Ricks Summer Newsletter
Friday, July 14, 2017

Ricks ... In the Top 5!
We are excited to share that we were nominated as a Top 5 Colorado Parent Family Favorite. Thank you for your continued support! Please help us spread the word about Ricks Center -- we still have space available for the 2017-2018 school year.

Summer Facilities Updates
Ricks administration have been developing our spaces in order to best support our inquiry-based and active approach to learning. Read on to learn about projects in progress, some of which you will be hearing about for the first time!

EC Playground and MS Courtyard: We have been meeting regularly with Eric Crotty, Landscape Architect (ECLA) and our DU's facilities project manager. We have used ECLA to make sure our 15-20 year investment meets our program needs while satisfying all local and national playground regulations (City of Denver, National Program for Playground Safety, National Health and Safety Performance Standards, and NAEYC).

The timeline for completion of these two spaces has been slated for mid-October. While we regret the later timeline, we recognize the importance of completing the two spaces as soon as possible. To accommodate smooth functioning of our programs, we are developing plans to fully fence off about half of the Primary/MS field as a dedicated EC playground for the first two months of school.

The temporary Early Childhood playground will feature sand and water play, dramatic play costumes, outdoor building blocks, a playhouse, and musical instruments. It will have a separate entrance/exit through the side gate opposite the Law School to accommodate smooth transitions. By maintaining a separate Early Childhood playground, we satisfy all licensing requirements and ensure a safe, developmentally-appropriate play space for our children. Additional information about pick-up and drop-off for the Early Childhood will be sent to parents prior to the start of school.

Middle School and Primary play space will still include half of the field, play structures and sand box, and when not under construction, the Middle School Courtyard. As usual, Mr. Jason and the teachers will make use of the Ricks facilities for playing and learning, and we will increase use of the vast spaces offered throughout DU, including the Ritchie Center, fields, and open spaces.

We are excited about the plans for the two areas. Architectural drawings will be sent to the community soon so you can see the incredible play spaces being developed.

Library Development: We are in the process of developing two school libraries in flexible spaces in the school. The Middle School library is taking shape in the Middle School Commons, now dubbed the Commons Library. This space serves as a gathering place for our older students, and will include reading nooks, collaboration tables, game spaces, and
books for self-check-out. Middle School teachers and students will continue to use it as a break-out work space, and it will include more options for group and independent work. Much of the furniture is on casters, so that it can be easily reconfigured in order to accommodate Middle School assemblies and other larger gatherings.

The EC and Primary library is under development in the Primary Atrium space, located at the south end of the main hallway. This space was used by the Literacy Specialist, who has been relocated a few steps away in a half-size classroom. The Atrium Library will house our extensive picture book and primary-level book collection.

Ricks would like to thank Scott Wiebensohn for leading the library projects. Scott is a well-known substitute here at Ricks and holds a Bachelor's in Elementary Education from UW-Milwaukee and a Master's in Library & Information Science from DU.

We also have an enormous THANK YOU to Carrie Watts for donating approximately 1000 books to our library collection, and for her time and assistance in setting up the new library spaces. Carrie is a new parent at Ricks, mother to Henry, who will be starting grade 6 in the fall.

**Atelier Development:** The Atelier will house our occupational therapist and can also serve as an indoor gym for the Early Childhood during inclement weather as needed. The space will be sectioned off from the hallway using interlocking low shelving, cubbies, and an entrance gate so children are in the space only with adult supervision. The addition of cubbies for our little ones will allow us to keep students' items organized more neatly, as well as to curb the spread of disease as each child will have their own partitioned space. We will replicate this in the Primary soon as we continue to develop our spaces.

To be more accessible to the Early Childhood community, Jessica Kennedy, our Director for Early Childhood, will have her office just off the main entrance to the school inside the Atelier.

**Admissions Office:** Amy Jacobs and the Admissions Office will be just behind the conference room, both of which can be found in the space between the Director's office and the Front Desk. This allows our visitors and prospective families to be hosted in a dedicated area where they can easily see the school in action as well as access the school for tours.

**Innovation Space:** The former "curriculum room" directly past the Front Desk has been cleared out in order to house the innovation space. We are working in partnership with Morgridge College of Education to develop a fully outfitted lab. A substantial amount of material has already been purchased by Ricks for use in a hands-on experiential learning environment. Modifications to prepare the physical space include removing carpet and replacing it with a hard-surfaced floor, adding a movable presentation screen and computer for a flexible “front of room” teaching location, acquiring digital media (audio/video) recording equipment, and developing as a digital media recording space. Other equipment will range from low tech maker items, as were found in the Creative Recycling Center, to high end innovation materials, such as the 3-D printer.

