

Administration

Greetings Silver Sands Sidewinders

Welcome to Silver Sands Montessori Charter School! We are delighted that you are a part of our community. From our kindergarteners to our eighth graders, SSMCS is committed to providing a positive environment for all children and their families. We can't wait to see all our returning families, new families, and incoming Kindergarteners on Monday, August 24th **virtually**.

Back to School time is always a time of excitement and change, yet with that comes anxiety and nervousness for many children. We recognize that this year there may be even more anxiousness than usual. We will do our best to ensure the transition to virtual learning be as seamless as possible and to ensure that each child feels loved, respected and safe. A Montessori learning environment is like no other ... our main objective at Silver Sands is to provide a carefully planned, stimulating virtual and school environment which will help children to develop within themselves the habits, attitudes, skills and ideas essential for a lifetime of creative thinking and learning. Respect and courtesy at SSMCS is the foundation for everything we do.

We are so excited that you have chosen Montessori education for your family. In today's crowded world of power struggles and ego trips, the Montessori Method serves as a guide to raising unselfish, self-regulated, caring human beings who are problem solvers and have the self-confidence to lead successful lives by their own efforts, rather than at the expense of their fellow citizens. The world needs as many people with these qualities as possible. The world needs Montessori.

Maria Montessori, founder of the Montessori school of thought, firmly believed that children have incredibly absorbent minds, assimilating all that they see, hear, and experience. By thoughtfully planning the classroom environment, either virtually or in person, in which children live and learn, the Montessori Method provides the positive experiences you as parents, and SSMCS want our children to have in order to grow up with healthy minds, healthy attitudes and healthy life strategies. By choosing Silver Sands Montessori, you think, as do we, that it's important for your child to...

Be vibrantly inquisitive about new things
Enjoy the process of learning
Acquire fine motor skills
Develop an analytical mind
Work independently
Work without disturbing others
Work well with others

Be able to focus his/her mind on the task at hand
Respect others
Respect his/her own mind and abilities
Feel purposeful and valuable
Derive satisfaction from achievements
Become an independent, confident adult

We strive to continue to provide a system of education that denotes itself to creating a safe, positive atmosphere in which children can learn, grow, achieve, succeed, and come to respect themselves and others whether it be online in our ZOOM or Google meet ups or in person.

We are so excited about this new school year and welcome your involvement. Please feel free to contact any of us by email or phone.

Sincerely,

Ms. Denise, Principal, ms.denise@silversandsmcs.org

Ms. Marlo, Head of School/Director of Finance, ms.marlo@silversandsmcs.org

Ms. Danette, Director of Operations, ms.danette@silversandsmcs.org

Ms. Kim Hodge, Director of Special Programs, ms.kim@silversandsmcs.org

Lower Elementary

Welcome Lower Elementary Families

Hello and welcome back! Thank you all **so much** for the support and participation from last year's school year and Distance Learning program. After the summer off, we're really excited to be working with you all as we begin this year virtually. We know how much Distance Learning requires flexibility and growth. *We're glad to be on this journey with you.*

Hello, Everyone! I'm Ms. Candace and this is my second year at SSMCS. I'm glad to be back with the Roadrunners and am excited to see all of the opportunities Distance Learning will provide for all of us. Though this is my second year in Henderson, I have taught learners of many different backgrounds in San Diego, California and Cincinnati, Ohio over the past fourteen years. I earned an M.Ed. in Montessori Education from Xavier University and have Montessori training for Elementary I (6-9 year olds). While my favorite hobby is on hold right now (traveling), I spend a lot of my free time painting, taking pictures, reading and FaceTiming with my five nieces and nephews. I look forward to seeing you all very soon and can't wait to see what the future holds for us!

Greetings from Ms. Amy's class, home of the Coyotes. Welcome "back" friends. I am thrilled to be returning to Silver Sands for the second year in Lower El. You may recall I have worked at SSMCS previously and taught kindergarten. I've been teaching for a total of six years in K-3 and I am a certified Montessori teacher (ages 3-6 & 6-9). I also have a Bachelor of Arts degree from Arizona State University (go Sun Devils!). I've lived in Henderson for 25 years with my husband, Jerry. My only child, Louis, is studying psychology at the University of Nevada, Reno. My nest will soon be empty once again!

