouraged us to believe in ourselves and celebrate our unique talents. We also visited the Plains Art Museum, where we observed real artwork, discussed different artistic styles, and found inspiration to bring back into our classroom. It was a wonderful week filled with imagination, confidence, and creativity!

Next, we stepped into the magical world of “A Midsummer Night’s Dream!” Enchantment filled our classroom through fairy tales, Shakespeare-inspired stories, and whimsical art projects like beaded sun catchers and origami stars. We visited the Fargo Theatre to enjoy a movie together and celebrated our annual summer carnival. Elementary had fun hosting their booths/games while making special memories with friends. We also prepared delicious fairy fruit wands during food prep, ending our whimsical week on a sweet note.

Our third theme, “Wacky Wonders,” was all about celebrating the silly, unusual, and wonderfully weird! In the classroom, elementary enjoyed fun, hands-on activities that encouraged creativity, laughter, and thinking outside the box. For food prep we created wacky faces with fruit and English muffins. This week reminded us that sometimes the silliest ideas can become the most memorable learning experiences!

We wrapped up the month by exploring a fascinating “Mushroom Forests” theme! Elementary learned about fungi, forest ecosystems, and the important role mushrooms play in nature. During our visits to Island Park, we searched for mushrooms, moss, and other forest plants while discussing how nature recycles through decomposition. Back in the classroom, we created mushroom bowls and posters. We also welcomed a presenter who shared fascinating mushroom knowledge. We ended the week with our talent show, where the children proudly shared their unique talents with classmates and families. Food prep was a yummy toadstool snack made with strawberries and bananas.

We had a few presenters visit our classroom this month. We learned how to play Tic Stack Toe and were gifted with a game of our own for the classroom, participated in a hands-on science experiment, and heard first-hand how treehouses are built. Thank you to Greg Tehven, Mary Alice Bergan, Dexter Jenson, Concordia Science, Pete Nelson, and everyone who came to share something with the children this month- they loved it!

Preprimary II News – Ms. Rachel

July has been such a fun and busy month! We started off with a short week and made some cool firework art for the Fourth of July.

Our first theme was “Andrés Valencia: Artist Like Me.” We learned that Andrés is a famous child artist, which inspired us to become artists too! We read books about painting, drawing, and other famous artists throughout history. One of our focuses was on learning what kind of art Andrés makes versus what other artists make. We also made rainbow arches, canvases, and rainbow cookie palettes. We had a great time using our creativity in unique ways this week!

Another theme we greatly enjoyed was “Wacky Wonders.” We had fun with all things science and silly this week! We read books like “Dragons Love Tacos,” “Don’t Trust Fish,” and “The Bear Ate Your Sandwich.” For art we made citrus stamping art and blow art monsters. Our teddy bear rice cakes for food prep were also wacky. Concordia Science came to school to do an experiment with the Pre-K children, and they had a blast!

Our “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” theme was paired with the Elementary class summer carnival, which is always so fun! The kids had a great time playing all the games and winning prizes, along with enjoying some yummy treats. Throughout the week we read the Shakespearean story and other whimsical tales. We also made masks and wisteria art! This week we had a special guest come in to teach us how to play Tic Stack Toe. Thank you to Greg Tehven and Mary Alice Bergan for coming in and for donating a game to our class- the kids love playing with each other!

We finished the month off with our “Mushroom Forests” theme, where we got to learn about all different kinds of mushrooms. The kids loved having Dexter Jenson come in to present about mushroom hunting! Pre-K also had two guest speakers, Pete Nelson and Nathan Clark, who talked about how to build tree houses and make marshmallows. Thank you to all the speakers this month!

Summer has been going by so fast! I can’t believe we’ve already made it to our last month. We’re looking forward to finishing the summer strong with lots more fun!

Preprimary I News – Ms. Ashley

July was filled with super fun themes and exciting events! The first theme was “Andrés Valencia: Artist Like Me.” We learned about this young artist/author and the styles he incorporates into his painting. We discovered that he is largely influenced by Pablo Picasso and Cubism. We read a lot of books about art and saw some paintings by other famous artists as well. Our art this week was oil pastels on canvas and watercolor painting, plus we did a little science experiment with magnets and metal balls that we used to paint on paper. For our food prep we made a sugar cookie art palette.

For our next theme, “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” we went to the Elementary Carnival! This is something that we look forward to every year. The kids get to play games, win prizes, eat some fun snacks, and hang out with the elementary kids! Ms. Shay and her class do such an amazing job with this, and we are very thankful that they enjoy putting in all the hard work so we can experience this activity! For art this week we made a fairy wand and a night sky scene. We focused on classic fairy tale books this week which the kids really enjoyed!

