



Community Guide and Handbook

2022—2023

Toddler – High School

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www.montessoriacad.org

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Board of Directors

The Board of Directors functions to oversee the financial viability of the school as well as the strategic path upon which it travels. The board is involved in major financial issues if they arise, approves the annual review of tuition levels, and sets governance policy. The board also oversees the Head of School.



Accreditations

American Montessori Society (AMS)
AdvancEd (formerly Southern Association of Colleges & Schools - SACS)
International Montessori Council (IMC)

Not-For-Profit School

Montessori Academy, Inc. is a Tennessee not-for-profit corporation per IRS code 501(C)3.

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[2022-2023 School Calendar](#)



1. WELCOME FROM MONTESSORI ACADEMY ADMINISTRATION

Welcome to Montessori Academy! We are an accredited Montessori school that fosters a love for life-long learning within every student and are delighted your family is going to be a part of our community.

You have chosen to join the most amazing school! Our staff is made up of highly educated professionals who have dedicated their career to Montessori education and are fully prepared to provide a quality, nurturing experience to educate the whole child. Montessori philosophy is based in the science of child development, which all our staff are experts on.

Montessori Academy is a community of adults and children, working in tandem, to meet the needs of each individual learner. We strongly encourage an open and honest dialogue among staff members and parents to ensure that each child's needs are met to the fullest degree.

Please read this guide carefully to ensure that you are aware of our policies and procedures. The goal of this guide is to represent the spirit of the positive expectations of everyone within our school community as well as provide knowledge about protocols and procedures. Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have questions, concerns, or ideas to share. We look forward to an exciting journey with your family filled with purposeful learning, genuine laughter, and celebration of community!

Warmly,

Montessori Academy Administration

2. MISSION, VISION, AND PHILOSOPHY

2.1 Our Mission

Our mission is educating and inspiring life-long learners.

2.2 Our Vision

Our vision is to be a community that supports, encourages, and empowers all students to reach their full, unique potential. We accomplish our vision by fostering social, emotional, physical, and academic development in an environment that encourages curiosity, exploration, and a love of learning.

2.3 Our Philosophy of Education at Montessori Academy

- Montessori Academy is a safe place where students feel accepted, secure, and loved. Each of our students is treated with *kindness and respect*.
- Curriculum extends beyond the State of Tennessee curriculum requirements and is comprehensive, rich, and effective.
- Instruction is carried out individually, and in small and large sharing groups.
- Our positively stated ground rules help to develop and maintain a community that reflects harmony and respect for the environment, one's peers and oneself.
- Multi-age students bond as a community that reflects peace and respect. Each year first-year and new students move into established classrooms. Older students *mentor* the first-year students and become the leaders in the class.
- Each classroom is guided by Montessori certified and trained teachers.
- Teachers and students speak quietly in the classroom. Students respect the need of their peers to concentrate during work time.
- Montessori materials are sequentially arranged. The materials invite hands-on learning and stimulate motivation.
- Students organize their daily/weekly plans and are expected to do most work at school. They work independently and can finish their work without being stopped by the "bell".
- Students become increasingly excited about learning.
- Accountability and responsibility are basic tenets of Montessori philosophy.
- Use of the peace rose (in Lower Elementary) teaches conflict resolution skills.
- Students develop confidence and leadership skills.
- Students are exposed to foreign language beginning in Primary and through High School.
- Life skills are taught at every level at Montessori Academy.
- In LE and above, students have "Character Development" discussions and lessons, concentrating on developing accountability, confidence, conflict resolution, leadership, motivation, organization, self-respect, and responsibility.
- A strong partnering of teachers, parents and students enables students to achieve their maximum potential academically, physically, socially, and spiritually at Montessori Academy.

3. ACCREDITATION & ORGANIZATION

3.1 Affiliations and Accreditations

Montessori schools vary greatly in interpretation, consistency, and teacher training. In the United States, there are over 5,000 Montessori schools with varying degrees of competence, standards and sizes. Some schools are connected with and funded by churches, and others are privately owned. Montessori schools are not franchised.

Montessori teacher training is extensive and essential to the excellence of the classrooms. To be fully certified as a Montessori teacher, one must have the minimum of a Bachelor's degree and successfully complete an accredited teacher training program.

In the mid-1990s, Montessori Academy became jointly accredited by AMS (American Montessori Society) and SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools). There are only 217 AMS accredited schools in the nation currently. In Tennessee, there are only three AMS accredited schools: Montessori Academy, our satellite school in Clarksville (Amare Montessori) and Lamplighter Montessori in Cordova, Tennessee. Montessori Academy is also accredited by the International Montessori Council (IMC). As an accredited school we strive to embody the values and high standards set forth by AMS.

3.2 Child-Care Licensing

Our Toddler and Primary Programs are certified by the Tennessee Department of Education. A copy of the *Rules of the Tennessee Department of Education State Board of Education* is in the Administrative Office and is available for review by parents.

3.3 Organizational Structure

Toddler: (18-36 months)

A Toddler class begins the educational process during the sensitive period for language and movement, from 18 months – 36 months. In this class, Toddlers are encouraged to have independence and to explore and make choices in a safe environment. Toddlers are given many opportunities for learning, including being taught to care for their own needs and the needs of the classroom. They love to help set the table for snack, fold laundry, sweep crumbs off the floor, wash dishes, and learn to put their belongings away. They also have available Montessori materials, which teach language, counting, sorting, and all about the world around them. The learning environment is home-like and fully equipped with Montessori materials, outdoor play area and a full-size gym. Montessori Toddler programs worldwide are very successful in meeting the developmental needs of Toddlers and allowing children the freedom to develop in a rich and joyful environment.

A child may be ready for our Primary program when ...

