

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

Kindergarten

Welcome Jackrabbit and Desert Tortoise Families

Ms. Alyssa-Support teacher

This will be my second year here at SSMCS with the wonderful kindergarten family. I was an elementary school librarian for 3 years in Northern California before moving here to Las Vegas. Can't wait to meet all of you!

Ms. Katie-Lead teacher

I began my teaching career in 2007 and joined the SSMCS family in 2018. I look forward to a wonderful year in kindergarten.

Ms. Stephanie-Lead teacher

I joined the SSMCS family in 2016 and have been teaching for over 20 years. I am presently the lead educator in the Desert Tortoise classroom and am looking forward to an exciting and growth filled school year.

We are thrilled to have the opportunity to welcome you to the Silver Sands Montessori Charter School family. Below we have provided some general information to begin guiding you through the 2020-2021 school year.

We will be utilizing Seesaw as our main platform for communication with all families. You will receive an invitation to join your scholar's classroom. Each student should join Seesaw by Friday, August 21, 2020. Please follow this link for a brief tutorial about this wonderful service; [See Saw Tutorial](#). Once you receive your log-in information, please be sure and check out Seesaw for your class specific pre-recorded "Videos for Classroom Success".

In addition, we have a few other digital platforms in which your scholar will be participating. We will utilize Khan Academy for mathematics supplemental materials and Reading A-Z will be used for supplemental reading materials. Each scholar will receive a special log-in and password to access both of these digital platforms. Our final platform that we will be using later in the academic year will be Read Works. To ensure safety, this too will have student specific log-in information. Please follow the links for brief tutorials about each program; remember, you will receive personalized log-in information from your classroom educator. [Reading A-Z Tutorial](#) [Khan Academy Overview](#) [Read Works Tutorial](#)

We will be hosting a Virtual Meet & Greet Open House on Thursday, August 20, 2020 from 12 noon-1:00pm. Zoom links will be provided by each classroom educator. On Friday, August 21, 2020 from 12 noon-1:00pm, we will host a technology information session for both classes. Please plan on attending both sessions to have your questions answered.

With Great Excitement,

Ms. Katie, ms.katie@silversandsmcs.org, Jackrabbits Lead

Ms. Stephanie, ms.stephanie@silversandsmcs.org, Desert Tortoise Lead

Ms. Alyssa, ms.alyssa@silversandsmcs.org, Support, Jackrabbits/Desert Tortoise

SSMCS Distance Learning FAQs 2020-2021: Kindergarten

1. **Will there be an Open House Night?** Our Meet and Greet Open house will be held on Thursday, August 20, 2020 from 12:00 noon - 1:00pm. There will be several brief recorded informational sessions on See Saw to aide in your understanding of our classroom procedures and expectations. Our kindergarten team will also be hosting individual family meetings at a later date.
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 Kindergarten
3. **What will the school-day look like?**
 - Daily Scheduled Morning and Afternoon Office Hours (parent communication)
 - Daily Scheduled Live Whole Group, Small Group, One-to-One instruction will take place several times a day
 - Daily Scheduled Recommended snack break, Brain Break
 - Daily Scheduled Live Lunch (social time for the class)
 - Daily Scheduled Recommended Outside Playtime and Rest Period
 - Daily Scheduled Afternoon Specials
 - Daily Scheduled Independent Work Cycle (work packet, Raz-Kids, or Khan Academy)
4. **Will the teachers hold office hours?** Yes, Kindergarten 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? Where do I get the materials to complete classwork?** Weekly packets will consist of letter formation and sound practice, numeral formation and identification, shape recognition, cutting practice, pattern development, as well as beginning reading skill development.