“Wacky Wonders” was next and this was so much fun! We got to learn about the scientific method and apply it to all the cool experiments we did. We did an art project using liquid watercolor and added a twist by letting the kids juice lemons over the paint. They got to see what happens when the citric acid from the lemons meets the liquid watercolor, changing the chemical structure of the color, causing it to change or disappear! This made for a beautifully unique painting. We learned what happens when oil and water meet, made a beautiful volcanic eruption using lemons and food coloring which made our room smell amazing! We even made a solar oven out of a box and tin foil which we used to make s’mores! Our food prep was a cucumber stacker. We made little sandwiches out of cucumbers, ham, cheese, and a delicious spread made of sour cream and ranch seasoning! We had class visitors come in to teach us how to play Tic Stack Toe this week, and they kindly donated a game for our classroom. Thank you to Greg Tehven and Mary Alice Bergan!

For the last theme, “Mushroom Forests,” we spent a lot of time learning about mushrooms and what makes them so special. We talked about some of the uses for them and got to look at many different kinds. Thank you to Dexter Jenson for coming in to talk about mushroom hunting with the children this week! We also did an experiment where we left a mushroom cap on a paper overnight to create a spore print! We also made a paper plate mushroom and did some mushroom stamping. For our food prep we made the image of a mushroom using pepperoni and string cheese on a piece of garlic bread!

Toddler II News – Mr. Tank

We started July off with the theme “Andrés Valencia: Artist Like Me.” We read some great books like “Harold and the Purple Crayon,” and “I Ain’t Gonna Paint No More!” For a special art project, we used sponge brushes to mix paint colors on a canvas. Everyone had a special abstract piece after this project! We also did a yoga activity where we identified parts of the body, and a dance activity to learn our colors. Each child pulled a color out of a basket. Once everyone looked at and identified the color, we all looked for something in our classroom that was the same color! We ended our activities this week by mixing different colors to see if they make other colors and what those are.

Our next theme was “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.” This week was full of wonder and magic as we explored

classical stories and embraced the make-believe. We attended the elementary carnival this week, and got to play games, get treats, and earn prizes at the booths. It is always so fun to attend this event- we love getting to hang out with the older children. We also made quite a few magical art projects and ate some whimsical snacks throughout this week.

“Wacky Wonders” was a big hit in our classroom. We did some sensory art involving putting paint in bags and using fly swatters to splatter it onto our paper. We practiced using scissors to cut out various items, like people and animals. Everyone gathered their items and we also practiced gluing them onto paper. Another fun project we did was making lemon juice art. We used watercolor and lemon juice to make vibrant art pieces and explore the scientific process of lemon juice “disappearing” on paper once it dries!

“Mushroom Forests” was our final theme of the month. We talked about how mushrooms are fungi but can also be called toadstools. They can grow without any light, and there are even mushrooms that glow! These are called ghost fungus. After reading and learning about mushrooms through books and lessons, we explored mushrooms in a hands-on way. We were very brave and tried many different types of mushrooms in different recipes, and most of us liked it. This week was a fun excuse to introduce new flavors to our palettes! We are excited for the last two themes of the summer coming up.

Toddler I News – Ms. Michell

We started July with our theme “Andrés Valencia: Artist Like Me.” Andrés is a fourteen-year-old contemporary artist, and his nickname is “Little Picasso” because he also does cubism. We read books like “Little Artist” and “Colors Everywhere” to go along with our theme. We also used watercolors, crayons, and colored pencils to make our own art. This was a very fun theme for us to get creative!

We then moved onto “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.” We learned this is a play written by William Shakespeare and talked about what a play or actor is. The story is about a wedding in Athens where they are led to the forest and tricked by fairies. We pretended to be fairies and tried to trick teachers and friends! We also made fairy crowns and had the chance to attend the elementary carnival! It was so much fun to play games and eat snacks with friends. Thank you to Ms. Shay and the elementary students for the fun morning and the flower decoration we put in our classroom!

“Wacky Wonders” was full of curiosity. We did a few experiments, such as griding up chalk and mixing it with water to make paint. We put drops of paint on a large sheet of paper and watched what happened when the colors would mix! Our favorite experiment was making dancing bubbles using Sprite, cooking oil, and Alka Seltzer. We put the ingredients in a glass, dropped the

Alka Seltzer in, and watched as the bubbles slowly danced up and down.