- Turns three by September 30 of desired school year (Turns five on or before Aug. 15 for the Kindergarten year of Primary)
- Separates from you with little difficulty
- Can communicate wants and needs
- Is independent in the restroom
- Follows simple directions
- Demonstrates age-appropriate ability to focus
- Demonstrates age-appropriate independence
- Can rest quietly for 90 minutes without adult one-on-one attention (20-30 minutes for Kindergarten year of Primary)
- Has completed all recommended screenings and/or evaluations

Primary: (3-6 years, including Kindergarten)

Primary students enjoy and need repetition. The environment is sequenced so that the student can move from less to more difficult work. During work time students are absorbed in a lesson they have chosen. The student receives a presentation of how to do the lesson and then may repeat it as many times as desired. If the student chooses the same work repeatedly throughout a week or two it is because the student has discovered the satisfaction of skill-building and mastery. The key to mastery is the desire to skill-build. Mastery produces confidence and the motivation to try another task. Kindergarten is the last year of our PR program. Our extensive curriculum prepares our children for LE.

Lower Elementary (6-9 years, 1st-3rd levels)

When the Primary student meets the exit requirements and moves up to LE, the student is welcomed into a classroom of helpful students with beautifully arranged, more advanced materials. The ground rules are important, especially in the areas of respect, kindness and caring. Work time continues to involve the use of appropriately sequenced Montessori materials and more advanced science, history, and literature curriculum. Each classroom's library allows the student to develop research skills. The multi-aged classroom gives the younger student the opportunity to observe the older student complete advanced work. Mentoring is a critical life skill that is taught and practiced in our multi-level classrooms which helps to develop leadership skills. Beginning at the 3rd level, students take yearly standardized tests.

Upper Elementary (4th-6th levels) and Middle School (7th-8th levels)

Upon completion of LE, a student is welcomed into an already established UE class and is ready for the most advanced Montessori materials. Work time continues to be the concentration with the exploration of a variety of subjects. Students are expected to do most, if not all, of their work at school, edit their written papers, write the results of science experiments, give oral reports, and improve computer keyboarding skills in speed and accuracy.

An important component of Montessori educational instruction is to design a classroom environment which is conducive to learning. The students continue to move from concrete toward abstract thinking, working from the big picture to increasing detail. The foundational materials, which serve as the backbone of the Montessori philosophy, will continue to be utilized and expanded upon as needed. The math, science, language, history, and geography materials give the students full advantage for comprehension and application of basic concepts as well as continue to build higher level thinking skills including analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

High School (9th-12th levels)

Maria Montessori described the high school environment as a "center for study and work." Students work with their teachers and advisors to evaluate their previous coursework, current interests, and future goals to choose classes and electives that best meet their needs. Our academic portal offers each student the opportunity to select individual courses that fit their needs and interests from a vast library of options. Curriculum is uniquely presented through an integrated approach.

A student's day consists of self-study, Socratic seminars, service-learning projects, foreign language electives, career development, limited direct instruction in core subjects, and our exceptional fine arts programs with offerings in band, strings, chorus, and composition. Where applicable, curriculum can be technology driven with electronic textbooks and assessments through an educational portal with student and instructor access.

4. MONTESSORI ACADEMY COMMUNITY

4.1 Parent Responsibilities

- Be positive and supportive community members
- Speak kindly to respectfully to all school staff
- Be proactive about requests your teachers make concerning your child
- Be sure your child arrives on time each day.
 - Toddler/Primary by 8:15 a.m. and LE & Older by 8:00 a.m.
- Build independence in your child through daily responsibilities at home.
- Communicate with teachers (ex. going out of town, new baby, death or change in family).
- Read the school-wide newsletter and communication from the administration and teachers.
- Attend Conferences and "All School Events" and become involved in the school community.
- Look over your child's work in the Friday Folder and return the folder on Monday.
- Observe in your child's classroom to gain a better understanding of how the classroom functions.
- Enjoy and explore the world through nightly reading with your child.
- If you have any concerns or questions, contact your child's teachers or Director.
- Read Community Guide and return Acknowledgement Form (Appendix A1). (DOE Requirement)

4.2 Teacher Responsibilities

- Create a peaceful, stimulating environment where children can learn.
- Convey friendliness, caring, and respect to students and parents.
- Communicate with parents.
- Clarify academic and social requirements to students and parents at each level.
- Facilitate the students' social and emotional development.
- **LE-HS:** Meet with students regularly to discuss assignments, issues and review progress, prepare daily/weekly and monthly assignments.

4.3 Student Responsibilities

- Know and follow the classroom Ground Rules.
- Dress in accordance with our Dress Code.
- Be polite, considerate, mannerly, and courteous to peers, teachers, and adults.
- Be a contributing, positive member of Montessori Academy's student community.
- **LE-HS:** Help develop family and personal routine for a successful school week.
 - Be responsible for book bag, lunch box, and personal property.
 - Complete weekly/monthly assignments on time and to the best of your ability.
 - Complete unfinished work at home and return it to school promptly.

4.4 Parent Coordinator Program

This program gives parents the chance to volunteer for the Montessori Academy Community. Parent Coordinators help in organizing school picnics, raising money for teacher professional development and school needs, coordinating food and toy drives and assisting teachers with classroom projects. Please contact Kara Holt - kara.pound@gmail.com.

5. ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT RECORDS

5.1 Enrollment Policy

Montessori Academy admits students of any race, gender, religion, or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to any student. Montessori Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, or ethnic origin in administration or educational policies or in any school programs.

Kindergarten Age Admission Policy: Children entering Kindergarten shall be 5 years of age on or before August 15. Our Montessori 3-6 program allows for children to continue to be challenged academically and excel as they grow socially and emotionally. Unlike traditional classrooms, there is no "ceiling" on what a child can learn in any of our classrooms. Sometimes children who turn 5 on or before Aug. 15 may still need an additional year in Primary before beginning the K year. Any questions about readiness for Kindergarten should be directed to [Adrienne Baker](#), Primary Director.

Montessori Academy reserves the right...

Montessori Academy reserves the right to suspend, dismiss, or require the immediate withdrawal of any student or family at any time if, at the sole discretion of Montessori Academy's Head of School, a student's work or the conduct or influence of a student or parent/guardian (on or off campus) falls below acceptable educational or social standards. Each student's enrollment is subject to the rules and policies of Montessori Academy, as interpreted by the Head of School.

