

The Montessori Day School

Parent Handbook

25th Edition

March 2009

5801 Carmel Ave. NE Albuquerque, NM 87113

The child has one intuitive aim: self development. He desperately wants to develop his resources, his ability to cope with a strange, complex world. He wants to do and see and learn for himself, through the eyes of an adult. The child who accomplishes this moves into harmony with his world. He becomes a full person. He is educated.

Maria Montessori

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Brief Curriculum Guide / Specials Schedule / Middle School Information

Maria Montessori

The Woman The Educator

The Montessori Method is a result of the experience and discoveries of Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952). Upon graduation as the first woman medical doctor in Italy, Dr. Montessori became interested in the education and training of special needs children.

Dr. Montessori designed materials and techniques that allowed her children to work in areas previously considered beyond their capacity. Dr. Montessori's great triumph came when these children took state examinations along with other children, and her children passed the exams.

Dr. Montessori's life began with a group of disadvantaged children in 1907 when she opened her famous Casa di Bambini. Through her observations of and work with children, she discovered their remarkable, almost effortless ability to absorb knowledge from their surroundings. Children teach themselves! This simple and profound truth inspired Dr. Montessori's lifelong pursuit of educational reform, curriculum development, methodology, psychology, teaching and teacher training, all based on her dedication to further the self-creating process of the child.

Today, after more than 100 years of international application, Montessori education has become the largest and fastest growing educational system in the world. Because the founder never created a copy write on her name, the name "Montessori" came into the public domain. Many childcare facilities and schools, adopt some of the Montessori principles, materials or the name "Montessori" as part of their program.

There are many Montessori societies and agencies around the world. Parents can find authentic Montessori schools by evaluating a school's affiliation to authentic Montessori principals via the American Montessori Society (AMS) and the North American Montessori Teachers Association (NAMTA) an Association Montessori International (AMI) society. MACTE is the USA agency for accrediting Montessori teacher training programs.

Mission Statement

The Montessori Day School is a private, Montessori School for children ages 18 months through 8th grade which serves students in the greater Albuquerque area. We believe that learning is best achieved within a positive social atmosphere that supports each individual's unique development. We offer an encompassing curriculum by providing a strong academic foundation with significant aesthetic experiences. Our ultimate goal is to encourage children to become responsible citizens who have the ability and desire to fulfill lifetime educational and social goals.

Welcome

The Montessori Day School follows the Montessori Method and philosophy of education. This method is child centered, and an individualized way of assisting children to develop their individual abilities and potentials. This method was possibly the first that was founded on the concept of educating the “whole child”. The method provides social, emotional and physical, as well as cognitive development. Montessori children are often described as self-directed, courteous, and joyful with a true love for learning.

We employ Montessori certified teachers. From time to time, we hire and intern Montessori and traditional teachers. Our professional staff is dedicated to providing a warm, loving, academically enriched environment that fosters the development and growth of happy well-adjusted children.

School History

Our school has been providing Montessori education and setting standards for academic excellence since February 14, 1983. Beginning with eleven children, the school has grown to include toddler, preschool, elementary and mid-high programs.

School Credentials

Our early childhood program is licensed through the NM, CYFD and our school is accredited with the North Central Association (NCA) of Colleges and Schools and the State of New Mexico.

School Affiliation

The Montessori Day School is affiliated with the American Montessori Society (AMS).

American Montessori Society Code of Ethics

“As American Montessori Society Members, we pledge to conduct ourselves professionally and personally in ways that will reflect our respect for each other and for the children we serve. We will do whatever is within our talents and capacity to protect the rights of each child to have the freedom and opportunity to develop his/her full potential.” (See page 51)

School Philosophy

In our school, we emphasize the child’s growth and development as a total person. This implies a constant awareness that each child is developing physically, emotionally and socially, as well as intellectually. This awareness allows children to take the lead in the learning process based on the unique needs of each child’s particular *stage of development*. Montessori teachers are trained to recognize and respond to these stages of development. This implies the structuring of both curriculum content and classroom environment so as to enhance the child’s discovery of the world. The curriculum is sequenced to

expose children to all subject areas, firing imagination and providing skills to

enable children to pursue all interest areas.

The curriculum is designed to respond to the child's mental appetite, providing freedom to choose and emphasize creativity, imagination and active involvement in learning. For this to occur, children must acquire the necessary basic skills, as these are the tools essential to continued development. Teachers function as a facilitator and consultant. They stimulate the *child's* interests and curiosity within a prepared environment.

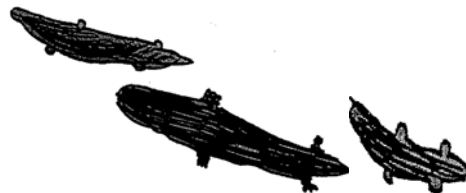
The classroom is structured to stimulate the child's enthusiasm for new ideas and new skills, and then provide the opportunity to use these new skills and apply these new ideas. Montessori material is the key and "the child opens the door." These materials do not give all the answers, but awaken interest and give the possibility of finding solutions.

School Objectives

The learning materials in a Montessori school have been designed to provide a wide variety of learning experiences geared to the developmental needs of children. The activities involve handling and manipulating materials. This work has proven intensely fascinating and absorbing for children. When engaged in well-structured tasks, students experience deep inner satisfaction which leaves them with an overall positive attitude toward learning and school.

Our objectives include:

- Assisting parents in aiding the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development of their child.
- Helping the child develop a positive attitude toward school.
- Fostering in the child curiosity, imagination, and creative intelligence.
- Helping each child develop self-confidence as an independent learner.
- Helping the child develop socially.
- Fostering inner security and a sense of order in the child.
- Assisting each child in building a habit of concentration.
- Sharpening the child's ability to discriminate and judge.
- Developing habits of initiative and persistence.



Never let a child risk failure until they have a reasonable chance of success.

Maria Montessori

Montessori Perspective

Dr. Montessori believed that no human being is educated by another person. They must do it themselves or it will never be done. A truly educated individual continues to learn long after the hours and years they spend in the classroom because they are motivated from within by a natural curiosity and love for knowledge. Dr. Montessori felt, therefore, that the goals of early childhood education should not be to fill the child with facts from a pre-selected course of studies, but rather to cultivate their own natural desire to learn. In the Montessori classroom this objective is approached in two ways: first, by allowing each child to experience the excitement of learning by their own choice rather than by being forced; and second, by helping them to perfect all their natural tools for learning, so that their natural ability will be at a maximum in future learning situations.

Another observation of Dr. Montessori, which has been reinforced by modern research, is the importance of sensitive periods for early learning. These are periods of intense fascination for learning a particular characteristic or skill, such as going up and down steps, putting things in order, counting or reading. It is easier for the child to learn a particular skill during the corresponding sensitive periods than at any other time in their life. The Montessori classroom takes advantage of this fact by allowing the child freedom to select individual activities which correspond to their own periods of interest.

Parents should understand that a Montessori school is neither a babysitting service nor a play-school that prepares a child for traditional kindergarten. Rather, it is a unique cycle of learning designed to take advantage of the child's sensitive years between three and six, when he can absorb information from an enriched environment. A child who acquires the basic skills of reading and arithmetic in this natural way has the advantage of beginning their education without drudgery, boredom, or discouragement. By pursuing their individual interest in a Montessori classroom, they gain enthusiasm for learning which is key to their becoming a fully educated person.

Because the children work individually with the materials, there is no competition in the Montessori classroom. Each child relies only on their own previous work, and their progress is not compared to the achievements of other students. Dr. Montessori believed that competition in education should be introduced only after a child has gained confidence in the use of basic skills.

It is a well-established fact that pre-school children mature at very different rates and their periods of readiness for academic subjects vary a great deal. Because interest is stimulated and the materials are at hand whenever a child is ready, some youngsters begin to read and calculate at an unusually early age. However, very early learning is not the norm, nor was it ever Dr. Montessori's objective. Her ideal was only that the learning experience should occur naturally and joyfully at the proper moment for each individual child. *"It is true we cannot make a genius,"* Dr. Montessori wrote, *"we can only give each individual the chance to fulfill his potential possibilities to become an independent, secure and balanced human being."*

Dr. Montessori believed that education must be a help to life and school should be a place where children can develop. In the elementary Montessori environment this development happens through work and concentration. Children experience a work period that provides an uninterrupted opportunity to learn at one's own pace. The power to concentrate results from the capturing of a child's interest, which leads to repetition and mastery. In this process orientated environment, each child takes an active responsibility for their own learning. The elementary child learns by conscious will. This active consciousness helps the child to determine their activity. The child is ready to relate the facts internalized from earlier preschool activities, and is eager to learn new things from the Montessori Materials.

In a Montessori environment children are free to move, free to group for regular work or special projects, free to help each other- in short free to create their own community. Social learning is brought about by lessons just as any academic subject is approached.

Planes of Development

Montessori theory and practice cooperate with nature in *"the predictable unfolding of the human personality."* Maria Montessori defined four planes of development from birth to age 24, each with its own characteristics. Our Montessori elementary school focuses on the second plane of development, while our toddler and preschool programs concentrate on the first. There are clear differences between the nature of children from birth to six and those from 6 to 12.

