

Welcome to St. Matthew's EEC



Dear EEC Family,

Our first official first day(s) of school are coming up quickly and we could not be more excited to welcome you to the 2026-2027 school year! To be well-prepared for the first day of school, please read through this newsletter carefully.

EEC Staff

We pride ourselves on the quality of care and the professionalism of our staff. You will be receiving communication directly from your classroom teacher throughout the year, but should you have any other questions or concerns, please direct them to the following people.

- EEC Director: Maria Calabrese
- Assistant Director: TBD
- Business Manager: Lexi Hockenberry
- Office Manager: Jackie Mowrey
- Office Number: 301-464-1813
- **All communication from the teachers and office will be coming through our ProCare Parent Engagement app. This is a different program/app than MyProcare.com that you use for billing.** We have to switch the account information over from summer to school year, once the summer ends, so fall families are not able to set up or use their account right now. On August 19th, families will receive the information with how to set up your account. For returning families, you will be able to log in at that point and see your information. Once you receive this email, please set up your account ASAP so you start receiving information from us right away.
- You will continue to receive emails regarding billing directly from Lexi from the eecbilling@gmail.com address.

Don't miss our Meet-and-Greet for ALL Playschool (2yr old), Preschool (3yr old), and PreK(4yr old) students

- Please come to our Meet-and-Greet for the opportunity to meet your teachers and look around the classroom. You may come and go as you please (a typical open house setting).
- We kindly ask that this time not be used for

- numerous individual questions with the teachers, as they are working to connect with all students and ensure everyone receives equal attention.

- **All Playschool, Preschool and PreK students will attend the Meet-and-Greet on Tuesday, Aug. 25**
Students w/last name A-K= 10-11:00am
Students w/last name L-Z= 11-12:00pm

Health & Safety Paperwork

Please return all state-mandated forms by August 21st.

- If you are a summer family, and just submitted new forms in June, you will not need to re-submit anything.
- If you are a school year family (returning or new), you will need to submit these forms via the ProCare Parent Engagement app, after creating your new account on the 19th.
*See below under Classroom Communication.
- The forms are all found on our website. Please submit them through the Procare Engagement App. You will go to the Procare Engagement app, go to documents at the bottom of the screen, click upload documents, and submit!

We are not accepting hard copies this year, they must be sent electronically through the ProCare Engagement app.

- Health Inventory Part 1 & 2
- Blood Lead Test
- Immunizations
- Emergency Forms (need new forms for all students)
- Birth Certificate or Passport
- Medical Authorization Form (Asthma, allergy, seizure, etc)
- We will be sending home a Family Survey

School-Only Student Routines

- We will continue with our routine of parents going to the classroom doors to drop off and pick up their student(s).
- **Door codes** will be available at the Meet-the-Teacher and on the first day of school.
- Enter the building by using your door code and then pressing the # sign.
~ Use the school door that is in the front of the building, at the top of the ramp.
~ These are the only two doors where your codes will work. This is for safety purposes.

- Look for the signs (or ask for help) and go to the classroom.
- Please guide your child, and assist if necessary, to hang up their items on their hooks outside of their classroom.
- For school-only children, the door will be closed until the teachers are ready to open it and check in the students for school.
- You will sign your child in by using a QR code that will be at the classroom doorway for you (don't fret, we will explain how to use this!).
- You will greet your teacher at the door. Please be sure to verbally "check in" your child so the teacher(s) knows they entered the classroom.
- At pick-up time, please go straight to the classroom to pick up your child. For school only students, the door will most likely be closed again. Please wait until the teachers open it for school-only dismissal.
- Please remain at the classroom doorways and keep your time in the building to 15 minutes or less at drop off and pick up.

Child Care Student Routines

- **Child Care Hours:** 7 am to 6 pm
- Drop-off and Pick-up will be at the child's CHILD CARE CLASSROOM. This may be different (usually just next door) than their SCHOOL classroom.
- If your child has CHILDCARE in a different classroom than SCHOOL, we will inform you of this.
- **Door codes** will be available at the Meet-the-Teacher and on the first day of school. You must enter the # sign after your code in order to open the door.
~ Use the school door that is in the front of the building, at the top of the ramp.
~ This is the only door where your codes will work. This is for safety purposes.
- When you get to the classroom, please guide your child, and assist if necessary, to hang up their items on their hooks outside of their classroom. Their lunch boxes should be placed on the shelf above their hook.
- You will sign your child in by using a QR code.
- Please bring a photo ID at pick-up until teachers get to know you.
- The afternoon supervisor will be in the office, if needed.
- Please remain at the classroom doorways and keep your time in the building to 15 minutes or less at drop off and pick up.
- Your child will only be released at the end of the day to a person on your Emergency Form. If you need someone else to pick-up, please call the office. We will also need a photo ID to verify.
- **We close at 6 pm. LATE FEES will be assessed PER CHILD at the rate of \$15 per 15 minutes, beginning at 6:05 pm.**

