



Academy for Children
A Montessori School and
Child Care Center

**JUNE 2026
NEWSLETTER**



Summer Registration

We appreciate all of you who have already registered your children in our summer programs. We currently do not have any openings for the summer. If you would like to be placed on our waiting list there are forms available in the office. We look forward to hearing from you. The summer program is a great opportunity for the children to take part in the wonderful activities our staff has planned. It is also a nice way to keep in touch with old friends and have the chance to make new ones. Thanks to all the families that are currently registered.

Swimming Lessons at the YMCA

If your child will be attending swimming lessons at the YMCA from 9:00am-9:30am and you would like for your child to walk with the Academy staff, please have your child dressed and ready to go if they are dropped off at 8:15am or later. If your child is at the Academy before 8:15am the Academy staff will help them get dressed. We will leave school at 8:35am. Please be sure to contact the Academy office at 701-261-8087 if you plan to meet the group at the Y for the lesson.



Summer Open Swim

During the summer of 2026, the Academy for Children will be taking children to the YMCA swimming pool in the afternoon for open swimming. The children need to be three as of December 31st, 2025. The children will be able to go to the pool once a week. Preprimary groups will go on Monday or Wednesday. Elementary children will go on Friday. We ask that you please bring your child's towel and suit on the day that your child will be swimming. Towels and suits will go home that day after swimming.

School Office Hours

Ms. DeLynda's office hours will be 9:30-11:00 but may vary due to the many events of the summer. If you wish to schedule an appointment with her, please call in advance. You are welcome to contact her directly by calling 701-261-8087 or e-mailing AFCMONT@att.net.

Center Closed
Friday, July 3rd



*The Academy will be closed
on July 3rd, please have a
safe holiday!*

*If you have changes to your child's
schedule for this childcare week, be
sure to let the office know.*

Sunscreen

We are asking parents to please apply sunscreen to their children's skin before they come to school each day. The Academy staff will reapply during the late morning and the afternoon hours, but to save time in the morning, we would like the children to arrive at school with sunscreen applied. If you happen to forget to apply sunscreen, please let the staff know so they can be sure your child has sunscreen on before going outside. The sunscreen should be SPF 30+ and provide broad spectrum UVA and UVB protection. Water resistant is best for children when playing outside or in water, while hypoallergenic/fragrance free is best for sensitive skin. *Reminder, we ask that **no spray** on lotion be sent.*

Summer Theme Schedule

June 1 – June 5	Backyard Critters
June 8 – June 12	Ancient Cities
June 15 – June 19	Works of Maurice Sendak
June 22 – June 26	The Great Academy Bake-Off
June 29 – July 3	Child Care, <u>Closed July 3rd</u>
July 6 – July 10	Andres Valencia
July 13 – July 17	A Midsummer Night's Dream
July 20 – July 24	Wacky Wonders
July 27 – July 31	Mushroom Forests
Aug. 3 – Aug. 7	Campfire Medleys
Aug. 10 – Aug. 14	Pirates Ahoy
Aug. 17 – Aug. 21	Child Care
Aug. 24 – Aug. 28	Child Care



All School Picnic

We had a great turnout for the end of year picnic on May 12th. It was fun to see so many families hanging out together. It is lovely to see the community we have created.

Pre-K Graduation

It was certainly a special graduation ceremony on May 20th. We had 15 students graduate from our preprimary group that day. We want to thank all the friends and family members who joined us!

Classroom News

Preprimary II – Ms. Ashley

What an amazing year! May was a busy time for us. The theme was “United States of America.” We sang songs and read books about our beautiful country. We learned about some of the important landmarks in the U.S.A by doing an objects-to-label work. We also did an art project where the kids’ water colored the state of North Dakota or Minnesota.

This month, we spent a lot of time learning about butterflies while we watched them grow in our room. We learned about the life cycle of a butterfly using models showing the stages as well as learning the parts of a butterfly using Nomenclature Cards. It is always so fun watching the caterpillars grow bigger overnight and eventually transition to a chrysalis. The kids then patiently wait for all the butterflies to hatch. We got to release them on Friday the 15th!

Thank you to Christy Tehven for coming into our classroom and teaching us about some beautiful flowers and talking to us a bit about how she does her job. She also left us some flowers so we could do our own lesson on flower arranging. Each child was able to select a few flowers and taught how to cut them to fit the vase and add the water. Our room was so beautiful!