Hi, welcome Mountain Bluebirds and families! My name is Kiruba but I go by Ms. K. I have a bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Master's in computer applications. This is my 8th year at Silver Sands and I have been a STEM teacher. Science and math were my subjects. I have worked with kids from different grades - from Kindergarten to Middle school. Last year, I had a great opportunity to work with Bluebirds and it is my pleasure to continue with the same amazing class. I understand that this academic year will be challenging for students, teachers, and parents. But we have a great plan in place with respect to virtual learning. I look forward to seeing you all and I am excited for this academic year.

Hello everyone and welcome back Pumas! My name is Ms. Kristen and this is my second year at SSMCS. I am a certified Montessori teacher (ages 6-9). I have been an elementary teacher for 16 years. I have a bachelor's degree in Chemistry for University of Hawaii at Hilo. I have lived in Las Vegas for the past 18 years with my husband Bob. He teaches at SECTA. He is teaching Chemistry this year. I love to bake, crochet, and read during my free time. I look forward to "seeing" you all soon.

Below is information about some new additions to our program this year. More information will be provided during the virtual Meet and Greet on Thursday, August 20.

We will use a learning management system called Seesaw to communicate with each other, as well as submit student work. Please keep an eye on your email for an invitation to Seesaw from your child's teacher, and watch the video linked below.

Check out this link for a brief tutorial on Seesaw: <https://web.seesaw.me/parents>

In addition to the Montessori works and instructional packets, there are few more supplemental tools your child will use to learn. For MATH, we'll use Khan Academy. For READING, we'll use Raz-Kids. Your child will receive a special log-in and password to access both of these digital platforms.

We will be hosting two Virtual Meet & Greets on Thursday, August 20, 2020:

Coyotes (Ms. Amy) and Roadrunners (Ms. Candace) - 1:00 - 2:00 pm

Pumas (Ms. Kristen) and Mountain Bluebirds (Ms. K) - 2:00 - 3:00 pm

Zoom invitations will be provided by each teacher and will be posted to Seesaw.

Should you have any technical questions (Seesaw, Zoom, etc.), please join your child's teacher's Zoom meeting on Friday, August 21. Meeting times will be the same as listed above. An invitation for this event will be posted to Seesaw, as well.

We look forward to "seeing" you soon. It's going to be a great year!

Ms. Amy, Lower Elementary Lead

Ms. Kristen, Lower Elementary Lead

Ms. Kiruba, Lower Elementary Lead

Ms. Candace, Lower Elementary Lead

Ms. Diane, Support Teacher (Coyotes & Pumas)

Ms. Faith, Support Teacher (Roadrunners & Mountain Bluebirds)

SSMCS Distance Learning FAQs 2020-2021: Lower Elementary

- 1. Will there be an Open House?** Yes, Open House will be a Virtual Meet and Greet this year. It will be on Thursday, August 20. Parents will be invited to a Zoom meeting.
Coyotes and Roadrunners - 1:00 - 2:00 pm Pumas and Mountain Bluebirds - 2:00 - 3:00 pm
- 2. What to expect on the first day?** A lot of fun! We will start to get to know each other in video chats that will also inform you of our virtual classroom expectations - basically, we'll meet our new friends and learn about what it means to be in Lower EI!!
- 3. What will the school-day look like?** Teachers will provide instruction on core concepts; either by lessons uploaded onto Seesaw or live, via a scheduled Zoom Meeting. On Wednesdays, teachers and students will engage in a "Social Time" to meet their social-emotional needs. Instruction will occur in both small and large groups. Children are expected to attend Zoom Meetings scheduled for them. Our school day will run from 8:00 am - 2:30 pm
- 4. Will the teachers hold office hours?** Yes, the lower elementary teachers will hold the same office hours, from 8:00 – 8:30 AM M-F. If you are unable to meet during these times, please feel free to email your teacher with any questions or concerns.
- 5. Will there be packets and what will be in them?** Instructional packets will be picked up and dropped off each week. It may include paper-based practice for: Montessori Materials to be made in the home, Mathematics, Reading, Language Arts, and Handwriting.
- 6. Will students still work through programs like Math-U-See at their own pace?** Yes, Math, Reading, and Spelling will be assessed to form small groups. We will do these a little differently as we'll be online. Please expect to receive a Math-U-See assessment, for example, prior to beginning school. Reading and spelling assessments will happen online in a whole group. We will work to our best efforts to maintain this important academic feature.
- 7. Will there be a day to pick up and drop off packets?** Yes, Lower EI students will pick up new packets and drop off prior week's work on Wednesday. Times to be determined shortly.
- 8. What if I can't be there to pick up or drop off on the day assigned to LE?** Please discuss your needs with your child's classroom teacher.
- 9. Will there be a supply list?** Yes, a list of items pertinent to home and our classroom were emailed out to families via Infinite Campus and will also be posted on the website. Please plan to drop off the two supplies requested for the classroom (two folders and binder) when you pick up your child's packet on Wednesday, August 26.
- 10. Will there be all of the specials?** Physical Education, Gardening, and Spanish will be taught by our Classroom Support Teachers, Ms. Diane and Ms. Faith. Music will be taught by Ms. Alessandra and Art will be taught by Ms. Rebecca.