What to bring

St. Matthew's believes in sand, wood chips, glitter and glue! You can fully expect your child to be covered in one or all of the above on a daily basis. Please dress them accordingly and be sure they are wearing close-toe shoes. Here is a general list of items to pack for the first day. You will be receiving a more specialized list from your child's teachers.

- Extra clothes labeled with your child's name and placed in a zip lock, labeled bag. Pack: shorts/pants, shirt, underwear, and socks.
- Don't forget napping accouterments if your child is in a napping room. Cot sheets may be purchased in the office for \$10. Please limit to a cot sheet and small blanket.
- **Lunch:** We provide morning and afternoon snacks, but you will need to provide your child's lunch. Please **pack your child's lunch or you may order a hot lunch that is delivered to the school daily from Main & Market. PLEASE READ THE INFORMATION BELOW on how to order from them. For the month of September, you will need to place your lunch orders by August 24th. You will continue to receive reminders monthly to place your orders.** We provide milk and water at snack time and lunch. Please make your teachers aware of any ALLERGIES.
- **SUPPLIES: We are asking families to provide some supplies this school year! We are asking for each student to supply**
 - 2 gluesticks
 - 1 box of fat or thin crayons
 - 1 8-pack of washable markers
 - 1 box of tissues
 - 1 container of cleaning wipes

If you wish to donate more, we are also asking for Sharpies, dry erase markers, and any art supplies! Your class may also have a teacher wish list that they will share.

Classroom Communication

You will receive a welcome letter from your child's teachers via the ProCare Parent Engagement app, as well as a postcard for your child in the mail. If you do not receive both by Friday, August 21st ask about it at the Open House or feel free to call the office. The letter will reiterate much of what is here, but it will be more specific to the workings of that classroom. The letter may also include special requests for the classroom. Then each month, you will receive a calendar detailing upcoming events and scheduled activities. **Please make sure that you have set up and are consistently checking the ProCare Parent Engagement app to ensure you are receiving all communication.** In addition, your child will be given a folder that will be used to send papers/projects home. It will either go home daily, or once a week on Fridays.

ProCare Parent Engagement App is the Key!

We use this platform for all kinds of information: inclement weather notices, event updates and reminders, emergency plans, School News articles, pictures.... the list is endless. Once you get used to it, you will love this because it means that everything you need to find for St. Matthew's will be in one place. No more searching through emails! In the next day or so, you will receive an invitation to set up your account. Please don't hesitate to ask us if you are having any problems setting up or using your account.

Parking

The parking lot can be a challenge. Please keep the following tips in mind.

1. Parking spaces are clearly marked.
2. Do not park in the handicap spots if you are not handicapped.
3. Please do not park in front of the church's Little Pantry (there are signs marking this area).
4. Do not leave children or babies in cars unattended. It is dangerous and you can be reported to the police.
5. Yellow curbs mean NO PARKING.
6. Remain alert – children dart away from parents when they are excited!

Building Security = Team Effort

The most important thing we do each day is keep our students and staff safe. We are committed to the safety of our building and have invested heavily in security equipment: we have over 24 cameras inside and outside, and we keep the doors locked at all times. But of course, all systems have their limitations.

In the last few years, we have discovered that we are most vulnerable to intruders at busy drop-off and pick-up times: out of courtesy, parents hold the door open for the next person. Or, a visitor waits until someone is exiting the building and comes in while the door is open. PLEASE pay attention to these behaviors. You have our permission to be "rude" and close the door behind you. If the following person is a parent here, they will understand. Do not let anyone in who is not with a child. Feel free to tell the person they need to use their code or buzz the office to get into the building. AND please let us know when you see someone you do not recognize in the building. We will go find them! When we work together, safety reigns! Please feel free to come to us in the office to learn more about our safety procedures.

Back to School Tips

Whether your child is returning to St. Matthew's this fall or embarking on her very first school experience, parent preparation for the first day of school is the key to your child's success. The following list gives you a few suggestions on how to help your child transition from summer to school.

