

Tyra Johnston's Class
Kindergarten
Room 251

Welcome to Kindergarten! I hope you enjoyed the summer, filled with fun, adventure and warm weather! I'm looking forward to an exciting year of learning and playing, exploring academic, artistic, and "active" interests, spending time in nature and in the larger community, and building a cohesive classroom community!

My family (Christopher, Astrid and I) live a block and half from school – I know, lucky us! – and I'm starting my 20th year of teaching at Ann Arbor Open – amazing! This summer, we took a trip to Eastern Canada and saw family in New York City. We're now scrambling to finish house projects and gardening. Astrid will be in the 6th grade at Ann Arbor Open. You and your child can call me "Tyra," as the teachers are generally known by their first names. As of right now, we do not have an aide in our classroom, and parent help is always welcome and appreciated! You'll learn more about me, and our classroom, during Curriculum Night on Thursday, Sept. 13th from 6-7:30pm.

Here are a few reminders that will make the transition to school easier:

I know this is a lot to take in - I just wanted to front-load the information so you can get a sense of things. I encourage you to go over any useful information with your child before school starts so they know what to expect! Many other questions (bus schedule, aftercare, paperwork, etc.) can be answered by the office.

Dates to Remember:

Meet the Teacher! Come visit the classroom (Room 251) on Wednesday August 29th between 4:30-6.

We'll have some toys and games out to explore, and you can ask questions.

The Beginning of the Year Picnic will be Thursday, September 6th from 6-7:30pm

Curriculum Night is scheduled for Thursday, September 13th, K-4th 6:00pm-7:30pm, 5th-8th 7-8:30pm.

Paperwork: All AAPS families must now register their returning students via InfoSnap (see information from the school), but on the first day of school we will still send home paper copies of the field trip contribution form, the free/reduced lunch application, etc.

******The school times are from: 8:14am-3:22pm ******
(Open gym and before school care in the auditorium are provided)

Please come in and introduce yourself on the first day or whenever you have time!

***For the first day especially, as well as the first week of school, **please tell me how your child gets home** (you could have a temporary schedule for the first week). Do this by filling out the clipboard in the classroom or emailing me the information before the first day of school: johnsto2@aaps.k12.mi.us

I use the outside door for the entrance year round.

We begin our morning meeting by 8:20 and I take attendance soon thereafter, so please have your child at school on time every day. It's very important for the children to feel they've been part of the day's routine from the start (I like to compare being late for school to the discomfort an adult might feel

walking into a meeting after it's started). If you come in after I've taken attendance you or your child will have to sign in at the office. If you are volunteering in the classroom, please sign in at the office and get a visitor's nametag.

Every child has a hook, a mailbox and a "red bin" for personal items. There is a Hand-In Bin for paperwork that's coming to the teacher (permission slips, homework, books to return). Lunches go in the shopping cart. Help your child put his or her belongings in the right place at the beginning of the day (if you are dropping off): hang up coats, place any items for me from their backpacks in the Hand-In Bin, put their lunch in the lunch cart, and have them come over to the meeting area. Our goal is for the children to become independent at the beginning of the day, and in packing up at the end – and they do! I will, of course, help them too!

All children should be picked up by 3:22. At the end of the day, if you pick up your child, please do so on time - some kids get very nervous when the bell rings and they haven't seen their parent, and I need to finish up my day or go a meeting! If you're running late, please call the office at 994-1910, and I'll drop your child off at the office after 5-10 minutes - thanks! (Emailing me during the day to tell me about a change of plans or any other information won't work!! I only check my email once a day or so, and I don't ever use a phone for email or texting at school! Thanks.)

Comfort items (stuffed animal, small blankie) are welcome – I encourage kids to get them out during recess but not during meetings (distracting) or at lunch (can get lost). If your child will feel better having one during the first days/weeks of school it's okay – let me know!

****If your child has any allergies (food, insects) or medical conditions, let me know verbally ASAP, as well as on his or her emergency contact form. We can discuss it further if necessary. ****

Snack: for the first two weeks, please send in only fruits or vegetables due to potential allergies.

I don't post a monthly schedule for snacks: instead, it has worked well in the past for each family to send in a snack for 20 small kids approximately once a month. Fresh fruit, vegetables, and cheese sticks are encouraged and can be refrigerated; crackers, pretzels, popcorn etc. store well in our cupboard. (Gummies and fruit snacks are fun but not very filling).

Label your child's belongings - clothes especially - now and in the future!! Please label your child's lunchbox on the outside with his or her name and my name/room 251 to guarantee an easy return if it gets misplaced. Clothes with names make it back to you - those with no name end up in the Lost and Found, then given away!! (I have learned this from personal experience!). I may write your child's name on the tag if, for example, we have three sets of black snowpants floating around the classroom!

If you would like, please send in an extra set of clothes for your child in case they need it. You can put them in a ziploc bag and I'll store it or they can keep it in the bottom of their backpack.

Generally, soon after the bell rings, the room won't be available for water fountain or bathroom breaks after school, and I'd like all classroom equipment (soccer balls, jump ropes) back in the room at the end of the day. (You can always ask if I have more flexibility on a certain day). Sorry for the inconvenience - I know it's nice to play after school, but I often have "stuff to do," - and thanks!

I send newsletters home approximately every week or every other week by paper and email (usually both). I also use e-mail lists for correspondence. Please send me a "hello" email now and I'll add you to

the list – if you have a preferred email (unlike the one for each parent/guardian you gave to the school) please let me know. You can e-mail me at johnsto2@aaps.k12.mi.us

I welcome parent volunteers into the classroom to lead book groups, go on field trips and volunteer for other activities. I'll be telling you more about when and what soon, during Curriculum Night!

Should you ever need to contact me, please feel free to do so via e-mail, on the phone at school (734-994-1910), or at home (734-277-6047).

Important: if, during the day, you need to tell me something (change of afterschool plans, early pick up, etc.) please call the school's front desk to talk to me or to get a message to me: I only can be guaranteed to check and respond to email after school. I also never use a phone for email or texting at school!
Thanks.

See you soon!

Tyra Johnston