5.2 Withdrawal Policy

Montessori Academy has a well-established withdrawal policy that is included in the "Enrollment Agreement." If you have any questions about this policy, or if you have any special circumstances that are not addressed in the policy, please feel free to discuss your concerns with the Head of School. (See the Discipline Procedures section of this Community Guide for other dismissal circumstances.) The withdrawal policy is as follows:

To be released from this contract, an e mail must be sent to the Head of School with a full calendar month notice of intent to withdraw, or tuition will be owed for the following month. Student's enrollment is subject to the general statements, rules, policies, and financial terms of Montessori Academy (as stated in the Community Guide and future revisions).

5.3 Student Records

Files are kept for each student at Montessori Academy. Access to the files is limited to the Administration, the student's parents and the student's teachers. Any request for records to be sent to another school must be approved by parents and a form signed. Student records will not be released if there is a balance owed on the account. Student accident reports, immunization forms, and standardized test scores will be kept permanently.

6. FINANCES

6.1 Tuition

Tuition is due on the 1st day of each month. A \$25 late fee must accompany payments received after the 4th. If necessary, a parent may temporarily make weekly payments to avoid going into arrears or losing the child's space. Montessori Academy reserves the right to fill a child's space if tuition is not paid in full by the 4th of each month unless arrangements have been made with the Head of School.

You will not receive a bill unless you are late on your payment. If receipts are needed, email your request to cprather@montessoriacad.org. If paying by check or cash, bring it to the box on the wall beside Mrs. Prather's desk. Please do not send your check in with your child or give it to a teacher.

It is a parent's responsibility to pay any NSF and bank fees that are incurred from returned checks, ACH debits, etc. These fees will be added to the Family Portal account.

If making any payments via Venmo, please include an additional 2% over the payment amount to cover the cost of Venmo's standard transaction fee.

For questions, please contact [Anna Sitter](#), Director of Finance & Operations.

[2022-2023 Tuition Rates](#)

6.2 Tuition Discounts

- A 2% discount is applied to yearly tuition (not After Care) if paid in full before August 1, 2022.
- Families receive a \$50 per month sibling discount on the 2nd child's tuition. Families receive a \$100 per month sibling discount on the 3rd child's tuition. Families receive a \$150 per month sibling discount on the 4th child's tuition.
- Families with 2 or more students in Elementary and above receive an additional \$50 per month discount.

*4-Step Student Referral Program: \$250 credit

1. Refer a family to MA...
2. Once the child is enrolled and begins...
3. New family mentions you referred them...
4. You earn a \$250 credit on your account *per child* enrolled, (or if you pre-pay the entire year, then MA will write you a check).

6.3 Policy for Payment by Electronic Bill Pay

The preferred payment method is ACH Automatic Debit.

[ACH Authorization Form](#)

Payments can also be made via the online [Family Portal](#). An additional option is using your bank's online bill-pay system just like you electronically pay your other bills. Use your child's name as the account number. To allow five days processing time, put the due date as the 25th of the prior month for us to receive it on the first.

7. GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

7.1 Safety

7.1.1 Emergency Situations

Montessori Academy has procedures in place in the event of a weather emergency, fire, lockdown or bomb threat. All classrooms have designated "safe places" and exit plans, depending on the nature of the emergency. All staff members are trained in the procedures and classrooms have regular drills to practice evacuation and lock down procedures. Please contact the Administration Office if you would like more information on the specifics of the emergency plans.

7.1.2 Crisis Management Plan

The safety of children and staff is always our top priority. In the event of a crisis, highest ranking administrators will make safety and physical needs decisions based upon the information available at the time. The following address the most basic and primary concerns:

Communication Challenges: Communication with parents is offered in multiple formats. In the event of a crisis, not all communication forms will be available, but administrators will take the following steps to encompass as many forms of communication as possible:

1. Text message to parents via Reneb
2. All school email blast
3. Phone list with parent phone numbers as well as parent approved secondary contacts

Location of Children: Keeping children on the MA property is always the first choice due to transportation issues. Parents are advised to check with their parent approved secondary pick-up list (grandparents, friends, etc.). Children will be in campus locations as follows:

- Normal campus locations (classrooms and after care locations)
- Normal "Safe Place" locations specified for each classroom
- Gymnasium, Administration Building, Fine Arts Building
- Campus property – Ex. Baseball Field, Big Rock

Continuing Operations: Covered in the MA Emergency Recovery Plan and allows room for flexibility as needed.

7.1.3 Minor Accidents

Minor accidents that happen at school will be promptly treated by a staff member and the parents will be notified either by phone or through a note/email. We are only authorized to use soap/water/hydrogen peroxide on wounds (DOE stipulation). Our classroom teachers and after care teachers are all trained in CPR/First Aid and are required to keep their CPR/First Aid certification current.

7.1.4 Asbestos Inspection & Smoke Free Environment

Montessori Academy is an Asbestos-Free School. The result of the inspection done by Law Engineering Firm is on file in the Montessori Academy office.

Montessori Academy ensures a smoke free environment campus wide.

7.1.5 Tools & Activities

Students may be exposed to the following real tools and activities as part of the Montessori curriculum. There are risks involved with these activities and/or tools.

- Woodwork/Carpentry -- Screwing, Sanding, Drilling, Sawing (hand & electric), Nailing, Staining/
- Painting
- Cooking -- Use of knives, stove, oven, grater, etc.
- Nature Study -- Digging, Cutting/Pruning, Weeding, Low Lying Tree/Rock Climbing, Rope Climbing/Swinging; Encounters with local plant/animal life requiring precaution. Nature hikes as a group.
- Household items-- Iron, Needles, Sewing Machines, Hot Glue Gun, Super Glue.

Children receive safety lessons and presentations BEFORE they can use tools for work. Please note that many of these activities and use of tools require the use of protective eyewear and/or gloves and adult supervision. Children who misuse tools will be prohibited from using them until they receive follow-up lessons and demonstrate responsibility for the use of materials generally.