CHARACTERISTICS

1st Plane of Development (birth to 6)

ABSORBENT MIND

- a) indiscriminate
- b) reason not fully functional

INTEREST IN FACTS

(what and where)

SELF-CONSTRUCTION

INTERNALIZATION OF CONCEPTS through

Manipulation of concrete materials

2ND Plane of Development (ages 6-12)

CONSCIOUS/ACTIVE LEARNER

- a) still peripheral absorptive learning
- b) discovery of reason

INTEREST IN RELATED FACTS

(why, when, how)

GROUP ORIENTATED

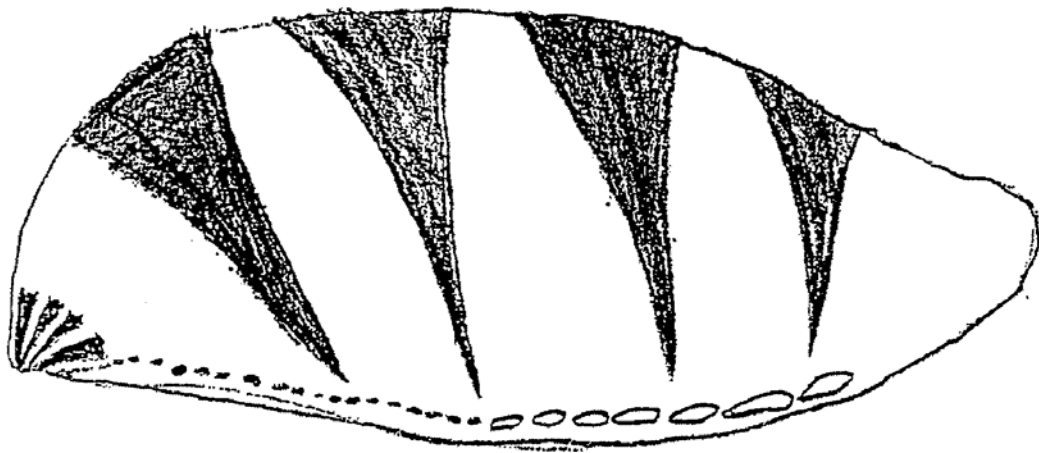
(construction of the social individual/social unity)

INTERNALIZATION OF SYMBOLS

(Manipulation of ideas through the use of symbols which leads to abstract thinking.)

Section 1 Programs

*Infant & Toddler
Preschool & Kindergarten
Elementary*



Infant & Toddler Programs

Infants

(6 weeks to 12 months)

From time to time the school is fortunate to have the physical space to run an infant program. Check with the office as to the program's availability.

Younger Toddlers

(12 to 18 months)

As with the infant program, this program is also offered when space is available.

Older Toddlers

(18 to 36 months)

Program

The Toddler Program is structured to meet the specific needs of children at this age: movement, language, independence, and beginning socialization. The head teachers have received specific Montessori training to work with the developmental considerations of this age. They prepare activities for the children to choose which will help them to refine their small and large motor skills. These activities show cause and affect which involves problem solving, building concentration skills, vocabulary enrichment and opportunities to acquire proper speech. The teachers observe each child as they explore the environment of the classroom in order to prepare appropriate activities. Toilet training, for children who are ready, is supported at school.

The child at 18 months to three is stepping into an era of rapid physical growth and cognitive development. It is at this time that he is gaining a feeling of independence, bursting into verbalization, and refining their large and small muscle movement. Their needs at this time are quite different than those when they were slightly younger or even those of the preschool child aged child.

It is the goal of the Toddler Program to meet those needs by providing a classroom which has activities designed to strengthen their skills, allow for movement and provide an atmosphere of safety and security. The importance of these years is expressed by Maria Montessori in the following section of this handbook entitled *Preschool & Kindergarten*.

The teachers in the Toddler Program have received, in addition to their Montessori training, specific training to the developmental needs of the children at this level. While the basic Principles of Montessori hold true at this level, all aspects of the program are approached with developmental appropriateness in mind.

Separation

The child from 18 months to three years is just becoming aware of themselves as an independent being in a vast and confusing world. In order to make their start in the Toddler Program a positive and happy experience, parents need to participate in our **Separation Process**.

The following procedure is offered as a guide for the teacher and parent. Some children may not experience separation anxiety. Variations appropriate to the needs of the child are important.

Separation Process

*During the first week of school, parent and child will come to the program together for approximately an hour each day. During this time the child is free to explore the classroom on their own while the parent remains in a designated area of the room, and within sight of the child. The child will return to the parent's side often at first, gaining self-confidence from the security of that presence. The activities themselves have been simplified for this time experience resulting in a sense of accomplishment at the successful completion of each activity. As trust of the staff and environment is built, parents will see their child explore for longer periods of time, and turn to the teachers with their questions and comments. As the teacher observes these signs of security in the child, they will contact the parents to let them know that **Separation** is completed and that their child is ready for the longer day in the program.*

Each child will respond differently to the adventure of "going to school," So the teaching staff is trained to observe and facilitate the process. The average separation time is one week, but it may be longer or shorter, depending on the individual child. Parents and staff will be in communication daily, so that all your questions can be answered on a timely basis. At the end of the **Separation Process** the child will go joyfully into the program, and parents can feel confident that the needs of their child are being met.

Toddler Check List for First Full Day

Forms

You will need to provide the completed health form, signed Financial Agreement and the Emergency Card/Transportation Authorization.

Personal Articles

We often change clothes at least once a day. Please bring a change of clothing each day or leave a weather appropriate change of clothing in the child's supply bin in the bathroom. Please leave the child's diapers or extra training pants in the bin as well. Parents provide diaper cream and suntan lotion (to be kept in child's bin). Please label all of your child's personal items.

Sunscreen

We request that parents apply sunscreen daily for their children. During warm school months the staff will apply sunscreen before afternoon recess.

Lunch

Children bring their own lunches. Please see the section on Food for helpful hints. Be sure the child's name is labeled visibly on the lunch box, bag or thermos. Parents can also sign up for a jason's deli student lunch at the front desk.

Clothing

Children need to wear season appropriate, comfortable clothing in which they can work and play without the fear of getting dirty or messy. Clothing should be easy for the child to remove independently. Tights and one piece outfits make it difficult for children to learn how to dress and toilet themselves. Summer months require extra sunscreen and hats.

Toileting

We follow the NM state regulations as provided on the next page.

Toddler Daily Check List

1. When dropping off your toddler, make sure that the adult in attendance is aware of your arrival. If you arrive late, escort your child "quietly" to the classroom door. A staff member will greet you at the door and welcome your child into the classroom. Please make sure your child is calm and happy when you deliver them to the staff member. Staff members will not accept crying, upset children. In this way, everyone can have a happy day.
2. When you enter or exit the front door, or playground, be absolutely sure that the door and gate latches are secured! We don't want any children to slip into the parking lot.
3. Make sure your toddler does not bring gum, candy, money, toys or a purse into the grounds. If the child feels they have a book, CD, or something of interest, discuss this with the teacher before bringing it into the classroom. At the toddler stage, children are not developmentally ready to share their possessions with others.
4. Please pick up your toddler promptly at dismissal time. The very young child especially gains security through being pickup at the same time each day.
5. Check out with the attending adult and be sure to sign the attendance sheet each day. Unsigned attendance sheets will be billed for the entire day.
6. Check the lost and found frequently.

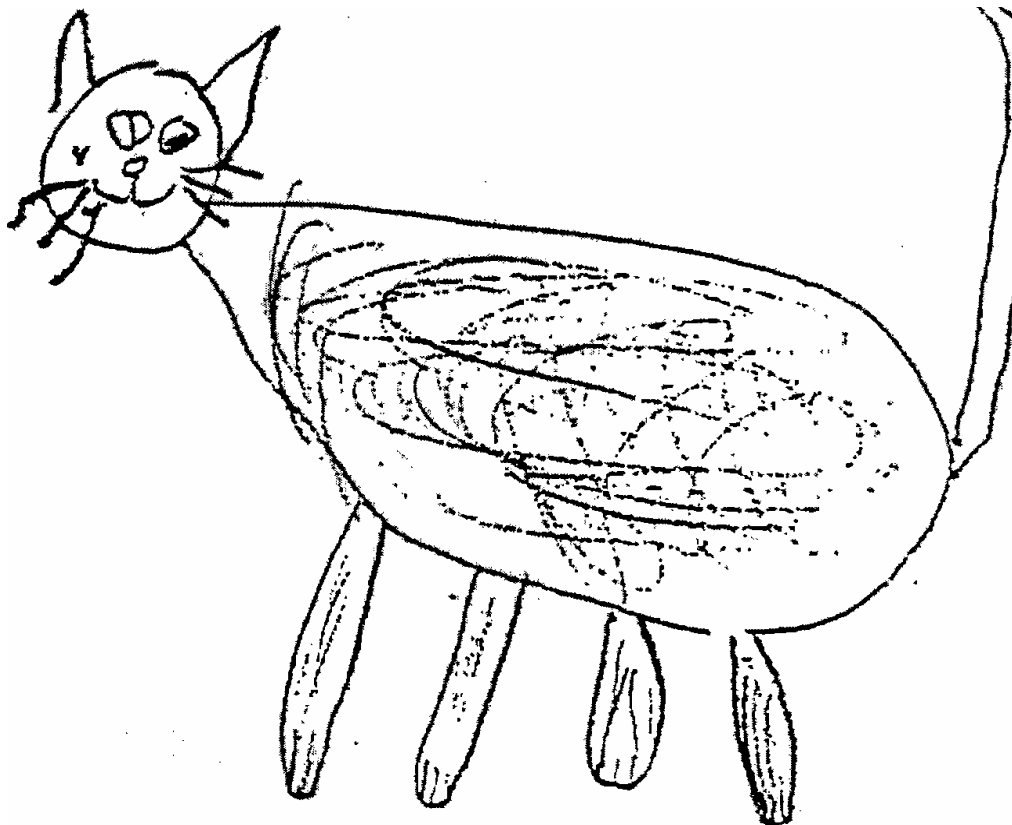
New Mexico State Requirements for Infant / Toddler Programs

- Infants shall have a regularly assigned crib.
- Each toddler shall have a regularly assigned crib, mat or cot.
- Linens shall be changed daily. If cots or mats are used they shall be disinfected daily.
- A child who falls asleep on the floor, in a swing, high chair etc., shall be placed in his or her crib.