We are providing you with a basic starter kit of supplies but you may need to purchase additional supplies such as crayons, pencils, glue sticks, etc. as needed. We have also provided you with a bag of 45 items for use in mathematics. We will send materials home to use with the lessons presented however, there are some supplies such as bowls, plates, etc. that you may need access to from home.
6. **Will there be a day to pick up and drop off?** Weekly packets will be provided on Wednesday's with the expectation that materials are returned the following week for grading and a new packet for the upcoming week provided.
7. **What if I can't be there to pick up or drop off on the day assigned to kindergarten?** If you are unable to pick up your packet on Wednesday, alternate arrangements can be made on a case by case basis with the individual teacher.
8. **Will there be a supply list?** Yes, a list of items pertinent to home and our classroom work will be delivered to families in time for the first day and these are to be kept at home.
9. **Will there be all of the specials?** Weekly Specials-Outdoor Classroom-Gardening, PE, & Spanish (lessons will be live and recorded with Ms. Alyssa) Ms. Rebecca will be doing art and Ms. Alessandra will be doing music once a week as well, with lessons either live or recorded.
10. **How will Library work?** While we will not be physically checking out library books, we invite you to visit Ms. Erin at the Whitney Ranch Library where you will be able to check out books. You will also have access to many digital resources for pleasure reading through Raz-Kids, Storyline, recorded read-alouds, etc. Our plan to encourage reading and build your home library includes sending paper copies of books home.
11. **Will there be homework?** Yes, homework is an important part of establishing a routine for our littlest learners. Kindergarteners should be reading or be read to each night. Please record this reading on the provided reading log. This will be turned in at the end of each month. In addition, we may have special family projects in which your scholar will get to present to their classmates.

- 12. 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. Aylssa will be the support teacher for kindergarten.
- 13. What are the email addresses of the kindergarten teachers?** We are looking forward to a wonderful school year. We will have office hours daily from 8:00-8:30 morning and each afternoon as needed. We ask you to please copy Ms. Alyssa on all correspondence with both Ms. Katie and Ms. Stephanie. Please understand that we ask for your patience when responding; while we try and respond quickly, we do allow ourselves a grace period of 24 hours. Our email addresses are as follows:
ms.katie@silversandsmcs.org Lead Teacher, Jackrabbit Classroom
ms.stephanie@silversandsmcs.org Lead Teacher, Desert Tortoise Classroom
ms.alyssa@silversandsmcs.org Support Teacher, Jackrabbit/Desert Tortoise
- 14. 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. All families are expected to check in with their scholars Lead Educator to verify work being completed. This is done through attending live whole group, small group, or one-to-one sessions. If you are unable to attend live sessions, verification of work completed and participation in lessons presented/recorded will consist of families submitting a brief synopsis and photo of work completed.
- 15. 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 kindergarten 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 we have your most recent contact information and that both custodial parents are listed on that form. Thank you!
- 16. If my child cannot attend a scheduled Zoom meeting, what can we do?** Your child will be expected to participate in live lessons as much as possible. Participation will help to ensure a good learning foundation is created as well as help to establish a consistent routine for learning. This will be particularly important for small group instruction. Families, please note that the expectation is for your scholar to work as independently as possible. This means that you will need to encourage their academic development from a distance to allow them sufficient time for practice and reflection.
- A recording of lessons will be posted to Seesaw. In the event that the lesson has an extended time, a link will be provided for safe and easy access. Students should watch the recording and complete any work on their own time.
- 17. 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. However, because we are not a one size fits all program, please provide your scholar with the grace and courtesy to complete work at their own pace with multiple opportunities for practice.
- 18. 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.
- 19. What will we be learning at the beginning of the year?**
- Practical Life activities (scooping, pouring, pincer, folding, sweeping)
 - Sensorial Activities (cutting, textures, smelling jars)
 - Mathematics Activities (daily calendar, shapes, counting, worksheets-number identification, ten-frames, etc.)
 - Reading/ELA (letter tracing, ABC Bootcamp, letter sound practice, read-alouds (recorded and live), circle maps, etc.)
 - Writing (name practice, nursery rhymes, subject area journal entries/pictures, etc.)

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.