**Extended Day Program Update**

Over the course of the past school year, we saw attendance in Kids Adventures slowly dwindle. Parents expressed frustration at the lack of communication, inconsistent billing, and quality of care being provided to our students through the program.
the program. We want to offer a robust and positive extended day program, including childcare as well as exciting enrichment classes. Therefore, we have decided to run our own before and after school program rather than outsource it to Kids Adventures. The program manager will be Maggie Wright (see her bio below).

The cost structure of the extended day program is as follows, and a more comprehensive schedule of enhancements and days off.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Cost per use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extended day morning</td>
<td>7:00 – 8:30 AM (Wed 7:00-9:00 AM)</td>
<td>$9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended day after school</td>
<td>3:30-6:00 PM</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended day after enrichment classes</td>
<td>4:40-6:00</td>
<td>$9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half day (early release days)</td>
<td>12:00-6:00</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School days off</td>
<td>8:30 AM – 3:30 PM</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional information

Early childhood and elementary students who have not been picked up at 3:40 PM on regular days, 12:10 PM on half days, or at 3:40 PM following enrichment classes, will automatically be placed into the extended day program. Care will be charged at the customary rates, and parents will be contacted.

Students must be signed out of the extended day program by 6:00 PM. For any students who are not picked up by 6:00 PM, we will immediately phone parents and then emergency contacts. Families are billed $1.00 per minute, per child, for care from 6:00 PM.

Enrichment fees are billed separately and are dependent on costs as determined by providers. Students will report to the gym at 3:30 PM for attendance, and enrichment classes will begin at 3:40 PM.

Financial Aid: Students currently receiving financial aid are eligible for the same percentage discount in the extended day program. Please contact Katlin Davies (Katlin.Davies@du.edu) for details.

Naming Contest

Many students use our extended day program – before school, after school, and for enrichment classes. We need a great name for this, and are opening it up to all of you! The adults around this summer have not been able to come up with a great name; we know that our Ricks' community will be much more inspired. If you have a naming idea, email anne.wolf@du.edu. The winner will receive a free enrichment class and acknowledgement in the newsletter. Name on!

New Staff Welcome and Update

Ricks would like to welcome the following staff members to the team!

**3rd/4th Grade Teacher:** Sue Ann Burger
Sue Ann Burger is eager to begin as a third and fourth grade teacher at Ricks for the 2017-18 school year. She has over 20 years of teaching experience in the field of elementary gifted education. She is an avid Oklahoma Sooners fan and received her bachelor’s degree in elementary education from the University of Oklahoma, with a minor in vocal music. She also has a master’s degree in gifted education.

Sue Ann’s father was a principal, her mother was a first grade teacher, and her sister was a middle school English teacher; apparently, teaching runs in the family! Sue Ann started her own teaching career at a public school for gifted students in the Oklahoma City area. She landed her first job by promising to be the gymnastics coach for 50 eager gymnasts at the school. She later helped start a gifted school for Rockwood School District in St. Louis, and then taught gifted/talented students in the Cherry Creek School District for 15 years.

Her son, Jason, will graduate from college with a news broadcasting degree in December and her daughter, Stacy, is starting college at Baylor University this fall. Her husband, Kyle, is an account director for Kobie Marketing in Tampa. Sue Ann loves football, coffee shops, the mountains, her red Mustang, and especially, her two-year-old golden retriever, Moxi.

**Middle School Math Teacher: Jacklyn Van Ooyik**

Jacklyn Van Ooyik is joining the Ricks Center as the Middle School Math Teacher. Jacklyn has seven years of experience teaching 6th through 8th grade mathematics around the Denver area. She is passionate about teaching to develop problem solvers and critical thinkers in her classroom. She also coached high school co-ed cheerleading in Highlands Ranch for six years. Ms. Van Ooyik is a Colorado native who grew up in Parker. She received her BS in Mathematics Education from the University of Oklahoma, her MA in Curriculum & Instruction from the University of Denver, and is currently working on her Ph.D in Curriculum & Instruction with an emphasis in Math Education at DU.