7.2 Health

7.2.1 Sickness Policy

One of the most important ways we can keep our classrooms free of illness is to ensure that the children who attend the program every day are healthy. Children are given a routine visual health check each day upon arrival. Any child who shows symptoms of being ill or infectious will not be admitted to school. Students displaying symptoms during the school day will be sent home from school.

ILLNESS/EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL:

Regular attendance is important; however, there is no advantage to sending a sick child to school. Not only does a sick child pose a risk of infection to other children, but a sick child also (even one who is not contagious) cannot function effectively in the environment. We WILL NOT keep actively sick children, and it is the parent's responsibility to make alternative arrangements for care in the event of illness. We will call if your child is ill and your child MUST BE PICKED UP WITHIN AN HOUR OF THE FIRST CALL TO THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN. Though extremely rare, it is possible that MA could close a classroom or entire department if there is widespread illness in students and/or teachers.

A physician's report form must be completed before a child may return when:

- 1) A child has had a diagnosed communicable disease, (Strep throat, pink eye, impetigo, measles, etc.).
- 2) A child has undergone surgery or has been hospitalized.
- 3) A child has been seen by a doctor because of illness.

A child MAY NOT come to school if any of the following conditions exist:

- **FEVER:** of 100-degrees OR HIGHER (Underarm temperature of 99 or higher): A fever indicates that a body is under stress or is fighting infection. With a fever, the child should be given time to rest, recover, and regain strength even if fever suppressants are effective in reducing the fever. Even if the fever is caused by a non-contagious illness, the child may not attend school. A child may come back to school after 24 hours if they are symptom free (without fever suppressants).
- **RASH:** If your child develops a rash and the cause is not known, we will ask that the doctor check out the rash and verify in writing that it is not contagious. With a note from the child's doctor, we will administer lotion or salve to treat Poison Ivy, Poison Oak, or bad chigger, flea, or mosquito bites.
- **DISCHARGE:** From the eyes or ears; inflammation of the eyes
- **SORE THROAT or PERSISTENT RATTILING COUGH:** Child may return to school with doctor's note.
- **STREP THROAT:** Children who have been diagnosed with Strep Throat cannot return to school until they have had three doses of their medicine, which is usually 24 hours after they have started their medication.
- **FRESH COLD:** A constant runny nose with green or yellow mucus.
- **PINK EYES:** With or without discharge
- **VOMITING:** A child may come back to school after 24 hours has passed since the last episode without medication.

7.2.1 Sickness Policy (continued)

- DIARRHEA: A child may come back to school after 24 hours has passed since the last episode without medication
- OPEN SORES: From Impetigo; Hand, Foot & Mouth, Cold Sores
- CONTAGIOUS CONDITION: Any Type
- Any health condition that prohibits the child from FULL PARTICIPATION in the program, or which the teacher or school believes to be unhealthy for the child or other exposed children.
- LICE: The student must have a note stating that they have been treated from Lice Solutions or a trained Lice Professional prior to returning after lice has been identified.

Should a child require constant one on one attention, become ill during the day, or arrive too ill to participate in the activities of the day (in the opinion of the teacher and in consultation with the Director), the parent will be notified to pick up their child. If we are unable to reach the parent(s), we will call the contacts on the Emergency Contact sheet. Please notify the office promptly if your child will be absent for any length of time. Also, notify the office when your child contracts a contagious disease. We will often in turn notify parents of classmates with possible exposure.

****Children who are sent home sick from school may not return the following day.****

7.2.2 Medicine Policy

Prescription medicine, cough syrup and suppressants may be sent to school in the original (unexpired) container, labeled with the child's name. The medicine must be handed to a teacher. (Please do not send medicine in the lunch box.) Medicine must be accompanied by a note of authorization every day and specific instructions as to how to administer, how much to administer and when to administer. Tape a reminder on the lid of the child's lunchbox. Teachers will return any medicine that is not allowed. Fever-reducing medicine may not be given to a child in the morning to "hold down" a fever. State guidelines classify diaper cream and Neosporin as medicine. If a child needs either diaper creams or Neosporin, a note of permission from the parents must be submitted to the teacher. Cough drops may be sent with LE/UE students, but will be kept and dispensed by the teacher.

Medical Conditions – If a student has a medical condition such as an allergy or asthma, send a detailed explanation to the office with multiple copies (with your signature) - include symptoms and warning signs and appropriate measures to be taken should an emergency occur. Please make sure to add your emergency phone numbers to the note and keep the numbers current.

*For severe allergies, please have your pediatrician fax the Emergency Action Plan to (615) 833-3680.

7.3 Attendance, Tardiness, and Absence Policy

7.3.1 Attendance Policy

We desire for each child to receive the full benefit of a Montessori education, including social cohesion, progression through the Montessori curriculum, and opportunity to develop and strengthen positive self-concept. Consistent attendance is vital to these goals. We ask that you demonstrate your commitment to your child's continued education at Montessori Academy by displaying understanding for the importance of daily attendance with punctual arrival. Even a few minutes each day accumulates quickly!

7.3.2 Tardiness Policy

It is the expectation held by MA that all members of the school community arrive on time to school. Late arrivals disrupt the classroom, teachers, and learning environment.

We expect all children to be in their classrooms by the stated start times (as opposed to being in the parking lot or walking to the door of the school).

Repeated tardiness is detrimental to your child, negatively impacts the classroom, and interrupts the work of our administrative staff. If we determine that chronic tardiness is an issue, we will take the following steps:

- After 3 unexcused tardies, your child's teachers will speak with you about the effect of tardiness on your child and offer suggestions to help with your morning routine.
- If tardiness continues, you will be contacted by the level director, who will offer more ideas and assistance with how to adjust your morning routine.
- If these steps do not resolve the issue, you will have to come in and speak with the Head of School and level director about whether MA is the right fit for your family.