Emphasis in activities shall be given to play as a learning aid growth experience.

1. Throughout the day, each infant and toddler shall receive, positive physical contact and attention such as being held, rocked, talked to and taken on walks inside and outside the center. All cries of infants shall be immediately responded to. No child shall be left to cry for more than five (5) minutes.
2. Routines relating to activities such as naptime, feeding, playing, diapering and toileting shall be used as opportunities for language development and other learning experiences.
3. While an infant is awake, the caregiver shall change the child's position and location periodically.
4. Infants and toddlers shall have an extended period of time each day to move freely by walking, creeping or crawling in safe, clean, warm and uncluttered area. A child who is awake shall not spend more than thirty (30) minutes of consecutive time in a crib, playpen, jump chair; swing or other confined space
5. Infants and toddlers shall be encouraged to play with a variety of developmentally appropriate safe toys and objects. There shall be at least three- (3) choices available for each child in the group at any one time. Playthings shall be washable.
6. Infants and toddlers shall be taken outside every day except during inclement weather or when restricted by a child's medical condition.
7. An adult-size rocking chair or other adult-size chair shall be provided for each group including infants and toddlers.
8. A dated daily log shall be kept on each child to include: diapering, toilet training, feeding and sleeping information.
This log shall be kept on file for one week.

*Preschool & Kindergarten
Programs
3-6 years*



The most important period of life is not the age of university studies, but the first one, the period from birth to age six. For that is the time when man's intelligence itself, his greatest implement, is being formed. But not only his intelligence, the full totality of his psychic powers... At no other age has the child greater need of an intelligent help, and any obstacle that impedes his creative work will lessen the chance he has of achieving perfection.

Maria Montessori

The 3-6 Year Old Program

Philosophy

The preschool programs for children from 3-6 involve a series of sequential, manipulative, and sensorial activities that ultimately bridge the gap between concrete and abstract learning.

Children work at tasks that help master motor skills and independence in their daily living. Sensorial exercises stimulate perceptions vital to growing minds, such as identifying and grading of shades of colors, shapes, weights, and smells, as children work with intriguing cylinders, geometric solids, and specially designed Montessori materials. As the child's interest grows, he is introduced to sequentially prepared lessons, individually or in a group.

Full-day sessions and half-day sessions (mornings) are available in the 3-6 year old program. Four and five year old (kindergarten) children attend full-day sessions to pursue in depth cultural, math and language studies.

Programs

Sessions

Full Day Programs run from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Morning programs run from 9:00 am till noon. Kindergarten is a full day program. Kindergarten children are generally in their third or fourth year of the 3-6 preschool program. The kindergarten curriculum is designed to prepare students for elementary level work. Most kindergarten children are ready to experience a full day of school by the time they are this age.

Student Pick-up

Full day school programs end at 3:00 pm. Parents sign out their children between 3:00 pm and 3:15 pm. After school childcare begins at 3:16 pm. The school closes at 6:00 pm.

Nap-Time Pick-up: *Should a preschool parent find it necessary to pickup a student during naptime: 1. Inform the office. 2. The office will inform the teacher. 3. The teacher will ready your child for pick-up outside of the classroom. We ask your cooperation in this matter so that there are as few as possible disturbances for the other children who are napping.*

First Day of School

These suggestions are offered to help you in preparing your preschool child for their first day at school. When children begin the Montessori experience, it is a big step in their young lives, and they need the interest of the family. It is best to talk about the beginning of school only a day or two before the actual date. Explain the situation briefly and calmly. Talking about specific activities could lead to disappointments, so speak in general terms.

On the first day, when you arrive at the class, give your child a friendly good-bye and leave your child in the care of the teacher. Make it a warm and brief good-bye. Then exit and refrain from returning, even if tearful cries beseech

you. Teachers will comfort a disappointed child and their success is dependent upon no interruptions. If your child discovers that you will return when he/she cries, a habit may begin that will grow more difficult in time. It works best for the child if the parents do not linger. Your child will sense your confidence in the teacher, and his/her fear should be dispelled. Do not be discouraged if your child does not relate many specifics about his/her school experience. Usually the child has been working with many different activities throughout the day and specific recall can be difficult. *Keep in mind that Montessori education is concerned with process rather than product, and therefore much of what your child has accomplished is being internalized.* You will notice that your child may bring home very few papers and other “products” as evidence of his/her schoolwork. You will need to be patient as your child gradually reveals his newly acquired skills and knowledge.

All new students are given a time period within which their adjustment is observed. Occasionally, there are instances in which the staff finds the program inappropriate to the needs of a particular child. If a child is not adjusting successfully, or the school is not serving the child’s needs, we will be in touch with the parent and assist them with alternative plans.

First Day Check List

Registration forms

Please have your forms completed on or before the first day of attendance.

Personal Articles

Please send an extra set of clothing to school with your child. All clothing should be labeled and brought in a zip-loc bag with the child’s name on the bag. Remember to change clothes for the seasons.

Lunch

Children bring their own lunch and snacks. Be sure the child’s name is labeled visibly on all items. We are unable to cook or refrigerate student lunches; ice packs are suggested. Jason’s deli school lunches are also available. See the office for details. Please see the section on food for helpful hints.

Clothing

Children need to wear season appropriate, comfortable, labeled clothing in which they can work and play without fear of getting dirty or messy. *Clothing should be easy for the child to remove independently.* Overalls, tights, tight snaps, etc., can be difficult for young children to remove by themselves and can make trips to the bathroom a problem. Footwear should be soft soled and non-slip. Shoes that act as toys are not permitted.

Preschool Daily Check List

1. **Please arrive at school on time.** Programs begin at 9:00 am. In order for preschool children to make a smooth transition into class time, parents should bring their children to school a few minutes beforehand. The school provides a 15 minute childcare “block” before school begins.

Preschool children who come late often miss the opening lesson and feel awkward about their tardiness. The concentration of the other classmates is interrupted when someone arrives late.

If you are running late to class, please meet your classroom teacher’s assistant outside the classroom door. Say your good-byes and leave happy children with the assistant who will quietly escort them into the classroom. Please prepare your child beforehand about being late to class. They are not in trouble. A quiet, smooth transition will be made by the classroom assistant. The assistant will not accept screaming children. If your child is upset, please calm them before coming to the classroom door. Calm them in your car or on the school playground so everyone will have a nice day.

2. **Please inform** the adult in attendance when you drop off or pick up your child.
3. **Make sure that your child does not bring gum, candy, money, toys, trading cards onto school grounds.** We have many interesting materials and constructive activities in the school. If the child feels they have a book, record, or something of educational interest, please discuss this with the teacher before bringing it into the classroom.
4. Please pick up your child promptly at dismissal time. Very young children gain security by being picked up at the same time everyday. Notify the teacher when you pick up your child, and be sure to sign out on the attendance sheet with the time of pick-up. **If possible, let your child know before hand, that they will be picked up at a different time than usual.**
5. **Check the lost and found frequently.**

The Elementary Programs



My vision of the future is no longer people taking exams and proceeding then on that certification, but of individuals passing from one stage of independence to a higher state, by means of their own activity through their own effort of will, which constitutes the inner evolution of the individual.

Maria Montessori

The Elementary Program

Philosophy

The Elementary School child occupies what Maria Montessori called the “second plane of development.” Children at this stage are in a period of rapid intellectual growth as they develop the ability for rapid thinking. Children want to know the how and why of things. Through exploration and experimentation, they discover the qualities and facts of the world. Self education is the mode which the elementary children learn most effectively. The teacher’s role is to provide and support children in this all important endeavor.

Dr. Montessori developed what she called the “cosmic curriculum” for this educational level. In the cosmic curriculum, children discover the history of the world and the human race, and in the process, begin to define their own place in the life of human kind and of nature. Sequentially, all things are naturally related to the creating of the universe and our earth. We encourage children to begin asking questions. Children pursue and research historical scientific, artistic, and cultural interests. Information is gleaned from a rich variety of literature, experiments, art projects, tapes, films and field excursions.

During the elementary years, children explore the academic world in increasing depth, through the related disciplines of mathematics, reading, penmanship, creative writing, research methods, art, music, science, botany, zoology, anatomy, history, geography, social/cultural studies, drama, and physical education; all is taught as parts and contributions to the whole. Multi-aged classrooms and a spirit of cooperation rather than competition, allow children to grow emotionally and intellectually at their own pace.

Our teaching must only answer the mental needs of the child, never dictate them.

Maria Montessori

Goals of the Montessori Elementary Program

We are committed to the Montessori approach to learning. Our Goals are for each child to learn:

To Study Independently in a program of Individualized Instruction

Individualized instruction does not mean one-to-one instruction. Some lessons occur in small groups.

To Work Cooperatively with Others in a Multi-Aged Setting Develops A Community Spirit

Children are free to work in groups of their own choosing for special projects or to accomplish their regular daily work. They practice problem solving methods within their small groups. They become effective community members.

To Think Abstractly and to use their Imagination through a Variety of Approaches and Open-Ended Exploration.

The imagination develops intensely in the elementary child. "To strike the imagination" is to get the child's interest. It leads to work, which leads to imaging, which leads to thinking.