We also had a few field trips. The zoo is always so much fun for both the kids and the teachers! The weather was perfect and the animals were all out to play so it was a great experience! Thank you to the families that came with and helped! The fire station was the next field trip we went on, and it was also a ton of fun! The kids were so enthralled by the presentation. At the end they got to experience what it looks like when the firefighters must drop what they are doing when they get an emergency call. The kids stood back and watched them get ready and leave the station in a matter of a few minutes!

The Pre-K kids got to have an ice cream party while they snuggled into their blankets and watched a video on the laptop. They had a great time! The next day they had their Preschool Graduation Ceremony out on the playground. Thank you to all the families that showed up! This is a huge event for us! The kids work so hard on learning the songs, rehearsing the ceremony, and making their posters. They were so excited to graduate!

One of the last things we did as a group was our trip to Island Park to have a picnic lunch. This is a fun event for the kids because we get to go to eat and play with Ms. Jade’s class. It was a great way to end the year! Thank you again to all the AFC families for everything you guys do for your children and the school! We as teachers appreciate you. Have an amazing summer!

Preprimary I - Ms. Jade

The theme for May was “United States.” In our classroom, when we review the continents on the globe, we review a

fact about each one to help us remember its name. The fact for North America is “where we live”. We discussed that there are more places than the United States in North America! The first United States lesson we completed focused on naming different U.S. landmarks and reviewing a fact about each. The landmarks included: the Capitol, Liberty Bell, Statue of Liberty, Lincoln Memorial, Hoover Dam, Gateway Arch, Bald Eagle, Mount Rushmore, the White House, Empire State Building and the Alamo. The children really loved learning the names and facts about these unique U.S. landmarks!

This month we had tons of fun with all of the special events that we had! Our first special activity focused on making Mother’s Day gifts, which the children had a great time creating. The next special project we did was baking mini chocolate chip muffins using the wheat that we ground for a practical life food prep activity. The children did a great job with the whole baking process, eating the tasty muffins at the end was the best part! We had an awesome time walking to the Island Park playground to play with our friends on a warm, sunny morning! It was so great to be outside and celebrate the warm weather! Our cold lunch picnic was a hit! Bringing a cold lunch from home and walking to Island Park with our friends to eat and play was just the best! Our first big field trip this month was the zoo! Riding the bus there was sure neat! While at the zoo the children had fun walking around and looking at the various exhibits with their peers. Thank you to the parents who volunteered on this trip! Our next field trip was to the fire station! We had a nice walk down to the station with our friends, teachers and parent volunteers. We had a great, informative tour of the station and the equipment there! There were so many cool things to see on this field trip! Thanks to the parents who volunteered on this trip!

The last week of school included Preschool Graduation, and some special end of the school year classroom activities. The graduating kids were so excited during the whole process! The graduates had tons of fun working on their grad posters, participating in graduation practice, decorating, singing and dressing up! The preschool graduation had such a great turnout, thank you to all who attended.

The school year sure flew by! We learned a lot, laughed a lot, and had so many enjoyable moments throughout the year! I will miss the students, the families, and the staff so very much! I have so enjoyed my time here at AFC! Wishing everyone a great summer vacation! Thank you for such a wonderful school year!

Toddler II- Mr. Tank

This month we enjoyed our “United States” theme. We started using our map rug and looking at North Dakota and Minnesota.

For art, we used cut up strips of paper and yellow paint to make prairie roses representing North Dakota’s state

flower. Next we used a large black paper and with white on our fingers created a common loon. While we were painting our pictures, we listened to some of the sounds a loon may make! Our next craft was palm trees. Using brown, green, and black construction paper, we glued them together to represent Florida. For the next project, we gathered toothpicks and string to make our own versions of San Francisco Bridge!

After finishing our art we were able to pick out a few books to read. We started with "Penguins Love Their ABC's," a super fun book about the alphabet and different words for each letter. Next was "Clark the Shark Dares to Share," a book showing how kind and fun it can be to share with your friends. Our next book was perfect due to the change of seasons! While reading "Little Sunflower" we watched the life cycle of sunflowers from seed to adult and then back to seed again. We finished off with "There's a Hole in my Bucket" which was a huge hit with the class!

The school year really flew by and we are so excited for a fun-packed summer!

Toddler I – Ms. Michell

How can it be the last month of school already?! We've learned and grown so much this year. We are looking forward to summer days and time spent at the lake!

This month we had caterpillars in our class as an extra theme to go along with our theme of "United States." We watched our caterpillars eat all of their food and grow big! The next step was to form their cocoon. We watched and waited and when they came out, they were butterflies! It was so fun to watch them fly away when we let them outside!

For the theme of "United States" we talked about how we have 50 states. We talked about how we live in North Dakota, but Ms. Michell is from the state of Michigan, which looks like a mitten. We learned that some places in the U.S. don't get snow and some other places get lots of rain. Lastly, we went over the flag and how it has red and white stripes with 50 stars.