Toddler/Primary

Toddler and Primary students need routine and must be in the classroom by 8:15 a.m. The front doors will lock at 8:15 a.m. at which time parents will need to walk their child to the Administrative Office, sign in and then walk your child to the back door of the classroom. Teachers are already working with children at this time and are not available to talk.

LE-HS

All students are expected to be in their classrooms and ready to begin the school day (with lunch boxes, instruments, books, and coats put into place) by 8:00 a.m. Any student not in place at 8:00 a.m. will be marked tardy.

Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. need to stop by the office to get a "tardy pass" to be allowed to enter the class. After three tardies, time will be made up at the teacher's discretion.

7.3.3 Absence Policy

Absences must be reported to the school by parents. Please email your classroom teachers in the case of an absence. Excused absences include illnesses, deaths, and family emergencies. Other excused absences will be discussed on a case-by-case basis with the level director and/or Head of School. Any unreported absence is considered unexcused. By state law we are required to report school-age students having five or more **unexcused** absences.

Absences due to trips or vacations (1st-6th) - Please schedule vacations during school breaks. If your family must be out of town for more than three days, please inform the teachers one week in advance (unless it is a family emergency) to request assignments for your child to complete. These assignments will be due on the day that the student returns to class. Incomplete work must be made up before the next report card can be issued.

7.4 Arrival and Dismissal

There are certain instances (severe weather including heat and cold, fire drill, lock down situation) when teachers may not be outside during arrival/dismissal. If this is the case during arrival, please walk your child to the classroom. If during dismissal, please first check your child's classroom. If students are not there, check your child's safe place. In the event of a lockdown – all doors will be locked, and entry will not be possible until the lockdown is over.

7.4.1 Arrival

Toddler Arrival

You may walk (not carry) your child to the classroom backdoors (Toddler 1 & 2 via back playground and Toddler 5 via front playground) between 7:45-8:15 a.m. Say goodbye at the door and allow your child to enter the classroom independently. Encourage and help your child learn to carry their lunchbox/belongings.

Primary Arrival

Primary Arrival is 7:45-8:15 a.m. You may drive up and let a teacher or administrator walk your child to the classroom or park *in a parking space* (not at the curb) and walk your child to the classroom door. To promote independence and healthy patterns of separation, parents may not enter the classrooms in the morning. Children should carry their own lunchboxes and belongings to build independence.

For your child's safety we ask that the **car seat** be on the right side of the car.

Keep goodbyes short and positive. This empowers your child and demonstrates your confidence in them. You may call the office for reassurance. If your child experiences anxiety, work with their teachers to create a plan.

LE-HS

For safety, students may not be dropped off under any circumstance before 7:30 a.m.

Beginning at 7:30 a.m. each morning:

- We ask parents to drop their students off at the curb and watch them walk into the building. Please do not enter the classrooms unless it is an emergency.
- Please make sure your child is dropped off **no later than 7:55 a.m.** to be ready to start the day promptly at 8:00 a.m.

Additional Arrival Notes

- **Children are not accepted after 10:00 a.m. unless a doctor's appointment delayed arrival. Please ask your child's doctor for a note to verify appointment.** Missing work time or playtime disrupts your child from having a productive day. Rest time (Toddler/Primary levels) is extremely difficult for teachers if a child has slept late. Montessori Academy is a school and not a daycare.
- If your child has a doctor's appointment, please send a note to the teachers, come to the office, and sign him/her out.
- If your child forgets something important (ex. lunchbox), please drop it off in the office.
- Please leave all breakfast food in the car.

7.4.2 Dismissal

Half Day Program (Toddler & Primary)

Students registered for our half day program will bring a lunch and eat with their friends. Parents come to the classroom front door and wait for a teacher to bring your child to you. **There are not tickets or drop ins to extend the day past 12:00 p.m. for Half Day Program students.**

- 11:45 a.m.–12:00 p.m. - Dismissal for Toddler Students (must be picked up by 12:00 p.m.)
- 12:00–12:10 p.m. - Dismissal for Primary Students (must be picked up by 12:10 p.m.)

Full Day Program

- 2:45–3:00 p.m. - Dismissal for Toddler & Primary Students
 - Please arrive as close to 2:45 as possible to help with efficiency.
 - Toddler pick up is at the Toddler 1 & 2 playground and Toddler 5 playground/fence. Pick up Toddler students before older siblings (siblings are not walked over).
 - Primary pick up is along the curb in front of Rooms 1 – 5. For Primary pick up, place car seats by the right rear door so children enter the car from the curb.
- 3:00–3:15 p.m. Dismissal for Lower & Upper Elementary Students
 - LE pick up is in a car line in front of the LE classrooms.
 - UE pick up is in a car line in front of the Admin. Building

It is the driver of the vehicle's ultimate responsibility to ensure the child is buckled and buckled correctly. When every driver assumes the responsibility of efficient pick-up, the dismissal time will be a pleasant closure for the school day.

After School Care (ASC)

Dismissal Procedures

When you arrive to receive your child from their designated location, you will be greeted by an Aftercare staff member, ID'd, and asked to sign them out.

Things to Remember during pick -up:

- We ask that you wait in the designated pick-up location
 - Toddler playground gate or Toddler breezeway door.
 - Primary front classroom doors or back porch gate
 - Elementary Pavilion or Gymnasium parking lot door.

Per our Safety Protocol, we cannot allow parents and caregivers to congregate on school grounds during pick up. In compliance with DOE and our ratios, when your child is signed out, we are no longer liable for their care. This also includes siblings from other levels. We have amazing local parks and encourage playdates for more socializing opportunities.

Hours of Operations and Locations:

- Toddler: 2:45- 4:30 pm
 - Location: (outside) Back Toddler Playground
 - (inside) Aftercare Room (first room by the Toddler Breezeway)
- Primary: 2:45- 5:30pm
 - Location: (outside) Primary playground/ Pavilion area
 - (inside) Rooms 1, 2, 3, 4 & Room 5
- Elementary: 2:45-5:30
 - Location (outside) Elementary pavilion
 - (inside) Gymnasium

Habitual lateness to pick up your child will result in a suspension of After School Care privileges.