To Work with colorful and dynamic 3-Dimensional Materials which put Abstract Ideas into Concrete Form

The Montessori Materials assist the child in reaching abstraction. Spatial time lines, pictorial zoology, fractional insets, and botany charts are a few of the many materials designed to move the child towards abstract thinking. They are a means to the end.

To Apply the "Basics" in order to answer the why, the how, and the wherefore within their world.

The 3 "Rs" serve as a tool enabling the child to move forward and peruse a wider curriculum. Math and language skills progress on an on-going basis, with the child practicing math problems and language arts lessons as expected.

And the student continues to use their basic skills through other studies in Montessori's Cultural Curriculum. Math is used to determine the distance between two cities on a map or to weigh specimens collected for studies in geology. Language arts skills come together as a child researches and reports on how the earth was formed, or how people live in another country, or which plants belong to the heliconia family. The child sees how music (rhythm, notation, etc.) relates to mathematics.

To Be self-Disciplined and Self Directed....

The Montessori Material aids the children in developing the ability to master their own thoughts and actions...on gaining control over

one's own being. The emphasis is on inner discipline. The children learn to take responsibility for their behavior. They make choices. They learn to take responsibility for their behavior. Later in life they will adapt to job situations without needing extra attention or direction from a supervisor.

To Solve Problems Creatively

The world is experiencing an accelerated rate of change. The education of the future must prepare students to cope with changes and to find solutions through means other than traditional educational methods and advice from experts.

Montessori children learn to approach many sources for their answers. They research different points of view. They look toward community for possible solutions. They learn to adapt to change and recognize their potential for shaping their own lives.

Standards of Progress

The Montessori elementary programs offer individualized instruction and evaluation. Students are grouped in a multi-aged setting, either ages 6-9 or 9-12, to allow for cognitive development without competition. Teachers evaluate the student's work in an on-going basis and meet twice annually, fall and spring, for a progress report with the parents. Parent-teacher conferences detail the progress of the student in each subject area, as well noting social and emotional growth.

Report Cards are issued twice a year to indicate the following:

1. The child's performance and comprehension in relation to the Montessori Curriculum and their individual growth within it.
2. The child's performance in relation to standard grade level requirements signified by a grading system. The grading system assists the family and future teachers in assisting the child to the appropriate grade level with any other school.

Furthermore, the school administers standardized tests as a means of comparison with students in other schools locally and nationally.

Students who are not working to capacity are required to finish their assignments as homework. Every effort will be made by the teachers to develop self-discipline and follow-through with each student. Parent cooperation in these areas may be required.

Elementary Admissions Policies

Maria Montessori devoted her life to developing an educational method comprised of sound child development practices and developmentally appropriate activities. Our school is modeled upon this dual system and we build our school policies from this base. We emphasize the importance of balance among the intellectual, social-emotional and physical needs of the child.

The mixed age grouping, which is a corner stone of the Montessori Method, allows ample time for the teachers to address the development of the complete child within each developmental stage. These stages are referred to as the 3-6, 6-9 and the 9-12 levels, and that each level may be beneficial for a child for three or even four years.

Basic requirements for admission into the elementary programs include the school dress code and:

6-9 level:

1. The child must be no younger than six years old on or before September 1 of the school year.
2. The child must be capable of attending to a given task for a specific time period. (Time varies with task)
3. The child must demonstrate self motivation and self control.
4. The child's maturity and emotional development is appropriate for first grade or above.

9-12 level:

1. The Child must be no younger than nine years old.
2. The child must be capable of attending to a given task for a specific time period. (Times varies with task)
3. The child must demonstrate self motivation and self control.
4. The child's maturity and emotional development is appropriate for fourth grade or above.

Recommended Readings:

Miseducation: Preschooler at Risk by David Elkind

The Hurried Child by David Elkind

Six to Nine Curriculum

Designed around the broad interests of the young elementary child, the 6-9 program offers an enriched and exciting integrated curriculum that is sequential and cumulative. Language and math are core subjects that are integrated throughout the entire program and all subjects are presented in complement to each other. Great lessons involving the Time Line of Life, geography, zoology and botany as to stir the imagination as they unveil the concept of order in the universe. The program goals are to develop within the child a sense of self worth, respect for others, and a quest for knowledge.

Nine to Twelve Curriculum

Building on the 6-9 curriculum and philosophy, the 9-12 extends academic and social concepts to higher levels of abstraction preparing students for middle school and beyond.

Children enjoy working with square root, beginning algebra concepts, and plane and solid geometry. Word functions, sentence diagramming, and clause and phrase analysis are just part of the whole language approach. Great Books and novel reading make language and reading skills fascinating. Early humans and great civilizations are a continuation of Time Line studies.

Beginning chemistry is explored in relation to the origin of the universe. Drama. Music and performance opportunities enrich the curriculum in the 9-12 classroom.

Elementary Daily Check List

Please

1. arrive to school on time.
2. follow the dress code.
3. remember your homework.
4. bring "healthy" food for lunch and daily snacks.
5. do not bring gum, candy or toys to school.
6. sign in & out accurately.
7. check the lost and found often.

Elementary Policies

Enrollment Dates & Entrance Requirements

Registration for the academic school year, mid-August-through May, begins in February of the previous school year. Students enter the program in the fall of each year. Students may be enrolled throughout the year should openings occur.

To enter the school, students need to have a background in Montessori education or experience in a similar learning situation. The philosophy of the home should complement that of the school. Children are interviewed and parents must observe school classrooms before the child is accepted into the program.

Absences

Please inform the office when your child is absent. During the course of an absence, parents should ask the teacher for homework assignments. *Absences of more than five days often seriously disrupt instruction and the learning process.* Parents need to be fully aware of the consequences of extended absences.

- When the absence is due to illness, the teacher will attempt to help the student make up work and tests.
- In all other extended absences, the parent must give written notification at least one week in advance.
- Extreme absence cases will be brought up to the school board.

Home Work

Elementary students have homework. Parents should help students establish a positive quiet atmosphere, where their child can read, write at a table and finish their homework assignments. Students not completing their class work are expected to complete their assignments as homework.

School Hours/Tardiness

Elementary classes begin at 9 am and end at 3pm Students are expected to be on time. Students who arrive late often feel awkward about their tardiness. The concentration of other students is interrupted when a student arrives late. *Continued tardiness may lead to suspension or dis-enrollment from the school.*

Dress Code

The Elementary Dress Code is found on page 47.

Tutoring

When it is assessed that a student is not working at their expected academic level, the school will highly suggest or require that the student receive outside tutoring.

Unsatisfactory Conduct Policy

Parents will be informed of behaviors that are difficult and disruptive in the classroom, on the playground or any school function. A student will be sent home immediately for any conduct that endangers another person or is considered totally impermissible by the teachers. The parents will be notified to pick up the child at the office where the Director or teacher in charge will discuss the matter with them.

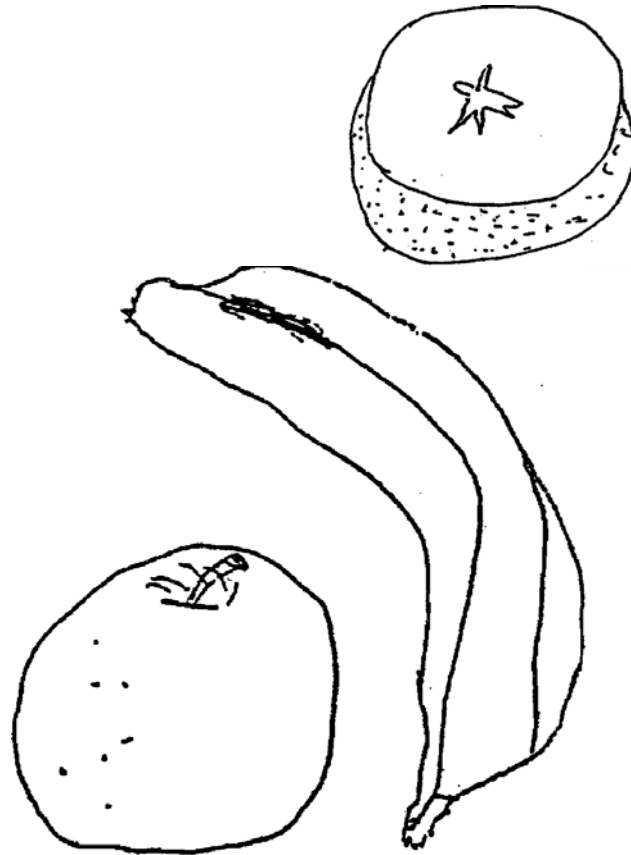
Depending on the circumstances, the student may need to remain out of school for one or two days. Parents will be advised as to how to handle the situation at home. The goal of the school is for the student to learn appropriate behavior and accept responsibility for their actions. The vast majority of infractions will be handled in the classroom context, but parent participation may be necessary in extreme cases.

In extreme cases a student may be dropped from the program. Such action would occur only when other channels of discipline have failed and the student's presence is jeopardizing the class program overall. Parents will be informed if a child's behavior warrants a "probationary period," before a dismissal occurs.

Student Cell Phone Policy

For the safety and security of all students, the school requires all **student cell phones** to be secured in the school office during the school day. Student cell phones must be deposited in the school office upon arrival and will be returned to students when they sign out with their parents. Students are not permitted to take pictures or record the voices of other students at any time.

Special Program



Education should no longer be mostly imparting knowledge, but must take a new path, seeking the release of human potentialities. The teacher...works in the service of the complete human being, able to exercise in freedom a self—

disciplined will and judgment, unperverted by prejudice and undistorted by fear.
Maria Montessori

Special Programs

Enrichment classes are offered as an extended program to the Montessori classroom. Field trips are scheduled when relative to the classroom curriculum. Annual school wide celebrations occur throughout the school year.