We are looking forward to our summer themes. We are also super excited for our upcoming water days!

Thank you to all parents in my class. You do so much and we are so glad to have you as a part of the AFC family!

Infant – Ms. Connie & Ms. Eve

Our final school year theme was all about the United States! We had lots of fun looking at all of the international flags on our floor and walls that represent all of our different heritage!

We had fun patting, hugging, and feeding our soft play babies, helping us learn our gentle touches. To practice using our fine motor skills, we played with our little people and animals and worked on setting them right side

up! We even got to practice our ins and outs by placing them in our dump truck. Putting our problem-solving hats on, we got our shape sorter out and tried to fit all the shapes into the correct holes.

This last month has been much more active in our room as our friends are starting to crawl, walk, and even trying to run or walk backwards! Just in time for summer! We've also been busy making lots of art that showcase the United States. We made buffaloes, the Liberty Bell, the Statue of Liberty, the White House, and many more fun projects! The infants got to paint with balls that had varying patterns on them, and we even painted with socks on our hands!

There were so many fun books about the different cities in America! We learned about San Francisco, Chicago, New York City, Washington D.C., and of course, our own state, North Dakota. Some other fun books we enjoyed were "Wow! America!," "Whoever You Are," and "Duck for President!"

We are so excited for summer to kick into full gear this June with our fun weekly themes!



Child Care – Ms. Rachel

The last month of school has flown by! The children had a great last afternoon of childcare on May 1st after an early dismissal. We got to make cute strawberries with googly eyes and had some yummy strawberry snacks. During everyday afterschool time, we enjoyed playing with friends and our teachers, going outside or having dance parties.

We have a wonderful staff of childcare teachers, and I cannot say enough how much we appreciate having them on our team- their passion and care for our kids is amazing! Thank you to all the staff, children, and families for attending childcare days, participating in themes, and having lots of fun with us this year!

A Friendly Reminder

Please close the white playground gate behind you when entering or leaving the school. Thank You!



Congratulations to the Stanley family, Ballinger family, Tatum family, and Schlosser family on the arrival of their baby girls and boys!

Playground Clothing

The children will be spending a lot of time outside this summer. To make sure that they are appropriate and safe, we ask that children wear shorts under dresses. Also to make sure they have comfortable summer walking shoes.

BIKES

Please take note that it is best to lock your bikes up outside of the playground, so children don't climb on them during outside time. Please use the Academy sign in the parking lot or use the bike rack across the street.



Children's Extra Clothing Bin

Just a reminder to be on the lookout for a note stating what items your child needs for their bins. If your child has outgrown some of the clothing and you would like to donate the clothes to the Academy, it would be greatly appreciated.

Donating Old Swim Suits

It's always nice to have extra swimming gear on hand for children who may have forgotten their suits. If you would like to donate gently used swimsuits and/or swim trunks, it would be greatly appreciated!



Healthy Snacks

We at the Academy would like to help children eat healthier and be aware of a variety of healthy snacks. If you will be bringing snacks to share at the Academy, we ask that they do not include candy or gum. Also, please keep in mind those students who have nut allergies. We would like to follow our healthy snack rule.

Backpacks

We encourage all families to start bringing backpacks/reusable bags for their children. The backpack/reusable bag is more eco-friendly and reduces the number of plastic bags we send home in the evening with the children's works.

Hand Washing

We are asking all families to have their children wash their hands when they arrive, as well as before they leave the Academy daily. We are looking for ways to cut down on the number of germs entering our center, as well as trying to find ways to reduce the number of germs our families are getting exposed to. Thank you for your assistance in this effort.

Donations

Messerschmidt Family – car seat and playhouse
Sandven Family – art supplies
Young Family – clothing
Castor Family – clothing
Skalsky Family – clothing
Steele Family -staff treats
Leslie Family – diapers and staff treats
Hanson Family – art supplies and staff treats
Mangen family – clothing and toys

Academy Staff Summer 2026

DeLynda Tappe is the Director at the Academy. Her summer office hours are 9:30- 11:00, but she will be available during center hours. She is looking forward to a full and busy summer.

Emma Hetland is the Assistant Director at the Academy. She completed her Preprimary Montessori degree through NAMC and spent this last school year in Ms. Ashley's preschool classroom. She looks forward to working with the children, staff, and families for another exciting summer!

Shay Briggs is the Elementary Lead Teacher this summer. She completed her Preprimary Montessori degree through NAMC. In her free time, she enjoys reading and outdoors. She has worked at the Academy for almost six years and looks forward to another great summer.