After School Care (ASC) (continued)

Students must be signed out of After School Care on the classroom clipboard. Your child will only be released to people on the authorized pick up list. You may update your pick-up/emergency contact list by emailing cprather@montessoriacad.org or by calling 833-3610.

There will be no tickets or drop in for afternoon or After School Care.

Irregular Pick-Up During School Hours

We discourage irregular pick-ups as they are a disruption to the school day. However, if you need to pick up your child during the school day, please send a note with your child for the teacher. When you arrive at school, please report to the office (except in the case of severe weather). We will call for your child to be sent to the office. Please sign your child out on the clipboard while you wait in the office. Exception to this rule: In case of severe weather, please do not go to the office, but go directly to your child's classroom or "Safe Place" and sign your child out on the classroom's clipboard.

Early Dismissal Days (Please check school calendar for dates)

The Toddler & Primary Early Dismissal Window is 11:00–11:15 a.m. The Lower Elementary and Older Dismissal Window is 11:15–11:30 a.m.

We require your written permission for your child (email is also acceptable):

- To be picked up at any irregular time other than normal dismissal time
- To be picked up by anyone other than parents or the usual carpool
- To go on all field trips

Authorized Individuals: Students will be released only to parents and authorized individuals (per the Enrollment Contract). Tennessee state car seat laws state that children may only be released to a person with proper seat restraints for the child's age and size and who present themselves capable of operating a vehicle. Employees of Montessori Academy are not permitted to buckle children into their car seat. It is solely the responsibility of the adult picking up students to buckle them. In the event of an emergency and a parent cannot be reached to pick up their child from school, the school will contact the authorized people on the Enrollment Contract.

7.4.3 Campus Driveway Instructions

Please refrain from cell phone use when dropping off and picking up your child, and while on the campus driveway. Please follow all instructions given by school staff directing traffic.

Visiting the Admin. Office: The Admin. Office is directly behind the three flagpoles.

Drop Off/Pick Up:

Toddler: Turn right into the circular drive by the Woodlee Memorial Gymnasium (one-way traffic only). Do not back up! Please watch for traffic as you re-enter the main drive.

Primary/LE: Pass the gym circular drive and continue straight into main circular drive – a one-way street.

Large Circular Drive (PR/LE)

- Always drive slowly when on campus.
- Please park in the parking area if you must leave your car.
- Do not leave your car unattended in the drop-off/pick-up lane.
- Please observe the directional arrows when driving around the circle.
- Never leave your car with the engine still running! Drive safely and please buckle up.
- Never back up! (One-way traffic only)

UE: Turn into the driveway adjacent to the Fine Arts Building – a one-way street.

7.4.4 Student Drivers

Montessori Academy High School students may drive to school and park their cars on campus and park in designated areas as long as they have a valid Tennessee driver's license. Due care must always be taken on campus while observing a 15 MPH speed limit. Drivers must always be alert to the presence of younger children. Students may not leave campus without permission and must sign-out if attending courses or work-study off campus. This is a privilege that is dependent upon responsible practice and not a guarantee.

To park on campus, students must register their car at the front office, which includes a picture of their license and a parking form. The form is to ensure plenty of parking spots for our students, faculty, and visitors, as well as provide a record of vehicles on campus for safety purposes.

Montessori Academy reserves the right to revoke driving and parking privileges if safety rules are violated.

7.5 Room Placement

Next level placement is determined by teachers and administrators based upon several factors, including space availability. Parental requests will be considered but final determination is made by the administration.

Based upon our accreditation status, all rooms are staffed with highly qualified teachers and are strong both academically and socially.

Fall room placement is made in late spring/early summer. For students transitioning mid-year (Toddler), decisions are made as the student approaches the transitioning date.

Any specific questions may be sent to the Head of School or appropriate director.

7.6 Student Support Protocol

Montessori Academy's Student Referral and Support Protocol is designed to help teachers and parents navigate the process of determining the best method of guidance for a child who is needing extra support. This process forms a team of adults who know the child including: parents/guardians, teachers, level directors, and any therapists working with the child. It starts when the teachers have identified some areas of concern they have about the child's development, whether that be physical, emotional, mental, or academic.

Once the teachers have identified an area of concern, they observe the child and strategize ways to make classroom-based accommodation or support. Their observations may include:

- Anecdotal Observations
- Antecedent – Behavior – Consequence (ABC) Observations (recording when an incident happens, what happened before, what happened after, time of day)
- Time Intervals (at designated intervals record what the child is doing)
- Frequency data (collect frequency data on one specific behavior)
- Developmental Checklist (observing for typical milestones in speech and language, gross and fine motor, self-care activities, executive function skills, social emotional skills)

After they have implemented classroom-based strategies, more observations are made, to see if these accommodations are helpful in achieving greater success for the child. When the classroom-based strategies are not able to help the child consistently become more successful in the environment the teachers begin the student referral and support process.

7.6 Student Support Protocol (continued)

There can be several routes taken at this point depending on the needs of the child. Screening for speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, or a full psychological evaluation are often needed as the next step to identify any roadblocks that are in the child's path. MA partners with Project Play Therapies to provide speech, OT, and PT screenings free of cost. After the initial screening, if an evaluation and therapy are recommended, these are paid for by the family. A full psychological evaluation is also paid for by the family. PPT offers therapy both at MA, and at their clinics. Some insurance companies will pay for services provided at the clinic. There are also other organizations the family can choose, including contacting the local school district who will provide free support for school-age children. Kid Central TN is an excellent place to look for more information on programs available for children of all ages in TN [KidCentral TN - KidCentralTN.com](http://KidCentralTN.com)

Next, the level director and teachers determine a plan to accommodate the child and implement suggestions from the therapist and continue observations and gather data. After a 2-8 week period of implementation the teachers and level director communicate with the parents as to if there was consistent and significant shift in the child's success and experience in the classroom environment.

A plan is made by the level director and teachers to continue implementing accommodations and watching for growth, gain further training for the teachers, or begin an exit plan based on what is best for the child and level of support they need. This plan is shared with the parents.