Due to time constraints, some enrichment classes may be scheduled until 3:15 pm. Please note that this classroom overtime happens during the free after school child care block.

The Music Program

Toddler & Preschoolers have a ball with **Mr. Frank Leto** and his musical genius. Preschoolers and elementary students are also introduced to the Montessori Bells and general music theory. Elementary students are introduced to classical music and general music theory. Elementary students also participate in the Montessori Steel Drum Band program directed by Mr. Frank.

The Art Program

Art is an integrated part of the children's daily curriculum. As a mode of creative expression, children are encouraged to relate to all aspects of their living and learning to this natural expression. In Art class, children might explore and expand lessons in science, history, geography, or math, while learning the basic techniques of drawing, painting, printmaking, cutting and pasting, clay modeling, and other three-dimensional forms.

Before & After Care Programs

For those parents whose working hours do not coincide with the beginning and ending of the school day, arrangements can be made for before and after school supervision. Childcare is available in the form of prepaid 15 minute blocks from 7:30 am to 8:45 am and from 3:15 pm to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. See current fee schedule.

During **After Care activities**, children are divided into separate age groups. Various scheduled activities including art, cooking, story time and play time are available. Homework club is also available. *After School Tutoring* for grades K-8. Learn from certified Montessori teachers K-8 Math, Reading and Study Skills.

Section 2 General School Policies and Procedures



General School Policies & Procedures

Visitors

Visitors are encouraged to call the office and request an appointment. Every visitor must have office approval to visit the school. Visitors will have a guide and information on observing a Montessori classroom. Visitors sign the Visitor Log Book.

Admission Procedures

Call the office and make an appointment to visit the school.

Office hours are: Monday through Wednesday: 9:00 am – 12:30 pm

Tour the school and observe the classroom. You will be given literature, fee information and an application packet if you are interested in the school.

How to apply:

- Fill out the Admission Application Packet and return it to the office.
- The office will then arrange an appointment for a teacher to interview your child.
- Shortly afterward, the teacher will meet with the parents to discuss the child's interview and readiness. The teacher will inform the office of the interview results and parent/teacher meeting decisions.
- If your child has been in school elsewhere, have **official records** sent to our school.
- An official request for school records form is available in our office.
- Students can be officially enrolled when
 - 1) the interview process is complete and approved and
 - 2) application forms, fees, transcripts and completed health forms are received, reviewed and accepted by the administration.
- If there is space available, your child will be assigned to a classroom or placed on a waiting list.
- Children currently enrolled and their siblings are given admission preference.

Classroom Placement

It is our prime objective to create well-balanced mixed-aged groupings in each classroom. Classroom and teacher requests by parents are given heavy consideration in deciding student placement, but the school ultimately has the responsibility to create the best Montessori balance/placement for each student enrolled.

Classroom Ratios

Our classrooms meet or exceed the NM State teacher/pupil ratio requirements. Toddlers have 6(or less) students to 1 teacher and preschool (3-6) have 12(or less) to 1 teacher. Elementary ratios vary depending on the grade.

Moving-up Procedures

Generally children stay in the classroom assigned at the beginning of the school term for the entire school year. However, should a parent or staff member feel that an early change is necessary; the following steps are taken:

- 1) The child is recommended for move-up by the adult.
- 2) Teachers from the next level observe the child in their current classroom.
- 3) Staff from both levels meet to discuss the readiness of the child.
- 4) If the staff agrees, the child will visit the next classroom.
- 5) There may be one visit, or several visits to determine if the child is actually ready and **if** "they want to stay" in the new room.
- 6) The staff and parents meet to discuss the readiness.
- 7) If **a consensus** is made that the child is ready and should move-up, arrangements will be made to make the change if and when there is a space available in the next classroom.
- 8) If there is currently no space available in the classroom of choice, the student will go into the classroom waiting list.
- 9) Parents of students who move up during the school year will be given a new classroom orientation and folder by the new classroom teachers within the first week of the classroom change.

Office Records

Enrollment contracts, health records which include immunizations, allergies or illnesses the school should be aware of, emergency contact numbers (two numbers in addition to parents') and the child's doctor's name and number are all required by the State of New Mexico. **This information must be kept current.** Parents should notify the school of any changes in these records.

The School forwards educational records on request to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Please inform the office if you do not consent to the release of any or all information about your child.

Documentation of legal status of the child, if applicable, such as, but not limited to: restraining orders, guardianship, powers of attorney, court orders, custody issues, etc., must be filed with the school office and the classroom teacher.

Student Assistance Team

The **Student Assistance Team (SAT)** is composed of the school Director, an experienced head teacher and the child's classroom teacher. **Upon teacher request, the team will observe and evaluate specific children and make a written plan with suggestions and recommendations to the classroom teachers and parents.** In some cases, the team may feel that more evaluation is necessary. Parents will then need to seek additional support outside the school to evaluate (perhaps test) the child's specific progress and needs. We hope that the **SAT** will provide parents with the additional information they need to make the best choices for their children.

Tuition & Fee Payments

Tuition payments are an investment in your child's education.

Families choose tuition from the following payment plans:

- A. Full Payment Plan.** Entire tuition is paid on or before enrollment.
- B. Monthly Payments are due on the first of each month. A late fee of 1.5% monthly (18% per annum) will be charged beginning the 11th.** Tuition payments are paid in 10 equal installments beginning in August. Charges for extra childcare, field trips and miscellaneous fees are billed separately each month. For students to attend school, bills must be paid in full each month. Students cannot be reregistered for summer school or the following year if bill payment is not current.

Late Pick-up Policy

Students being picked up after 6:00 pm will be given a Late Fee Slip which bills \$5.00 for each 5 minutes beyond 6:00 pm.

Students left past 6:15 pm with no notice to the school "must be considered as being abandoned". We are required by law to call NM/ CYFD to report any child abandoned.

Health Records & Requirements

New Mexico State Law requires that all children be properly immunized or provide an annual Immunization Exemption form. Please continue to provide the school with updated information.

- **Student Health Forms & Immunization Records** must be on file in the office.
- **Sick Children can not come to school.**
- Recovering students on medication need to fill out a **Medication Release Form.**

Medicine Policy

Please notify the office and teacher if medicine needs to be administered to your child. Complete a Medication Release Form available from the office, and include it with the medicine in a baggie. All medicine administered by the school must be sent in the original, labeled container. Do not send medicine with the students, in their lunchboxes or in their food.

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students

“The Montessori Day School admits students of any race, sex, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, national and ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion or disability in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.”

In Case of Accident / Illness

If a serious injury occurs we call 911 and then call the parents.

Parent should Contact the school office prior to class time if your child is absent due to illness or other causes. It is not necessary to speak directly with the teacher. When you have verification of the fact that your child has a communicable disease, please call the school immediately so that we can inform other parents. Because school children are easily susceptible to communicable diseases, the school reserves the right to make judgment concerning the child's ability to participate in daily school activities. Please do not send your child to school when he/she is ill. We send sick children home!

The following is a list of symptoms to guide you in deciding whether your child should be sent to school. Please do not send your child to school on days when any of the following symptoms are present:

Not available to participate in daily school activities

Fever, Rash, Cough

Discharge of discolored or profuse amounts of mucous from the nose.

Diarrhea, Vomiting

Sore Throat, Headache, body aches, general flu symptoms

If the children show any of the aforementioned symptoms, they are separated from the other children and allowed to rest on a mat. Parents are contacted to appraise the situation and determine what action is to be taken. If parents cannot be reached, then emergency numbers are called. If those contacts are unavailable then the school will determine if the child should go to the sick room provided by local hospitals. The hospital is the best alternative we can provide, since we do not have a sick room or staff appropriately to care for the sick children. The school will provide transportation to the sick room. Parents will be charged.

Each child is required to have an emergency release authorization form signed

by the responsible parent. In case of an accident at school, a parent is called immediately after first aid is given. **If a parent cannot be reached, the school will call a doctor or another appropriate measure will be taken, as detailed on the emergency release form.** The closest hospital is Lovelace Journal Center.

Attendance

School is a special time for learning and developing good work and social habits in children. To achieve continuity and clarity for the children, it is important that school follow a routine. Being on time is important. Children feel uncomfortable entering late and missing the first lessons of the day.

To ease school congestion, each student is given two childcare blocks of time each day. The first block is from 8:45- 9:00 am before school begins, and second childcare block is from 3:00- 3:15 pm each school day.

Student attendance sheets are provided for signing in and out. This information is crucial for the school and your child's safety. **Please be sure to sign in and out clearly and accurately on a daily basis.** When the accounting department can't read your information they bill the entire day. The front desk should be notified of any absences.

Daily Schedule

The School is open from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. School hours are from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Please feel free to call the office regarding any topic, question, or concern you may have that is not included in this handbook. **Please do not call a teacher to the telephone before or during class time. Messages will be given to the teacher.** Emergency calls will be handled immediately. We will be glad to help in any way possible.

Arrival and Dismissal

Preschool parents are encouraged to have their children at school by 8:45 am, 15 minutes prior to the beginning of classes in order to put their things away, socialize, and be ready for class. If the child is late, parents should escort the child to the office and the office will accompany the child to their classroom. This is extremely important and will avoid any disruption in the classroom routine. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of being on time and of making sure that your child's teacher knows of your plans. *Please note that children will not be released to an unauthorized person.*

Class is dismissed at 3:00 pm. Parents sign-out out then pick up children. Childcare begins at 3:16 pm. See Before and After Care Programs on page 27.

