

Dear Parkside Montessori Families,

Hello and welcome to the 2019-2020 school year! My name is Nima Tahai and I am your new Parkside Montessori principal. I am excited to kick off the new school year with you on Tuesday, August 13th.

In this welcome letter, you will learn some fun facts about me as your new principal, some exciting information about our school, and answers to your first day frequently asked questions...

Four fun facts about your new principal

1. I grew up in San Mateo and attended this district from Kindergarten through 8th grade
2. I was a principal for six years in Oakland, and I loved it!
3. I live a mile from the school :)
4. I hope to one day send my own two children to Parkside (Mazi is 2 ½ and Seti is 1)

What we should all be excited about

Parkside is the fastest-growing public Montessori school in the Bay Area. Three years ago our entire Parkside campus set a vision to become a Montessori school, and with a growing number of trained teachers and our largest incoming class - that vision is becoming a reality!

- We have **the best PTA in the school district!** From community building and fundraising to strategic planning, the PTA helps make sure all adults feel welcome and all students are cared for - our parent and family community has been the backbone of this school.

Please [Register](#) on the **Parkside PTA website** so you can receive weekly school emails, and have access to important information throughout the school year. Check out [this link](#) for a list of upcoming events.

- We have **the most dedicated teachers in the Bay Area!** With a wonderful mix of veteran Montessorians, traditional teachers earning their Montessori certificates and new teachers eager to learn and provide the best education for all students.
- Our students are **experiencing Montessori education** that will put them on a trajectory to be lifelong learners, approach problem solving with curiosity, and find deep intrinsic rewards in their dedication to expanding knowledge.

In short, Parkside Montessori has got it going on! :)

Ok - so let's get down to the nuts and bolts of starting the school year...

TK/Kinder Orientation

Parkside will host an orientation for incoming and returning TK and all Kinder families on Monday, August 12th from 1:30-3pm in our LGI (multi-purpose building across from our office). Come to meet your child's teachers and get a practice run before the first day of school. *This orientation is for the incoming TK or Kinder child and parent only.*

Class Lists

There is no orientation for 1st-5th grade families. Students and Families in 1st-5th grade will find class lists posted the day before school, August 12th, at 5 pm outside the school office.

School Start Time and Dismissal

The first bell rings at 8:15 am, and school starts at 8:20 am. Please plan to arrive before the first bell.

First Week Schedule

Parkside will be on our regular bell schedule during the first week of school. At Parkside every Wednesday is an early dismissal minimum day, and all other days (unless specified) will follow the bell schedule below:

Grade	Start Time	Dismissal on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays	Minimum Day Dismissal on Wednesdays
TK/K	8:20a	12:20p	12:20p
1st-3rd	8:20a	2:50p	12:25p
4th-5th	8:20a	3:00p	12:25p

Back to School Night

Back to School Night is an essential time for families to meet with your child's teacher. Parkside holds this event during the first week of school, on Wednesday, August 14th, from 6-7:30p. We will kick off in the multi-purpose room called the LGI, and then head out to visit classrooms and meet your child's teacher. Please note that this is an adult-only event.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

When you arrive on the first day, please make your way to the upper playground. You can expect to meet your teacher there by 8:15 am.

At the TK/Kinder pick up time, parents may wait in a line along with the gate to the right of the hallway outside Rooms 1 & 2, or pick up their child from the Drive Through line.

At the 1st - 5th grade pick up time, parents may wait outside the office area or LGI gate for their child or pick up their child from the Drive Through Line.

How does the Drive Through Line Work

When entering the Drive Through Line at drop off or pick up, pull as far forward as possible before stopping for your child to get out. Please make sure that your child is in the passenger side back seat for easy exit.

Parents must remain in their cars in the Drive Through Line, and children need to exit the car on their own at drop off and enter the car on their own at pick up. If your child is not able to enter and/or exit the vehicle on their own, please don't use the Drive Through Line. Because our school is growing, we thank you in advance for your patience.

Please note that parents MAY NOT park in the school parking lots.

New to Parkside or to the Drive Through Line? [Please review this map before the first day of school.](#)

Rainy Days

On a rainy morning, all children proceed directly to their classroom when they arrive at school after 8:00 am.

Playgrounds before and after school

The playground opens at 8:00 am each morning with supervision. All children will proceed to their class line or area once the 8:15 am bell rings.

The playgrounds are not available to be used by students after dismissal.

Our Marvelous Montessori Grade Level Teaching Staff

This year Parkside is welcoming four new teachers to our community. Becky Castiglia in K/1, Jennifer Martinelli in K/1, Shilah Garrigan in 4/5 and Natalie Tilley in 4/5. They join our amazing returning staff including Kristin LaBerge in TK/K, Tara Valentine in TK/K, Christina Simpson in K/1, Suranjana Majumdar in K/1, Brett Breon in 2/3, Niru Gridduluru in 2/3, and Gina Moreno in 2/3.

Working together for a great year ahead

I am thrilled to start my first year at Parkside, and committed to working with staff and families to fulfill our vision of making Parkside the best public Montessori school in the Bay Area. Our success depends on the adult community working together as a team and family. I encourage you to seek out ways to get involved, contribute to the good of the group and model the way for our young scholars that are watching and learning from us.

I look forward to meeting you and excited about a great year ahead!

In Partnership,

Nima Tahai
Principal
Parkside Montessori