**Middle School Latin Teacher: Scott Holcomb**

Scott Holcomb is joining the Ricks Center as the Middle School Latin Teacher. He has twelve years of experience teaching K through 12th grade Latin, the last three here in the Denver area. He believes that knowledge of Latin and the classical world is both fun and a foundation for future learning in many fields, and he aims to foster a lasting curiosity in his students. Mr. Holcomb grew up in Virginia Beach, VA, is married, and has four young boys. He received his BA in Classics from the College of William and Mary, and his MA in Latin from the University of Georgia. He enjoys music, movies, reading, and being outdoors.

**3rd/4th Grade Part-Time Teacher: Sarah Clark**

Sarah was born and raised in Denver, Colorado. She graduated from Kent Denver Country Day school in 1989, and attended Cornell College after graduating. She received her B.A. from Cornell in Elementary Education in 1993, with concentrations in Art and Physical Education. Sarah came back to Denver and earned her Colorado teacher’s license. She has worked in private schools and Denver Public Schools since then, and is thrilled to be teaching at Ricks.

**3rd/4th Grade Part-Time Teacher: Jackie Rodman**

Jackie joined our team last year as a teaching assistant in the 3/4 classroom and is so excited to continue at Ricks as a teacher. She is from Minnesota, where she earned her BA in education from the University of Northwestern, St. Paul and
has over eight years of educational experience. In her free time, Jackie enjoys reading, going on long walks, Netflix, and spending time with family and friends.

**Ricks After School Program: Maggie Wright**

Maggie is a proud native of Colorado. She graduated with a B.A in special education from the University of Northern Colorado in 2010 and brings five years of experience in out of school programming to Rick’s. In her free time she loves reading, sewing, and up-cycling. She is excited to be a part of the Rick's Center and cannot wait to build an extended day program where students explore their passions.

**Retirement Announcement:** We wish Kim Hammond the best as she moves on from teaching at Ricks. Kim cited an increased need to attend to her family next year. We thank her for over 20 years of service to the school!

**Program Updates**

**Middle School News**

**Course Selections**

Middle school students will have a number of decisions to make as this year begins. Each student will take PE, art, and music as regular classes during the week.

**Music:** Two choices per trimester, classes capped at 20. Choir is option 1 each trimester; option 2 will be hand-drumming (trimester 1), ukulele (trimester 2), digital music (trimester 3). Music classes are combined grades 5/6 and 7/8.

**Foreign Language:** Classes meet 4 times/week, and each student will select one language. There are three options for all grades, with classes capped at 20. Language choices are French, Latin, or Spanish. Foreign language classes are combined grades 5/6 and 7/8.

**Electives:** Students will take 2 electives each six-week period (4 per trimester), with class numbers capped. Each elective meets twice per week. Electives will include classes such as Student Council, yearbook, coding, creative writing, mock trial, and the Ricks musical. Elective classes are combined grades 5/6/7/8.

Middle School families will receive an email with a pamphlet containing brief descriptions of the courses before we open the sign ups. Please talk with your child about her or his preferences for language, music, and electives.

**On August 8, we will open course selections on Sign-up Genius at 5:00 PM. You will receive an email with the appropriate links to sign up.**

**Middle School Solar Eclipse Social & New Student Welcome**

A partial solar eclipse will occur August 21 between 10:23 am and 1:14 pm. We will have a Middle School Social and New Student Welcome that day. From 10:00 – 10:30 am, all 5th graders and other new middle school students are invited to come to Ricks, find their locker and practice opening its lock, and look at the classrooms that match the schedules. At 10:30 am, all returning MS students are invited to come and join us for fun, watch the eclipse, and eat lunch. Parents may pick up children at 1:00 pm. It will be great!
If you are a returning 7th or 8th grade student who would like to take a leadership role as a New Student Ambassador, contact Mrs. Wolf at anne.wolf@du.edu by Aug 17.

**Supply Reminder**
Just a reminder that students will need to bring in their own laptop, but almost all other supplies will be provided by Ricks. As well, we will be providing locks for all student lockers. Please be sure that your child’s backpack fits inside the lockers. Soft-sided backpacks can slip inside door and then expand to full interior width.

- 5th grade lockers: 10" wide at door (12" wide inside) x 11" deep.
- 6th - 8th grade lockers: 9.5" wide at door (11.75" wide inside) x 13.75" deep

**Primary Update**
If your child is new to Ricks and is entering grades 1 – 4, please keep Aug 21 and 22 open. We will bring in children individually for math and reading assessments so they can start the year in the most appropriate groups. Parents will be contacted directly to set up those appointments in mid to late August.