If you wish someone else to pick up your child, please provide the office with a signed, dated, written release with the name of the individual picking up your children. These notes will be kept on file. A new note needs to be written for each new situation. Individuals picking up children will need to bring identification. When there are changes in a student's pick-up time or transportation plans, please notify the teacher and office beforehand.

Cancellation of School

If it is necessary to cancel school for any reason, parents will be notified by the school staff. Please note scheduled school holidays as soon as possible. Working parents should be prepared for cancellations, as well as school holidays.

Snow Policy

We follow APS. "School Closed" means no school, no childcare. "Two Hour Delay" means classes start 2 hours later than usual. Because of possible staff delays, call first before bringing your children for childcare. Children will be accepted on a space available basis. Stay tuned to local TV stations for the latest information.

Car Pool Policy

Transportation is the responsibility of the parents. The school takes no responsibility or liability for personal transportation arrangements for students made by parents.

- **It is mandatory that the school be notified in writing of any children riding in the car pools.**
- **If someone other than a regular driver is to transport the children, a written note must be sent to the school. Children will not be released to an unauthorized person.** As car pools are formed, those parents involved should establish rules for conduct in the car pool, such as use of seat belts, care of personal possessions, and general comportment.
- **Each car pool driver is responsible for any changes within his/her carpool, not the teacher.**
- **We highly suggest that the car pool drivers have in their glove compartments the following information: name; address and telephone number of each child; business phone of the parents and doctor.** Each car pool driver is also responsible for gathering information from each child's parents, for signing in and signing out, and is required to fill the sign sheet completely on each child.

Transportation/Parent Parking

Parking Lot: **Please park your car in the parking lot. Be certain the motor is off. Children (and purses) should never be left in cars unattended. Never park in front of the trash dumpster.** We only have one pick up per week, and the city often changes our pick up times. If there is a car parked in front of the dumpster, they will skip us!

Field Trip Policy

Due to the wide spread in ages of the children, field trips will be selected and arranged by each class. **Parents will be notified and asked to fill out a permission and release form for each child in advance.** Children are usually transported by a local bus company.

- **In rare instances, where parent cars are used in transporting students: each preschool child must be secured in a car seat and older students in a seat belt. Please follow Federal car seat and seat belt guidelines.**
- Children are not permitted to sit in the front seats.
- Drivers need a valid driver's license and car insurance.
- Parents will be notified of the means of transportation.

Food

Parents, please provide well-balanced, nutritionally appropriate lunches for students. All foods need to be sent to school ready for the child to eat in containers that a child can open. **Please provide lunches with an appropriate amount of food.** Be sure to label lunch boxes and drinks. **jason's deli** also provides lunch for our school. See the front desk for details.

Snack

Preschool teachers prepare a **monthly snack calendar** and parents take turns bring classroom snack. Snacks are given each morning and afternoon. Snack is part of practical life activities.

Birthday Snack

Talk to your child's teacher about bringing a healthy birthday snack to share with the class for their birthday snack. Some ideas for snacks are cantaloupe, honeydew or watermelon slices, fresh fruits, cheese and whole wheat crackers, vegetable slices and dip, celery and cream cheese, muffins, etc. Birthday snacks should be brought in as child sized servings. **No peanut products please.**

Birthdays

Book Club

For many years, parents have donated books to the school in honor of their children's birthdays. A book plate is put in the front of the book thanking the family for the gift. Teachers read birthday books on birthdays as well as other times in the year.

Birthday Parties

We encourage parents to invite the whole class (or just boys or just girls) to home birthday parties.

Holiday Celebrations

We celebrate or acknowledge National Holidays. We also acknowledge many religious holidays from their historical perspective. We do not dress for or celebrate Halloween.

Parent Communications/Conferences

In the past, the school has found that a picture is really worth a thousand words and that observing a child in the classroom is an excellent preparation for the parent-teacher conference. Please feel free to make an appointment with the teacher and the office to observe your child's class before a conference.

There are two parent conferences scheduled during the school year, generally held once a semester. In addition, the staff may request a conference with you to help them better understand your child and his/her development in the classroom. This implies trust and mutual respect, plus a free flow of information between both parents. *For situations which can not wait until conference time, please make an appointment to meet after school with the teacher concerning any particular problems you might be experiencing, whether it be related to home or school.*

If you wish to have a special meeting with anyone of our staff members, please do not hesitate to call and make an appointment.

Observations

Toddler & 3-6

One of the most effective ways to understand your child's Montessori experience is through a classroom observation. Observations can be scheduled through the office. Remember that your own child will, at first, be very excited about your presence in the class. Sometimes young children will cling to their parents and refuse to work, or attempt the impossible, and show off. It might be a good idea to focus your attention on others in the room for an idea of how your child normally functions. With further visits you will find a more normal function.

In order that you may see a normal, working environment, we do ask your cooperation with use in these ways:

- **Please** avoid distracting the children. Remain silent and observe passively. You can respond to a child's interest in you by explaining you are here to see how the class works.
- **Please** remain seated in the area designed by the teacher. Do not walk around the classroom.
- **Please** do not interrupt the teacher during the class session. The teacher's first responsibility is to the children.
- **Complete** your observation at the agreed-upon time and return to the office. We will be happy to talk to you then.

Your observation will be made more meaningful by looking for these traits in the children:

- **Intrinsic motivation:** children are working and learning through their own choices and own direction.
- **Independence in Work:** children enjoy "working" and select one task then another tirelessly and independently.

- **Completed Work Cycles:** whatever activity is initiated by a child is carried out to its natural end signified by the return of the material to its proper place.
- **Respect:** children respect their friends' work and do not interrupt or attempt to make it their own. Materials are returned in a manner showing respect for the environment, as well as for a friend who will use it next.
- **Responsibility:** children take responsibility for their behavior with the materials. If a child spills, for example, he will independently remedy the problem.

Some of these qualities are certainly broad in scope and perhaps difficult to spot instantly. These are goals that we are moving toward in a Montessori environment. We are allowing the children the opportunity to grow and learn at their own pace; to develop those characteristics that we feel are natural to them in their early years. Such skills, if developed now, will be part of the child for life.

On the day of your scheduled observation, please go first to the office where you will be given any necessary information and escorted to your child's classroom.

Please reserve speaking with the teachers for a time when they are not involved in classroom supervision. The conferences are ideal to communicate in depth. The observation times are designed to give you an experience of the program and an idea about the functioning of your child in a Montessori classroom.

Elementary

Unlike the observations at the early childhood level, parents are invited to come into the elementary classroom at any time. You may examine the materials and observe the students about their work. You may spend a very brief time or spend the morning. Please reserve chatting with the teachers during class time. Please wait for a time when they are not involved in classroom supervision. The parent conference is an ideal time to communicate at depth. Scheduled observation times are designed to give you an opportunity to see the program and how your child is working through the curriculum.

Mailboxes

Parent Mailboxes are located at the front desk. You will receive office memos, billing information as well as general school and classroom information. Each classroom has a student mailbox for their work. Check both mailboxes daily.

E-Mail Communications

Parents can use email to contact the office. Parents may also sign up for the school e-mailing of information. E-Mail Forms are available in the office.

Newsletters

Monthly issues are a special treat for everyone. The editor loves to include

special pictures and quotes from children, parents and staff. Please remember to sign **the release form so you and your child may be included.**

Parent Group

Welcome! By enrolling your child into the school your family joins our school family and parents become Parent Group members. Parents have long played an important roll as partners in the educational process of the students in our school. The unique talents and gifts each parent shares with the school are essential to the successful achievement of our mission. The school thrives, in large part because of our generous parent body. Parents become involved with the school by donating talent, time and other resources. Parent involvement is the key to success and there are many ways to share your gifts.

Parent Nights

There will be various events throughout the year aimed at increasing your understanding Montessori philosophy and our school. Parent Nights are designed to answer our specific questions and provide enrichment ideas in the area of child rearing.

Parent Helpers/Visitors

Parents wishing to visit or help in a classroom must first inform the classroom teacher and then receive permission from the Director. Arrangements for available times will be scheduled through the office. All visitor and observers must obtain a visitors' badge from the office.

Changes at Home

In the event that a significant change occurs in your home, please consider informing the teacher as soon as possible. All information will be regarded as confidential. We will accept your judgment as to the kinds of changes, which may affect your child's behavior, security, and general well being. Common causes of distress include: either or both parents being away from home for any reason for an extended time; new person living in the home; illness or hospitalization within the family; accident or death within the family; new employment or moving.

Fire Drills

All school are required to have a fire drill each month. The Fire Marshall comes to our school annually to test our competency and equipment.

In order to train the children properly in the fire drill procedure, it is necessary to sound the alarm. Even though the teachers prepare the younger children in advance to calm their fear of the loud noise, they still become frightened when the alarm is sounded. We ask that parents talk with the child about the sound and let the child express how he/she feels about the experience. The fire drills are practiced at least once a month.

Discipline Philosophy/Policy

Behavioral problems are rare; however, when needed, the following disciplinary action occurs:

- Child sits slightly apart from class where he/she may hear and observe other children.
- When confrontation occurs, teacher and child or children “explore feelings” in a kind, positive manner. Occasionally it becomes necessary to remove a child from class and place them under the supervision of another teacher.

Children in need of discipline shall be removed from their activity and “set aside” for a brief period. This is usually one minute per year of child’s age.

- Teachers should be firm when needed, but supportive in exploring the feelings of any confrontation. If repetitive problems occur, the teacher will contact the parents to discuss the situation.

One of the ultimate goals of Montessori is to develop a self-disciplined individual. Discipline cannot be achieved through fear. Children must be aware that the teacher is compassionate of them and understands their limitations. Once this criteria has been established, power struggles will occur less often.

