



**Independent School
District 625**
360 Colborne Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102-
3299

Mississippi Creative Arts School
1575 L'Orient St.
Saint Paul, MN 55117

Phone: (651) 293-8840 | Fax: (651) 293-8843 | spps.org/mcas

Dear Mississippi Creative Arts families:

Welcome to the 2021-22 school year! All of us at Mississippi Creative Arts School look forward to seeing students in **grades 1-5 on Thursday, September 9** and **Pre-K and Kindergarten students on Monday, September 13.**

The first day of school can be overwhelming for students. Here are a few things to know so you and your child can prepare for the upcoming school year.

COVID-19 Student and Family Guidelines

Families should familiarize themselves with [these guidelines](#) @ spps.org, which are updated regularly and cover prevention strategies, health screening and monitoring, exclusion guidance and the SPPS COVID-19 Reporting System.

Parent/Guardian Access to the Building.

In order to maintain a safe environment for students and staff, parents will not have access to enter the building during the school day. If you need to pick your child up early please notify us at least an hour in advance by calling the main office at 651-293-8840. If you need to schedule a meeting with your child's teacher or other staff members on site please give us a call to schedule an appointment time.

Health Screening Guidelines and Expectations

Families should conduct a [health screening for COVID-19 symptoms](#) every morning before sending their student to school or the bus stop. School staff will also monitor for symptoms throughout the school day. If your child is exhibiting any symptoms, do not send them to school. Please report the absence and submit a report to the COVID-19 Reporting System as soon as possible.

Face Coverings

SPPS will require face masks for all teachers, staff, students and visitors (ages 2 and older) in all SPPS buildings, regardless of a person's vaccine status, unless they have a qualifying exemption. This will include indoor physical education classes and during meal times when not eating or

drinking. Masks are also required on school buses. In general, people do not need to wear masks outdoors (e.g. recess).

Students are strongly encouraged to bring their own clean, well-fitting masks to school each day, including extras. Disposable masks are available at all schools and on buses for students who forget theirs.

Find more information on COVID-19 guidelines for the 2021-22 school year, including social distancing, quarantine protocols, field trips, athletics and more, at spps.org/safelearningplan.

Open House

Please join us for our Open House on Thursday, September 2 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Open House will be held outside this school year to allow for families to safely meet with staff. Tours will be available for families of new students to see their classrooms and drop off materials as needed.

School Hours

School begins at 9:30 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m.

School Bus Transportation

Students will receive a postcard in the mail with bus information at the end of August. The postcard lists details about where and when to meet the bus. Please arrive at the bus stop **five minutes before** the bus is scheduled to pick up your child. Be sure to track the status of your child's bus on our school's website. MCAS students will have assigned seats.

If you believe your student is taking the bus but did not receive a postcard, please call our lead clerk, Ms. Ghnia Yang at 651-293-8840 **as soon as possible**.

School Drop-off and Pick-up

Drop off

- Staff will be assigned to monitor drop-off to ensure students wear a mask, maintain social distance, and enter buildings directly.
- Staff will help adults stagger drop-off to limit the number of students entering the building at one time.
- MCAS Drop-off will take place at the cafeteria doors. Students in grades Pre-K, 1, 2 will enter the building through the recess doors. Students in grades K,3,4,5 will enter through the main doors.

Parent Pick-up

- Parents will be provided with a map to where to line up and a number assigned to their family. Student pick-up will take place at the cafeteria doors. Parents will line up in their cars and will wait in their car as their child is called
- Staff will meet the cars, read the family number and use the radio to call for students to come outside. Staff inside will let students know it is their turn to leave. Students will be given the family number to be displayed on their backpacks.
- members (inside and outside roles) to supervise student pick-up
 - Staff inside will support students maintaining social distancing

Walking to School

Elementary school students (PreK-5) who live less than a half-mile from school should walk from home where the school patrols are stationed.

School patrols are assisted by school staff and will be on duty before and after school.

Breakfast and Lunch

All students receive a free breakfast at school, served daily from 9:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. through the Breakfast to Go program. As students arrive at school, they can grab their breakfast and eat in class. Hot and cold breakfast options are available.

For the 2021-2022 school year, breakfast and lunch will be free for all students. Students who bring lunch from home can also get a meal from the cafeteria. Students must pick 3 items (such as a fruit, vegetable and milk) to count as a free lunch. Students can still purchase milk separately for \$0.50.

All families are strongly encouraged to complete an Application for Educational benefits. These applications determine how much educational funding our school receives, and there are many other benefits for families who qualify for free or reduced eligibility. The application can be completed online at schoolcafe.com/spps. Paper applications are available at school.

Immunizations

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many children missed the opportunity to have their regular well child exams and immunizations. Please check in with your health care provider to make sure your child's immunizations are up to date before school starts in the fall. Visit spps.org/immunizations or call our school nurse for more information.

After-School Programs

Extended Day Learning will be available to families that are interested in signing up. Sessions are held for 1 ³/₄ hours (105 minutes) after the regular school day, two afternoons per week. Students participate in both academic reading and math and applied academics (enrichment) activities during each program session. Details regarding start dates will be communicated after the school year begins.

Contact Information

Please check our school website regularly, <https://www.spps.org/mcas>, for information and updates. If you have questions the website doesn't answer, please call our lead clerk, Ms. Ghnia Yang at 651-293-8840

Attached to this letter you'll find the following important documents:

- MCAS 2021-22 Supply List
- 2021-22 School Family Calendar
- Parents' Right to Know

I'm looking forward to welcoming you and your child to a new school year **Thursday, September 9, for grades 1-5, and on Monday, September 13, for Pre-K and Kindergarten.** I am looking forward to a great school year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lydia Kabaka
Principal
Mississippi Creative Arts Elementary School