



July 9, 2020

Dear Families of the Garden,

I hope everyone has been safe and healthy this summer. The ACG Board of Directors met yesterday to review our phone survey results and to determine the logistics of opening the school on August 12, 2020 within the parameters and safety guidelines set by the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department. We are happy to say that the Garden will open its doors this fall; however, after careful consideration and concern for the health of our community, we have determined that A Child's Garden will be operating with reduced hours and reduced class sizes.

I know this brings about many questions as we move towards our re-opening. Through the survey you took over the phone, we were able to determine how many families are ready to return to ACG and how many families are not planning to come back to our school at this time. Some of our part-time families voiced interest in increasing their schedule to 5 days a week and others said they would prefer to stay on the waitlist for a part-time spot, if and when we are able to accommodate those types of schedules. I want to assure you that the Board looked at the data, listened carefully to all of your comments, questions and concerns, and thoughtfully made the following decisions regarding the 2020/21 school year.

1. We will only offer M-F schedules as each class must be self-contained and we are not allowed to mix/share children and staff across classrooms.
2. The school will no longer be open until 5:30 each day. Our hours will be 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
(This is due to staffing logics and the fact that we cannot mix children and staff for early or after care). If you have registered for a 7:30-5:30 spot, your new pick up time will be 4:30. The cost of the 7:30-4:30 tuition will remain the same as it was for 7:30-5:30 because all staff will now report by 7:30 to prepare the classroom, complete the health screenings and receive children at socially distant drop-off locations outside of the building.
3. We will offer the following schedule options: all Monday-Friday:
 - 7:30-4:30
 - 8:30-4:30
 - 9:00-3:00
 - 9:00-1:00
4. Priority for enrollment for the spots we will offer when we re-open is as follows:
 - *If your child is currently enrolled for a M-F schedule for the 2020/21 school year, you have a guaranteed spot.
 - *If your child is currently enrolled part-time (MWF or T/Th) and you would like to increase your schedule to M-F, you will be put on a waitlist for a M-F spot in your child's class. If there is a M-F spot available, you will be offered that spot.

*If there are more students interested than spots available, we will arrange a lottery for the spots in that classroom.

*If we have empty spots and no current families who want them, we will go to the waitlist of new families to fill the spots.

*If your child is currently enrolled part-time (MWF or T/Th) and you DO NOT want to increase your child's schedule, we will put you on a waitlist for part-time care if and when it is available.

*Any family who is currently enrolled for part-time (MWF or T/Th), **and receiving tuition assistance** who would like to increase their schedule to M-F, is encouraged to get on the M-F waitlist in their classroom and apply for increased funds.

***Any currently enrolled families who decide not to return this year will be given priority on the waitlist for the 2021-22 school year.**

5. The Board has decided that the school will close one day a month for deep cleaning and teacher planning. An upcoming school year calendar which includes these additional closure dates will be sent out by the end of the month.
6. A Childs' Garden will follow Albuquerque Public Schools for scheduled closures such as Fall, Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring Breaks, but we do not plan to close if APS goes to strictly on-line schooling. The Board may close the school, at its discretion, as we follow the guidelines and closure recommendations of the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department. Please note that closure may occur if the Governor issues another Public Health Emergency that includes a mandatory stay-at-home order. Tuition will be prorated for any unscheduled closure that occurs.
7. At this time, due to the health and safety guidelines, we will not be able to offer interim care services during our prolonged breaks.

We know that your child's health, safety and development is extremely important to you and that the decision to return to school in the fall under the current conditions is difficult. In order to give you more information and hopefully aid in your decision, I have enclosed a copy of our **Covid-19 Safety Plan**. This is a newly state-mandated document that our Health and Safety Committee has worked very diligently upon over the past few weeks. A school representative will reach out to you again, next Monday or Tuesday, to see what your family decides. We hope you take the time to read the plan before then and, if you have questions, please reach out to us.

Please know that if your family decides to withdraw for the 2020/21 school year, we completely understand and wish you the best. We only ask that you email the office a formal notification with your reason for withdrawal (e.g., health concerns, financial, schedule not accommodated) by close of business on July 15, 2020. This will be the last date to withdraw and still receive your deposit refund. This date gives us the time to offer placements to our current families who would like to increase their schedules and also allows us to notify families on our current waitlist of their status for the upcoming year.

Lastly, please know that we are committed to your children and promise to provide a loving, relationship-based atmosphere of acceptance and respect where they can learn and grow.

Respectfully yours,
Mary C Matteucci, Director