Children have the right to appropriately express their feelings: anger, hurt, frustration, etc. When aggressive behavior occurs, the children involved are taken aside by a teacher. The teacher will try to help them express their feelings verbally. With younger children, a teacher assists by giving them the language to communicate their feelings.

The teacher always tries to use a normal tone of voice when addressing children. In doing so the child is more ready to listen to what is being said rather than the way it is being said. The children’s natural instinct is to please and not to displease.

Conduct Policy

Parents will be informed of behaviors that are difficult and disruptive. A student will be sent home immediately for conduct that endangers another person or is considered totally inappropriate by the teachers. The parents will be notified to pick up the child at the school office where the Director or teacher in attendance will discuss the matter with them. Depending upon the circumstances, the student may be required to remain out of school for one or two days. Parents will be advised as how to handle the situation at home. The goal of the school is for the student to learn appropriate behavior and to accept responsibility for their actions. The vast majority of infractions will be handled in the classroom context. In extreme cases a student may be dropped from the program. Such action would occur when other channels of discipline have failed and the student’s presence is jeopardizing the class program overall. Parents will be informed if a child’s behavior warrants a “probationary” period, before dismissal occurs.

Playground Philosophy/Policy

Our primary goal is to offer a strong Montessori educational experience for your children in a safe environment. We want parents and students alike to feel secure when they are attending our school.

Feeling safe involves a child's physical and emotional well being. Lessons in life are on going as children learn appropriate social skills and community building. We need to remember they are children and they are learning.

The playground is the most dynamic area of the school to build positive ways of communication. It is, also, the most challenging, since more physical behavior is expected and appropriate.

When the behaviors become too aggressive or threatening to another child's feelings of safety, we must take action. The staff reaffirms our intentions to respond in an immediate and consistent manner. We need parent cooperation to ensure our success.

We define inappropriate behavior on the playground in two realms: aggressive and threatening physical actions, and verbal messages that offend and/or hurt others. Obviously, one primarily affects the physical well being while the other carries emotional upset. We plan to focus on immediate responses to situations we, as adults, deem unsafe in these areas. Naturally our observations and judgments will always be subjective in nature, requiring us to assess each incident on an individual basis.

Any child who threatens another child in a physical or verbal manner will be removed from the playground and taken to the office. In more serious instances, the child will be brought to the principal. From there, the parent(s) may be called and asked to take the child home immediately. Our message is to clearly communicate that threatening behavior is not acceptable in this school. With parent cooperation, we can help our children learn that there are consequences for their actions, and that it is a privilege to be in an environment that emphasizes respectful treatment of others.

School Clothing

Student clothing should be neat, clean, comfortable and appropriate for the weather. Preschool clothing should be easy for the child to manage and be washable. Clothes that have elastic waistbands are excellent. Items that snap, zip, or button easily are recommended. Please label all clothing. For safety, we require parents to have their children **wear soft soled** shoes (i.e. sneakers) to school. However, no flip-flops, sandals or boots please. They are dangerous on the play structures. Elementary Students follow the dress code on page 46.

Cold Weather /Jacket Policy

Children need to come to school prepared to go outside for recess in generally most weather. Please make sure your child has appropriate apparel labeled

with their name for changeable weather conditions, such as snow boots, coats, hats, gloves, and shoes. During winter, every child is required to wear a coat or warm jacket during playground time. Hats and gloves are highly suggested. Teachers decide if it is warm enough to remove jackets or coats once everyone is playing.

Personal Possessions

Students should not bring toys or trinkets to school. Guns, knives, swords, or weapons of any kind are not allowed, although objects of interest to be shared on show and tell day are gladly permitted. Please inform teachers of show and tell objects before school.

Bathroom Independence

Bathroom independence is easier if the preschool child wears garments with simple openings. Belts and one-piece suits are difficult for a young child to manage alone. Young children (two to four) are asked to provide two changes of clothing in a zip-loc bag in case of accidents. All items should be labeled. In supplying these changes of clothes, keep in mind the changing seasons and the growth of the child. Check periodically to see if a change is necessary.

Hygiene

Montessori education focuses on the respect of one's self and others. Therefore: All students must come to school well bathed in clean appropriate clothing each day.

Naps

Following lunch, all pre-K students rest 30 minutes before afternoon activities take place. Older children who do not nap will spend time in quiet activities. Younger children who nap, sleep as directed by their parents. The school provides mats and blankets.

Videos & Movies

Videos or movies must be "G" rated for preschool. Elementary parents will be consulted before students go on trips to the theater or Dynamax.

Lending Library

As an ongoing parent education service, the school has available videotapes and selected readings on Montessori education. Ask the office for information.

Confidentiality Policy

The school will not disclose information pertaining to an individual child or parents/guardians of the child to persons other than the school staff unless the parents or guardians of the child provide written permission for the disclosure or in an emergency situation.

Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Procedures

The school is required by law to document all signs of abuse and or neglect to and report the information to the proper authorities immediately.

Attitudes & Values

Ever wonder why your child may be developing an attitudes you don't support. Consider the entertainment they see on TV, videos or the movies. Young children do not understand the "teen" sense of humor. They believe that this is how "grown-ups" act.

Discipline Policy

Very few things are not permitted at the Montessori Day School. Specifically, we do not allow children to hurt one another, to damage materials in the environment or to act in a manner that is abusive or disrespectful to one's teacher and classmates. Children who do any of these things are removed from one's friends and activities for a short time. Isolation (in a visible area in the classroom) allows the child time to think about their behavior and to observe others who are behaving in an appropriate manner.

In any cases involving dangerous or disruptive actions, the teacher may choose to remove the child from the classroom to the school office or other designated area. In such a case, the parents will be informed and asked to cooperate with the school if it continues. In extreme cases a child may be sent home and return after a suspension period

Grievance Policy

Procedure:

1. Students and parents should speak to the student's teacher about the issue and ask for guidance.
2. If the issue does not resolve, the parents should send a written letter to the school Director/Principal.
3. The Principal/ Director will set up a meeting to discuss the issue with all parties involved.
4. The meeting will occur at the school, outside of school hours. The meeting will address the grievance/s and provide several suggestions for resolution.
5. A realistic time line for grievance resolution will be included within the suggestions for resolution.
6. At the end of the agreed upon time line, the parties will meet to discuss the progress of the resolution. If the progress meets all parties' satisfaction, a written statement will be created by the Principal/Director and signed by all parties. All parties will be given a copy of the signed Resolution of the Grievance.

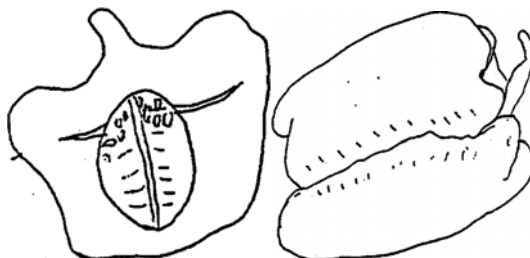
Bibliography of Montessori Readings

Reading List I

Montessori: Her Life and Work	E.M. Standing
Montessori and Your Child:	Terry Mallory
Montessori: A Modern Approach	Paula Polk Lillard
Teaching Montessori in the Home The Preschool Years	Elizabeth G. Hainstock
Teaching Montessori in the Home The School Years	Elizabeth G. Hainstock
A Parent's Guide to the Montessori Classroom	Aline D. Wolf

Reading List II

Education for a New World	Maria Montessori
To Educate the Human Potential	Maria Montessori
The Absorbent Mind	Maria Montessori
The Montessori Method	Maria Montessori
The Discovery of the Child	Maria Montessori
The Secret of Childhood	Maria Montessori
The Child in the Family	Maria Montessori
From Childhood to Adolescence	Maria Montessori



Major Points of the Montessori Method

It is based on observations of the true nature of the child.

Its application is universal. The results can be successfully achieved in any country, and with any racial, social, cultural, or economic group.

It reveals the small child as a lover of work, both of the intellect and mastery of the body (especially the hand.) This work is spontaneously chosen and carried out with profound joy.

Through his/her work, the child shows spontaneous discipline. This discipline originates within him/her and is not imposed from without. This discipline is real, as contrasted with artificial discipline of rewards and punishments prevalent under other methods.

It provides suitable occupations based on vital urges of the child at each stage of development. Each stage is successfully mastered before the next is attained.

It offers the child a maximum of spontaneity in choice of physical and mental activity. Nevertheless, the child reaches the same, or higher levels of scholastic attainment as under old systems.

Each child works at his/her own pace. The quick are not held back nor are the slowed pressured. There is much opportunity for group work, and the child spontaneously offers help with work they have mastered to those children who have not.

It enables the teacher to guide each child individually in each subject according to his/her own individual requirements.

It allows the child to grow in biological independence by respecting his/her needs and removing undue influence of the adult. It allows the child a large measure of liberty based on respect for the right of other. This liberty is not permissive license, but forms of the basis of real discipline.

It does away with competition as a major motivation for learning. The child competes with himself/herself. It presents endless opportunities for mutual work and help; these joyfully given and received.

The child works from his/her own free choice. This choice is preceded by knowledge and is thus a real choice.

The Montessori Method develops the whole personality of the child, not merely his/her intellectual faculties but also his/her power of deliberation, initiative and independent choice, with their emotional complements. By living as a free member of a real social community, the child is trained in those fundamental social qualities which form the basis of good citizenship.

Adapted and quoted from: *The Montessori Method: A Revolution in Education.*
E.M. Standing, The Academy Library Guild 1962.

