

Dear Families,

It is hard to believe but in a little over a week we will be on our way to Williamsburg! Students should arrive between 4:30 and 4:45 a.m. (yes, a.m.) Monday, May 21. The buses will load at 4:45 and depart by 5:00 a.m. We want to be well away before the regular school day begins for the rest of Montessori.

We will be giving the students background information next week through stories, presentations and activities. Our oldest students will be leading our scavenger hunt through the streets of Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown and Yorktown. As they travel around, they will collect facts to use in creating a project or presentation in the weeks after our return to share with the class.

Many parents have asked about contacting their children during the trip since students cannot have cell phones. In ancient times we asked students to learn to use pay phones and phone cards. Many places no longer have pay phones available. As a result we are asking parents to call into the The Woodlands Hotel mornings before breakfast or in the afternoons before dinner on the days when we return to the Hotel before evening activities. Please do not call before bedtime for several reasons. First, students are being encouraged to get to sleep and get their rest. For some students it may be past their usual bedtime when we return and they need quiet. This can also be a difficult time if your child tends to get homesick because he/she is already tired. Some rooms may be using the time for a quick check-in on their projects. If you are concerned that you cannot reach your child, you can always call the school office and they will relay a message to me. Thanks for your patience with this.

Children may bring cameras with them. Many have digital ones and look forward to capturing their adventure to share with you later. They will be responsible for keeping track of their cameras. When we are at presentations, we will let students know when it is an opportunity for photos and when to put cameras away. You might speak to them about the types of pictures your family collects or enjoys sharing. Many students focus on scenes out the bus windows and if they have film, use it up before we even arrive. Buying more film is very expensive at gift shops!

The students enjoy watching DVD's on the bus. If your family has a favorite (appropriate for all ages and family values) to lend for the trip, it would be appreciated. Please send those in by Wednesday of next week.

Children should bring additional snacks if they are concerned that they will want more to eat, especially for mid-morning and before bed snacks or if they are picky eaters and may not like the meals served. Snacks should not be perishable as the rooms do not have refrigerators. This should be their personal food that is not shared with peers. Each student is also asked to bring a community snack to be shared on the bus there and back. This should be peanut free, please. It need only be a bag of pretzels or apples or some special travel food your child would like to share with the class.

Please check the weather forecast for Williamsburg for next week and help your child pack appropriate clothing. We go, rain or shine or sweltering heat. Extended forecast indicates temperatures in the high 70s/low 80s with chances of rain. Layers are best. We ask that students wear shirts with sleeves to give them protection from the sun. Sunscreen is a must, please try to select a sunscreen that avoids coconut/shear butter or heavy fragrances for those traveling with us who have allergies. Thank you.

It is suggested that students bring around \$30 to use to purchase souvenirs for family. Though we have talked about thoughtful purchasing of souvenirs in class, it is also helpful if you talk about the kinds of souvenirs your family collects or would treasure.

When we are enroute from Williamsburg to Ithaca on Thursday, you will receive an email after our dinner stop to confirm the expected time of our arrival back at EAC. Please check for this just in case our return time changes.

Every year this trip is a highlight for Upper Level students and chaperones alike. All the activities and reservations have been double checked and eagerly await our arrival! See you soon for this year's Big Adventure!

Any last minute questions, please call me 227-4247.

Terry