**Early Childhood Update**
Family Meetings: Early childhood families in Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten will be invited to come as families to meet with your child’s new teachers. This will give the teachers a chance to learn more about each child as well as facilitate an easy transition into the new school year. Please watch for an email with a sign-up in August.

Kindergarten Open House: Our Kindergarten team is looking forward to a drop-in Meet-and-Greet on August 22nd between 9-11 a.m. Parents/guardians can bring their children to see the classroom and meet the teachers. Adults will learn some of the nuts and bolts to get the year off to a great start, and children will have engaging activities to become acquainted with their new classroom and teachers. We can hardly wait; see you there!

**Buddy Families Needed**
As we get ready to welcome many new students and families to Ricks Center, we would like to ask for your help. Do you remember when you first started at Ricks Center? Do you remember those individuals and families who helped to answer your questions and make you feel like a part of the community?

We are looking for Buddy Families to help welcome our new families to Ricks. Please email Amy Jacobs if you are interested in being a Buddy Family or if you have any questions. Thank you for your help!

**Student information/enrollment forms**
Student information/enrollment forms will be sent out through RenWeb in the next two weeks. In addition to student forms, the email will also contain information about how to purchase a parking permit.
Ricks Gear

We are excited to have Ricks Gear available this year!

**T-shirts:** Angelina Akdis (8th grade) was awarded the Shannon B. Jones grant at the end of the 2016-17 school year to pursue her passion in fashion design. Angelina’s first project was to design a t-shirt for the Ricks Center. She was inspired by Shannon Jones’ love of tessellations and zen-tangle patterns. By purchasing these t-shirts, you will be benefiting the Shannon B. Jones grant and Angelina’s future design projects. The proceeds from the sales of these t-shirts will be returned to the grant to continue funding future projects and grants for Ricks Center students. If you would like a t-shirt like the ones below, fill out the [preorder form](#) and return it to [rickstshirtorders@gmail.com](mailto:rickstshirtorders@gmail.com) by August 23.

![T-shirts](image)

**Other gear:** The Student Store will be run by the 5th grade class this year. Profits from the Student Store sales will be used to expand their merchandise. The store should be a self-supporting operation. To jumpstart sales for them, you may order backpacks, sweatshirts, and computer sleeves through DU's ShopPioneers website. Be on the lookout for more details once we have that site setup.

Read this summer!

The New York Times has published a [great guide](#) to creating and growing a reader. It includes helpful hints for readers from infant through young adult, with a few for you as well. Enjoy the selections yourself, too!

We want to encourage everyone to read over the summer. There are great reading programs through the various library districts, Denver, Douglas County, Adams County, and Jefferson County. You can get library cards from all of these whether or not you are a resident. Here are a few other reading lists as well:

- Campus Middle School
- NPR backseat book list
- Hoagies Gifted lists
- CAGT book list
- NEH + MENSA Kids reading list
- Davidson Institute Lists
- NPR summer reads for ADULTS
- NYTimes Adult reads

Facebook

Have you "liked" our [Facebook](#) page? Please take a moment to visit, and "like," the Facebook page. It’s another great way to see what is going on in the school and in the Ricks Center Community.
Around DU and Beyond...

Are you looking for something fun to do with your family this summer? Check out these upcoming family friendly ways to celebrate Summer with DU.

Save the Date

July 15 : RCA Early Childhood (Preschool, PreK & K) Summer Playdate @ Observatory Park, 9:00-11:00 AM  
July 17 : RCA Meeting @ 1:00-2:30 PM @ Ricks  
August 1: Second Ricks Summer Newsletter  
August 6: RCA Early Childhood (Preschool, PreK & K) Summer Playdate @ Observatory Park 9:00-11:00 AM  
August 8: Middle School Course Registration open at 5:00 PM  
August 11: Early Childhood and Primary Class lists emailed to families  
August 17: RCA Ricknic (a Back-to-School family picnic) @ Ricks, 5:00-7:00 PM  
August 21: Middle School Grade 5 and New Student Orientation, 10:00-10:30 AM  
Middle School Eclipse Social 10:30 AM -1:00 PM  
August 21 & 22: EC and Primary new student assessments  
August 22: Kindergarten Meet-and-Greet, 9:00-11:00 AM  
August 23: First day of school! Full day for Middle School (grades 5-8), half day for EC and Primary (Preschool – Grade 4)  
September 21: Crimson Classic 5k (Running/walking event for the DU Community) @ DU, 3:00 PM  
November 4: RCA Gala @ Wellshire Event Center