Notice to Parents and Students

The Montessori Day School, Inc. (TMDS) Board hereby gives notice, as required by the Amended Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, to all parents and students under the age of 18 and to students 18 or older that:

TMDS maintains the following education records directly related to students:

1. Academic records
 2. Personal information records
 3. Disciplinary records
 4. Attendance records
 5. Health records
 6. Progress records
 7. Standardized testing records
- B. Access to education records is limited to:
1. Parents of students under 18.
 2. Parents of students over 18 if such student is dependent as such is defined in the Internal Revenue Code.
 3. Students.
 4. Officials of this school district who have a legitimate educational interest.
 5. State and local officials to whom information is required to be reported.
 6. Certain test organizations.
 7. Accredited organizations.
 8. Appropriate persons in connections with an emergency.
 9. Pursuant to subpoena or court order.
 10. To any person with the written consent of the parent of a student under 18, or the student over 18.
- C. TMDS policy requires that education records be kept to an essential and relevant minimum. Records are reviewed at the end of each year and non-essential or irrelevant material is deleted.
- D. TMDS policy limits the right of access to education records to the persons and under the circumstances indicated in paragraph B above. TMDS requires that copies be made available to persons entitled to copies at the cost of twenty five cents per page. TMDS, policy provides that explanations and interpretations of records are available upon reasonable advance notice. Some records such as standardized test scores and other material of a technical nature, may only be reviewed with a person qualified in interpret and explain such material and records. TMDS policy provides the right to challenge the contents of records. If records contain information on more than one student, the right to inspect relates only to that portion of the records concerning the particular student in question.
- E. Student's directory information may be released with prior consent unless the parent or student informs the principal within a reasonable period of time that any or all of the information should not be released without prior consent.
- Directory information includes:
1. Class.
 2. Student and parent names.
 3. Address.
 4. Telephone listing.
 5. Date of birth.

Questions regarding the child's education record should be directed to the TMDS school office.

Emergency Evacuation Plan / Policy

As part of the school's emergency preparedness plan, it is important to inform you about our school emergency evacuation plans. It is a state law that every school has an alternate location for their students in case of a natural disaster or other need to evacuate the facility.

1. Our first choice is Jason's deli one street south of the school because they are open early and are large enough to house our students. They also have enough goodies to feed the children till parent pick-up.
2. Our second choice is the Subway on San Pedro (just north of Paseo). They also have treats, but they are a little smaller facility.
3. Our third choice is our back door neighbor, Christ Community Fellowship Church located at 5908 Carmel Business Park, Carmel Ave. NE...they are good neighbors who use our playground on Sunday mornings. This choice is only good if someone is at the church.

We do not anticipate an event that would anticipate our vacating our property, but should we need to, it is important to know beforehand will be and how to reach us.

Jason's deli	5920 Holly Av NE	821-7100
Subway Sandwiches	8101 San Pedro NE	797-2298
Christ Community Fellowship	5908 Anaheim Av NE	797-3825

Elementary Dress Code Policy

The dress code is intended to create a safe, non-competitive, commercial-free school atmosphere.

Uniform guidelines for acceptable student dress and grooming:

Clothing:

Solid colors, plain, no logos:

- Unisex polo style shirts or blouses
- Unisex fitted straight leg chinos or jeans
- Unisex fitted shorts, knee length (2" above knee or longer)
- Girls knee length skirts or shorts (2" above knee or longer)
- Girls must wear shorts under dresses and skirts during PE and while on climbing equipment.
- Comfortable Plain athletic shoes or dress shoes with rubber soles that are appropriate for PE and recess.

Additional:

Dress and Grooming:

- Students and clothing need to be clean and neat each day
- Natural hair coloring only
- No make-up or body glitter
- Ear rings must be small and fit the ear- hot hang
- No tattoos or body piercing
- No jewelry in PE or recess
- We are not responsible for lost or stolen items
- Hats and sunglasses may be worn outside only
- Students should wear sunscreen daily

When students dress does not follow the dress code, parents will be called to bring dress code attire for the student or the student will be sent home.



Guidance Program & Policy

Philosophy

The Montessori philosophy is based on the concept of a child centered classroom community that has, at its roots, respect. Everything we teach, model for children and present as lessons has its foundation in appreciation. It is from this integrated management approach to guiding children into respectful educational opportunities that we teach our children. It is necessary that each teacher be educated in the Montessori Philosophy, and be knowledgeable with child development and current rearing practices. The “educated” as well as trained in the method, Montessori teacher is then able to meet the needs of the class and individual child.

The Program

Montessori Teachers look at children from the “planes of development” point of view. That means, that we do not group children into classes by age. We group children in groups of three year age spans. It is this multi-level grouping that helps in our classroom management, role modeling, peer teaching and guidance style of the classroom and child.

Things to look for while evaluating proper guidance in a Montessori classroom.

1. Are the children calm, and happily engaged in activities?
2. Is it hard to find the teacher? Is the teacher giving a lesson or observing the class? This means children are self directed.
3. Do the children treat the classroom, others and themselves with respect?
4. Do children share freely with each other and enjoy happy conversation while at their tasks?
5. Do the children interrupt the teacher or other children doing work?
6. Do the children take pride in their work? Do they treat it with respect?
7. Do children take pride in the room? Do they freely help to maintain the room?

Classroom Management

There are basic rules that we follow in order to maintain order and guidance in the Montessori classroom. We believe freedom is a gift to be treasured. Appropriate freedoms are given as children develop self control and a sense of responsibility.

We believe that to let children do as they wish without a sense of control is to destroy the sense of pride that comes from learning responsibility.

In conclusion, the Montessori classroom is a little micro-community that develops trust and honesty, built on respect. This is the nature of our program. Guidance is built into the system. **Below is the**

Classroom Management Plan

Teachers are evaluated by this standard.

Child's Rights:

The child is free to work with any material displayed in the environment.

- **Child's Responsibilities:** The child must use it with respectfully, that is they must not harm the material, themselves or others. They must not use it in any way that disturbs the activities of others in the environment. They must know how to use it, i.e. they should have had a lesson on it.

Child's Rights:

The child may work on a table or rug, whichever is suitable for the selected work.

- **Child's Responsibilities:** The child may not work at or on a display shelf as their presence there would obstruct the other children's access to the materials.

Child's Rights:

The child has the freedom to use the room as his needs dictate in the above rights.

- **Child's Responsibilities:** The child restores the environment during and after an exercise. They are responsible for mopping their own spills, rolling their own rug, placing their chair under the table, and returning their work to the appropriate place on the appropriate shelf.

Child's Rights:

The child has the right to work undistracted by others. They may initiate, complete, or repeat an exercise alone and without a break of their concentration cycle.

- **Child's Responsibilities:** No child touches the work of another without their invitation to do so. No child is allowed to interfere with another's learning cycle. (This provides security for the child involved in the exercise to continue it to its completion.) If they must leave the work temporarily, they can continue later, confident that it will be as they left it when they return.

Child's Rights:

The child has the right not to join a group activity. He may continue working in an individual exercise, or they sit apart as an observer without being an active participant.

- **Child's Responsibilities:** The child is not allowed to interfere or disrupt an activity they have chosen not to join; this is their responsibility to the group.

Child's Rights:

The child has the right to work alone.

- **Child's Responsibilities:** A child is not forced or even encouraged to share work. Generosity develops from within as a child matures and gains self-security. With adequate materials and supportive ground rules, sharing comes naturally, in cases where sharing is appropriate or necessary.

Child's Rights:

The child has the right to do nothing if they desire. They may be learning by observing others, thinking, or simply relaxing.

- **Child's Responsibilities:** Their idleness is not allowed to disturb or distract others' activities.

TMDS
Chain of Command

School Principal
Algene Herrick

Office Manager
Pilar Leto

Business Manager
Margaret Cassidy-Baca

To contact the above, call the school at 822-0140.
In an emergency call the Principal at 417-3205.

CODE OF ETHICS
OF THE
AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

Adopted by the AMS Board of Directors October, 1969. Expanded June, 1975

As American Montessori Society members, we pledge to conduct ourselves professionally and personally in ways that will reflect our respect for each other and for the children we serve. We will do whatever is within our talents and capacity to protect the rights of each child to have the freedom and opportunity to develop his full potential.

PRINCIPLE I – Commitment to the Student

In fulfillment of the obligation to the children, the educator:

1. Shall encourage independent action in the pursuit of learning
2. Shall protect the opportunity to provide for participation in educational programs without regard to race, sex, color, creed or national origin.
3. Shall protect the health and safety of students
4. Shall honor professional commitments, maintain obligations and contracts while never soliciting nor involving students or their parents in schemes for commercial gain
5. Shall keep in confidence information that has been secured in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law

PRINCIPLE II – Commitment to the Public

The Montessori educator shares in the responsibility for the development of policy relating to the extension of educational opportunity for all and for interpreting educational programs and policies to the public.

In fulfilling these goals, the educator:

1. Shall support his professional society and not misrepresent its policies in public discussion. Whenever speaking or writing about policies, the educator should take the precaution to distinguish his private views from the official position of the Society
2. Shall not interfere with nor exploit the rights and responsibilities of colleagues within the teaching profession

PRINCIPLE III – Commitment to the Profession

The Montessori educator makes efforts to raise professional standards and conditions to attract persons worth of trust to careers in Montessori education.

In fulfilling these goals the educator:

1. Shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the Montessori education profession
2. Shall represent his own professional qualification with clarity and true intent
3. Shall apply for, accept, offer, recommend, and assign professional positions and responsibilities on the basis of professional preparation and legal qualifications
4. Shall use honest and effective methods of administering his duties, use of time and conducting business.

ALL AMS Montessori teachers, members and AMS Schools Affiliates are expected to uphold and abide by the CODE OF ETHICS.