1. Explore the idea of school through play. Set up a make-believe school room with stuffed animals as the students. Take turns being the teacher. Your child can teach his dolls how to sing a song or drink from a cup. You can teach your child a song with finger movements. Keep it fun!
2. Help your child share toys, take turns on the slide, and speak up for themselves.
3. Make a game out of practicing self-care tasks such as drinking from a cup, pulling up pants, putting on shoes, washing hands, and most importantly, asking for help with the bathroom.
4. Encourage your child to clean up one activity before moving onto the next.

MORE TIPS BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS

1. Establish an "early to bed, early to rise" routine that mimics your school day routine. Setting your child's internal "clock" will make your mornings smoother.
2. For most families with multiple children, the morning routine involves choreography akin to the opening ceremony of the Olympics. Begin putting the pieces together and practicing each person's role. Also, pat yourself on the back each time you get your children to school safely.....it can be a herculean task ☺
3. Describe school in super-positive terms. Tell your child how much you loved your teachers. Get them excited about making new friends.
4. Read stories about preschool and saying good-bye.
 - a. *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn
 - b. *David Goes to School* by David Shannon
 - c. *Will I Have a Friend?* by Miriam Cohen
 - d. *First Day of School* by Anne Rockwell
 - e. *When I Miss You* by Cornelia Maude Spelman
 - f. *Take a Kiss to School* by Angela McAllister
 - g. *It's Time for Preschool* by Esme Raj Codell
 - h. *A Pocketful of Kisses* by Audrey Penn

First Day Of School

1. Don't rush through the routine and add stress to the morning. Children react strongly to that emotion.
2. Tell your child how excited you are that he is going to school because it is so much fun!
3. Give a quick kiss and hug. Don't forget to smile, give the thumbs-up, and tell them that you will be back soon.
4. **Don't skip step three by dropping and running. In five minutes, your child is going to look up and wonder where you are.**
5. Radiate confidence in your child's ability to love school!

SEPARATION IS A PROCESS

Your child will either adjust very quickly or will need lots of time to develop trust and comfort with her new surroundings. Our teachers are amazingly patient and skilled at this process, so allow them to work their magic. This can take up to 6 weeks for some children.

Welcome to the family!!! We are blessed to have you and are looking forward to a great year!

Purchase School Lunches Online

Main & Market is looking forward to supplying your school with great food and service. **Main & Market** partners with **BOONLI** to provide a secure, fast, and easy-to-use online ordering program. The program allows parents and faculty to view our lunch menu, order, prepay and manage their lunches online.

IMPORTANT: SEPTEMBER LUNCH ORDERS ACCEPTED 8/1-8/24/26. THE LUNCHES DO NOT INCLUDE A BEVERAGE.

QUICK PICK OPTION **ALLOWS YOU TO EASILY ORDER LUNCHES FOR THE ENTIRE MONTH**

1. Go to:

HTTPS://MAINANDMARKET.BOONLI.COM - (please bookmark this page)

2. Create an Account: Password is: **BUTTERFLY49**, add account, profile(s) information

3. Sign In with your username & password

4. To begin ordering, select your menu from the Home page and click on the calendar date.

RETURNING USERS

1. Go to:

HTTPS://MAINANDMARKET.BOONLI.COM - (please bookmark this page)

2. Sign In with your previous username & password

3. Select a student/faculty profile which needs a new location, select their grade/location for the new school year from the drop-down menu, and then click "UPDATE PROFILE". Repeat for each profile. If a student has left or graduated, select their name & click "remove profile".
4. To begin ordering, select your menu from the Home page and click on the calendar date.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT If you need assistance registering, navigating, or placing an order online using the **BOONLI** Online Ordering System, email support@boonli.com or call 1-800-381-6511, ext. 3, Mon-Fri, 11 a.m. – 8 p.m. EST.

LUNCH PROGRAM QUESTIONS For questions regarding **Food or Policy, including Missed/Late Orders, Credits, and Changes/Cancellations**, please email lunchprogram@mainandmarket.com

ORDERING SCHEDULE

September Orders may be placed from **8/1-8/24**.

October- June Orders: May be placed prior to the **16th** of the prior month.

PAYMENT INFORMATION Payment accepted by Credit or Debit Card using Visa, MasterCard, or Discover. Please be sure to complete the check-out process when placing an order. **Do not close your browser prior to receiving the confirmation display, as your order may be interrupted and not fully processed.** Items left in your Shopping Cart will not be processed, and your order will not be placed. **You may print or save your order by clicking on "Print Order" in the Navigation Bar. MINIMUM ORDER FEE:** A minimum \$10.00 order is required for new or changed orders. A \$1.00 processing fee will be charged for orders under the \$10 minimum order fee.