To end the month, the theme was “Mushroom Forests.” We learned some mushrooms are good for cooking and others are not. Mushrooms are part of a group called fungi and they like dark, wet places to grow. The most interesting thing we learned this week was that some mushrooms grow in the dark! Our wooden mushroom work was fun to stack, make “soup” with, and let our animal toys stand under. Summer is going too fast, but we are excited for our last two themes!

Infant News – Ms. Connie

This summer is flying by and the infant room has had a lot of fun! We started the month with the theme “Andrés Valencia: Artist Like Me.” Our class painted with many different tools, including aluminum foil, socks, and blocks. We also learned our colors by reading the books “Mix It Up,” “Beautiful Oops,” “Rainbow Feathers,” and more.

Our next theme was “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.” We of course read the play by William Shakespeare, as well as a few of his other stories. The class painted fairies, tulips, and fireflies to go along with the theme.

We did a science experiment for our third theme, “Wacky Wonders.” Everyone made finger paintings with a mix of paint and baking soda. Ms. Giahna put a few drops of vinegar on the paper and we watched it fizz! Once it dried, we were left with some super fun, textured paintings.

Our last theme was “Mushroom Forests.” We read about fungi and forests, made some art, and worked with some new mushroom themed works. The stories we read this week were colorful and we loved seeing how different each mushroom looks.

Water days have been going well. The infants love to play hard in the water, and this always leads to a great nap afterwards! We’ve been working on milestones and have been seeing lots more personalities shine this month, which is always very exciting. Even though summer is almost over, we are looking forward to a few more weeks of fun in the sun before school starts again.

Donations

Ashworth Family – Staff Treats

Nerby Family – Toys

Mangen Family – Bracelet Maker, Clothes, Books, and Toys

Smeby Family– Busy Book & School Supplies

Boreen Family – Children Clothing

Strand Family- Coloring Books

Thanks to all who donated to the Elementary carnival!

Thank you to Greg Tehven, Mary Alice Bergan, Concordia Science Program, Dexter Jenson, Pete Nelson, and Nathan Clark for coming in to share with the Elementary and Preprimary children!

2026-2027



Academy Lead Teachers

DeLynda Tappe is the Director and President of the Academy. DeLynda obtained her Montessori Toddler and Preprimary Certifications from the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, MN. She received her Elementary Montessori credentials from NAMC. DeLynda has been employed at the Academy for 38 years and is serving her 30th year as our School and Child Care Director. She has two sons, Justin and Josh.

Emma Hetland is the Assistant Director of the Academy. She completed her Preprimary Montessori degree through NAMC. This is her fifth year at the Academy, and her second as Assistant Director. She was the summer Elementary teacher and Child Care Supervisor in past years. She is currently studying English/Creative Writing at SNHU.

Ashley Usgaard is our Preprimary II teacher. She has been working at the Academy for eight years. She completed her Preprimary Montessori degree through NAMC. Aside from her Montessori credentials, she has two nursing degrees. She has four daughters and two grandchildren. She looks forward to seeing the returning students and meeting the new ones!

Shay Briggs is our Preprimary I teacher. She has been working at the Academy for six years. She completed her Preprimary Montessori degree through NAMC. She was the assistant teacher in the preprimary classroom in previous years and was the Elementary teacher this summer. She is ready for a great school year with the students and families!

Tank Clayton is our Toddler II teacher. He has worked at the Academy for six years, and has many years of child care experience across all age groups. He completed his Infant and Toddler Montessori degree through NAMC. He is eager to start another fun and creative school year with our toddlers!

Michell McGraw is our Toddler I teacher. She has a background of over 25 years working with children. She completed her Infant and Toddler Montessori degree through NAMC. This is her 10th year here at the Academy. She lives in Fargo with her daughter Emery. She is looking forward to starting the 2026 school year!

Connie Rieck is our Infant teacher. Connie spent 20 years of her career working with infants and toddlers within nationally accredited programs and has continued with the Academy for 13 additional years now. She completed her Infant and Toddler Montessori degree through NAMC.. She lives in Fargo with her husband, Charles.

Chrislynn Briggs is our Child Care Supervisor. She joined the Academy three years ago and is attending MSUM for Psychology. She has been the assistant teacher in the toddler classroom and assisted with the Preprimary students throughout the years. She is excited to begin planning our after-school activities and child care theme days!

Laura Karst is our Music teacher. Laura was a lead toddler teacher at the Academy years ago and is Montessori certified through NAMC. She holds a BA in English/Writing from MSUM, where she also studied theatre and music. She also teaches yoga and theatre classes throughout the year. She is passionate about helping children explore music and theatre.