MA recognizes that early intervention is the best practice to help a child who needs extra support. The earlier a child can receive therapies and interventions, the faster the strategies take hold. MA works in partnership with parents to love and support the development of the whole child and to make decisions based on what is best for the child.

Classroom Responsibilities

- Observe the child taking anecdotal notes
- Plan classroom-based strategies
- Request an in-house Student Support Team (will end up being the teacher, the director, and another faculty member)

Support Team Responsibilities

- Review observations/incident reports
- Brainstorm ways to intervene using Montessori curriculum
- Decide what types of observations will best support the process (checklists, frequency count, etc.)
- Go through the support process to determine supports/goals

Support Process

- Identify the problem and set a measurable goal
- Determine what information is still needed
- Use observations to create hypothesis and prediction about the targeted skill
- Determine assessment criteria, establish timeline

Review

- Did in-house intervention work based on the criteria? If not, begin the referral process or decide on new supports.

Referral

- Classroom teachers fill out referral form, obtain parent permission and input
- Include all the documentation from the previous steps

7.7 Discipline Procedures

Classroom ground rules are created by each classroom community as part of a conversation about freedoms and responsibilities. Students feel ownership when they have a say in rules, sometimes referred to as a classroom constitution. Here are some examples:

- We speak kindly to others.
- We walk softly and slowly.
- We talk quietly.
- We do our own work.
- We put our work away carefully.
- We ask for a presentation of new work.
- We may do any work which has been presented.
- We respect the personal space of others.

Many strategies are used in the classroom to help community members succeed in learning in a peaceful climate. These strategies include positive discipline, redirection, encouragement, lessons in grace and courtesy, conflict resolution, removal of a child from an unsafe situation, and helping children regain social emotional regulation.

Disciplinary Policies – (Toddler & Primary) -In the Toddler, it is developmentally appropriate to see behaviors such as hitting, pushing, and biting. However, the school takes these behaviors seriously. Teachers will address these behaviors with the child immediately. An incident report (completed in Transparent Classroom) will be sent home and filed with the program director by the end of the day.

If repeated behavior issues arise in the classroom, the teachers will consult with an administrator and begin the Student Support Protocols. The Student Support Protocols rally a team around the student, including the caregivers, teachers, administrators, and other interventionists when deemed necessary.

There may be times when the student support protocols reveal that another environment will better meet a child's needs and the caregivers will be asked to withdraw the student. This is a 'no fault' policy and the enrollment contract will be released without penalty.

Disciplinary Policies (LE-HS) -Students learn best when they feel physically and emotionally safe. Inappropriate behaviors (e.g. disruption, physical or verbal aggression, bullying, etc.) are usually the result of an unmet need or a lagging skill. The Elementary teachers work with the students to bring attention to behavior and work toward meeting the unmet need or lagging skill.

If inappropriate behavior continues after a student/teacher conference, the director and the teachers begin/update student support protocols for the student. The student support protocols rally a team around the student, including the caregivers, teachers, administrators, and other interventionists when deemed necessary.

There may be times when the student support protocols reveal that another environment will better meet a child's needs and the caregivers will be asked to withdraw the student. This is a 'no fault' policy and the enrollment contract will be released without penalty.

Bullying of any kind is not acceptable or permitted and will be handled with diligence. Bullying includes but is not limited to, verbal threats or demeaning speech towards another child or adult. Bullying policies apply to online or text interaction. Bullying is defined as intentionally and habitually cruel behavior towards others. Not all interpersonal conflict is bullying; however please be assured that we take bullying seriously. Working as a team, we can help all our students to become strong, considerate, contributing members of our Montessori Academy community and future leaders of the world. Please let your child's teacher(s) know if your child needs help in this area and please notify your teachers if your child informs you of any instances of bullying.

7.7 Discipline Procedures (continued)

| CONFLICT | RUDE | MEAN | BULLYING |
|---|--|--|---|
| Occasional | Occasional | Once or Twice | Is REPEATED |
| Not planned; in the heat of the moment | Spontaneous: unintentional | Intentional | Is planned and done on purpose |
| All parties are upset | Can cause hurt feelings; upset | Can hurt others deeply | The target of the bullying is upset |
| All parties want to work things out | Based in thoughtlessness, poor manners or narcissism | Based in anger; impulsive cruelty | The bully is trying to gain control over the target |
| All parties will accept responsibility | Rude person accepts responsibility | Behavior often regretted; | The bully blames the target |
| An effort is made by all parties to solve the problem | | | The target wants to stop the bully's behavior; the bully does not |
| Can be resolved through mediation | Social skill building could be of benefit | Needs to be addressed/ should NOT be ignored | CANNOT be resolved through mediation |

Source: Jennifer Astles, DASA Newsletter, January 2014, TST BOCES

Harmful Behavior (all levels)

The following action will be taken in the case of harmful behavior, which includes but is not limited to assault, fighting, throwing objects, pushing, screaming, harassment, fleeing the environment, or severely disruptive behavior that continues over a period of time.

- The child will be removed from the classroom and taken to the office.
- An Incident Report will be made for all disruptive or destructive behaviors. Incident reports and written documentation should be given to the involved parents, classroom teachers, and directors.
- Parents will be notified and asked to pick up child from school or event if necessary (at the discretion of the teachers in collaboration with their level director).
- A mandatory conference will be held with the parents.
- A Student Support Plan will be developed that may include but is not limited to recommendations for evaluations/consultations (OT, PT, Speech, Behavioral Therapy, Counseling, etc.), plan of action for when the behavior occurs, journaling of behaviors by parent and guide.
- The parents are responsible for following through with the school's recommendations within a designated timeframe.

If the inappropriate behavior does not improve and the above procedures have been utilized without success, or the parent has not worked to fulfill the school's recommendations, the parent will be asked to withdraw the child and to find a place in which the child's needs will be better met. This is a "no fault" policy and there will be release from the enrollment contract without penalty.

Montessori Academy reserves the right...