- 11. How will Library work?** Teachers will send home a book list. Students will choose a book for the week. Students will only be allowed to choose new books if the previous book is returned.
- 12. Will there be homework?** Lower Elementary teachers request that children read independently at least 20 minutes each day.
- 13. Will the classrooms have support teachers?** One special facet to our distance learning program is the fact that we not only continue to have a support teacher, but two classes will have the same support! This will give great continuity to our department and offer essential collaboration opportunities among us, to provide an optimal educational experience for your student. Ms. Faith will be the support teacher for Ms. Candace and Ms. Kiruba (Ms. K) and Ms. Diane will be the support teacher for Ms. Amy and Ms. Kristen.
- 14. What are the email addresses of the upper elementary teachers?**
Pumas - ms.kristen@silversandsmcs.org ms.diane@silversandsmcs.org
Coyotes - ms.amy@silversandsmcs.org ms.diane@silversandsmcs.org
Roadrunners - ms.candace@silversandsmcs.org ms.faith@silversands.org
Mountain Bluebirds - ms.kiruba@silverdandsmcs.org ms.faith@silversands.org
- 15. How will attendance be taken?** Attendance will be taken directly in Infinite Campus and parents; you will have the ability to check your student in. You can do this by logging into Infinite Campus and clicking a simple box. If this sounds stressful (as yet one more thing to do in an already busy day) please don't worry -- teachers will have their usual capability of taking attendance in Infinite Campus. We will use student participation in zooms to justify the "present". More information will be provided to you shortly. If you have any concerns, please contact us through email.
- 16. How will parents communicate with the teacher? With the students?** Communication between home and school can increase your child's interest and achievement in learning. The lower el team will work closely with one another to ensure that all of our students feel safe and are given the optimal environment in which to succeed. If you have questions and/or concerns as the year gets underway, please contact any one of us. The most efficient way to reach us is via email. We will try to respond within 24 hours. Our schedule has office hours to meet with parents and/or students at the beginning of the school day via Zoom. Forms with the opportunity to update your correct email addresses and phone numbers will be coming home to you soon (before the school year starts). If you share custody of a student, please help us by ensuring your most recent contact information and that both custodial parents are listed on that form. Thank you!
- 17. If my child cannot attend a scheduled Zoom meeting, what can we do?** A recording of lessons will be posted to Seesaw. Students should watch the recording and complete any work on their own time.
- 18. How long might an assignment take for my child to complete?** An estimate of minutes that students should be spending on each activity may be given to help students and parents gauge their experience.
- 19. How will we know what to do each week?** We'll use a suggested daily schedule for students in a "Week at a Glance Schedule" that will be posted on Seesaw.

Elementary Specials

Music and Art

We are excited to start another school year with you. Even though things will be different this year we look forward to catching up with all of our students and getting to know the new ones. Going into this school year, music and art classes are being taught virtually, just as if we were in the building.

We know the arts offer students many opportunities for self-expression, creative problem solving, and an outlet during stressful times. As we are making plans for this school year, these things are at the forefront of our minds. Our planned lessons reflect this and we can't wait to see what our students create.

Sincerely,

Ms. Alessandra and Ms. Rebecca



Ms. Alessandra teaches music. This is her 4th year teaching at Silver Sands. She received a Bachelor of Music Education with an emphasis in Spanish from the University of Northern Colorado. When not playing the piano or oboe, she enjoys reading, traveling (though not this year), and spending time with her husband and little daughter.

Ms. Rebecca teaches visual art. She has been with Silver Sands as a teacher for the past three years and part of the SSMCS family since 2015. She earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from UNLV with her area of study in Landscape Architecture. Ms. Rebecca enjoys painting, crafting, and camping with her husband and daughters.