Rachel Dawson is starting her third summer with us at the Academy. She will be the Lead Teacher in the Preschool 2 classroom this summer. She is looking forward to a fun summer with the preschool kids!

Ashley Usgaard has been working at the Academy for eight years. She will be the Lead Teacher in the Preprimary 1 summer classroom. She has four daughters, and she has worked with children since she was 17! She completed her Preprimary Montessori degree through NAMC.

Tank Clayton has worked at the Academy for a little under six years and is the Lead Teacher in the Toddler 2 classroom. He completed his Infant and Toddler Montessori Training through NAMC and has worked in childcare for eight years. He is excited to spend another great summer with the Toddler 2 children.

Michell McGraw is the Lead Teacher in Toddler 1 again this year. She has a background of over 25 years working with children and has been with AFC for 10 years. She completed her Montessori degree through NAMC. Michell lives in Fargo with her daughter Emery.

Connie Rieck is the Lead Teacher in our Infant class. Connie has worked with infants and toddlers for over 20 years within nationally accredited programs and has been with AFC for 12 years. She completed her Montessori Accreditation through NAMC. She lives in Fargo with her husband, Charles.

Abby Dunn will be joining us for her second summer. She will be the Assistant Teacher for the Elementary class and is looking forward to spending more time in the classroom!

Chrislynn Briggs will be the Assistant Teacher in the Preschool 2 class this summer. This will be the beginning of her third year here at the Academy. She is attending MSUM for Psychology. She has worked in the Toddler 2 classroom for two school years, and she can't wait for her third summer with us!

Cyntia Mponimpave started at the Academy this spring and has worked within all of our classrooms getting to know the children. She will be the Assistant Teacher in Preschool 1 classroom this summer.

Patty Denchfield will be the Assistant Teacher in the Toddler 1 classroom this summer. Patty has been working at the Academy for the past twenty-five years. She enjoys her time with the toddlers and looks forward to another year with them.

Giahna Eilers started with us this spring and will be the Assistant Teacher in the Infant classroom this summer. She is attending Concordia in the fall for Exercise Science and looks forward to a great summer!

Darla Nordlund will be working with all the children this year. Darla has been employed with the Academy for sixteen years. She looks forward to spending a great year with us.

Josh Tappe has worked at the Academy for many years, and floats within all of our classrooms. He will be working with all age groups this summer. He is looking forward to a great summer at AFC before returning to NYC in the fall to pursue theatre!

Paris Foots will be spending her third summer with us at the Academy. She will float between the classrooms. She looks forward to spending another summer with us.

Anna Lacher will be joining us for her fifth summer here at the Academy. Anna will be working part time floating within all the classrooms. She looks forward to working with all the different age groups.

Penelope Echola will be working with us again for her fourth summer. Penelope attended AFC as a student when she was younger! She is currently in high school, and she will be helping in all our classrooms this summer.

Elsie Becker will be joining us for her fourth summer here at the Academy. Elsie will be working part-time floating within all the classrooms. She looks forward to all the fun summer activities with the children.

Margaret Holston will be starting her second summer with us. She will be working part-time and assisting in our infant classroom. She is looking forward to another great summer.

Emma Christl started working with us two springs ago. She will be floating between the infant and toddler rooms primarily. She is excited about her third summer with us.

Lora Okke will be starting her second summer with us. She will be assisting part time within our preprimary classrooms.

Alec Vruno started at AFC this school year. He floated in all the classrooms this spring and will continue to do so this summer. Alec graduated MSUM this spring and will be heading to Chicago for grad school in July!

Amelia Briggs started working at AFC this school year and has loved working with our preschool children after school. She just finished her second year of school at NDSU to become a radiological technician!

Angela Stephania will be starting at the Academy this summer. She will be floating through all the classrooms and is ready to get to know all the children and families.

Elin Kelly is starting her first summer with us. Elin is an Academy alumnus! She will be working with all the age groups throughout the day.

Fare Well Ms. Jade & Ms. Eve

We would like to thank all the staff that worked through the 2025-2026 school year. We had one of our best years and that is because of you! We are sad to see two of our staff members (Ms. Jade and Ms. Eve) leaving us this year but wish them the best in their future adventures. Thanks for all the time and energy that you have given the Academy and the Academy families.

Water Days

Water Days for Infants and Toddlers will begin on Tuesday June 2nd. Preschool 1 children will have water days on Monday and Wednesday starting June 1st. Please be on the lookout for upcoming notes with more details. Don't forget to bring you suit, towels, water shoes and other water gear.