Montessori Academy reserves the right to suspend, dismiss, or require the immediate withdrawal of any student or family at any time if, at the sole discretion of Montessori Academy's Head of School, a student's work or the conduct or influence of a student or parent/guardian (on or off campus) falls below acceptable educational or social standards. Each student's enrollment is subject to the rules and policies of Montessori Academy, as interpreted by the Head of School.

7.8 Communication

7.8.1 Office Hours

Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday when the school is open.

7.8.2 Communication Avenues

- **Parent Information Meetings (PIM'S)** will be unique and will help you understand your child's developmental and academic progress. At these important meetings, parents will meet their child's teachers and learn about the classroom routine, program objectives, daily schedules, curriculum and current classroom events.
- Weekly take-home folders (sent home on Fridays)
- Weekly digital newsletter
- Classroom Newsletters and/or photos shared on Transparent Classroom
- Report cards: Toddler & Primary; three/year, Kindergarten & Older; every 9 weeks
- **Open House Days** (Toddlers only participate in the Family and Special Friends Open House) Parents may visit the classroom during the designated time on these days. Open House is a wonderful time for parents to visit their child's classroom. The students are proud of the work they do and are eager to show it to you. Guidelines for Open House visits are as follows:
 - Enter the room quietly to experience the wonder and peace of a Montessori environment.
 - Make other arrangements for younger sibling(s) so that your child has your full attention.
 - Schedule an appointment with the teachers at another time if you have other questions. The teachers will be better able to give you and your questions their undivided attention at another time.
- **Two Conference Days** – scheduled in October and February. There is no school on these days.
- Conferences with the teachers as needed by parent or teacher
- Classroom Observations are encouraged
- Transition Meetings are REQUIRED for parents of students moving to a new program level.

7.9 Classroom Observations

Please invest time in the **fall** (after your child has been enrolled for 6 weeks) and the **spring** of each school year to observe your child's classroom. To set up an observation:

- Contact your child's teachers to schedule a date/time for the observation. After the visit, you may schedule a follow-up conference with the teacher to discuss your observations.
- Check-in at the office before your scheduled observation time. The office staff will give you a form to aid in your observation of the classroom and a "Visitor's Badge" to wear.
- Your child's teachers will have an "Observation Chair". Please do not sit with your child during this time. You need to be free to watch the entire classroom.
- Remember that this is not a time for a parent conference.

7.10 Time Management/Homework Policy

Homework Policy

We have occasional homework assignments and research projects, but our goal is that each child has free time to explore interests outside of school (ex. team sports, music lessons/practice, playing, exploring, and helping with practical life work at home).

There may be limited routine homework assignments involving additional practice with reading, spelling, writing, and library research. The Montessori 3-hour morning work time allows most students to get assignments completed during the school day, although some project-based assignments may need to be finished at home.

7.11 Field Trips (Kindergarten & Older)

7.11.1 Field Trip Guidelines

- Younger siblings are not permitted on field trips.
- NO STUDENT WILL BE PERMITTED TO RIDE IN A SEAT EQUIPPED WITH AN AIR BAG.
- **All students must bring the appropriate car/booster seat that meets state regulations.**
- Car assignments are arranged by the teachers, are filed in the office, and must be adhered to until students return to school, except in case of an emergency.
- Field trips are cancelled if not enough drivers are available.

Tennessee's passenger child restraint law is covered in Tennessee Code Annotated 55-9-602. Children age four (4) through age eight (8), and measuring less than four feet nine inches (4'9") in height, must be secured in a belt-positioning booster seat system, meeting federal motor vehicle safety standards in the rear seat, if available, or according to the child safety restraint system or vehicle manufacturer's instructions. (Note: If the child is not between age four (4) and age eight (8), but is less than four feet nine inches (4'9") in height, he/she must still use a seat belt system meeting federal motor vehicle safety standards.)

Children age nine (9) through age twelve (12), or any child through twelve (12) years of age, measuring four feet nine inches (4'9") or more in height, must be secured in a seat belt system. It is recommended that any such child be placed in the rear seat, if available. (Note: If the child is not between age nine (9) and age twelve (12), but is four feet nine inches (4'9") or more in height, he/she must still use a seat belt system meeting federal motor vehicle safety standards.)

7.11.2 Chaperones/Field Trip Driver Responsibilities

- Supervising and safeguarding the students in your care is your primary responsibility.
- Arrive at school at least 15-20 minutes in advance of our scheduled departure time to allow time to get organized and get the children safely into their designated cars.
- Chaperones **may not** leave their group and always must eat with their children.
- Do not use your cell phones during the trip unless it is related to the field trip.
- **Do not stop for food or drinks** because it is unfair to children in other cars.
- Escort your children back to their classroom and stay with them until the teacher arrives.

7.12 Former Student Visits

Former students are welcome to visit Montessori Academy after school and by appointment. Visits can be scheduled through an Administrator. Visitors must check in at the office. Visits are not permitted during the school day.

7.13 Snow Day Policy

Announcements of school closure will be made via the following methods:

- Text Message to Parents via *FACTS SIS Parent Alert*
- Email from Montessori Academy

Please do not call the office. If you need to pick up your child, please do so.

We try to avoid unnecessary closings by waiting until early morning to make the decision and announcement. The safety of your family is most important, so please use your own judgment about bringing your student late, picking him/her up early or just staying home on those troublesome days. If the weather worsens as the day progresses and we must close early, we will announce the closing time via email/text.

7.14 Videotaping School Programs/Events

We encourage you to take pictures and videos of *your own children* as a record of their growth and accomplishments through their years at Montessori Academy. We are extremely careful about publicizing pictures or information about families, which is why we use a formal photo release form. We ask that you bear this in mind when videotaping performances. You may post pictures of *your own children* on the internet (YouTube, Facebook, social media websites, etc.) at your discretion. However, please do not post pictures of children from other families to any of these websites without the parent's permission.

8. CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

8.1 Entering the Classrooms during School Hours

If you are volunteering in a classroom or observing in a classroom during school hours, please check-in first at the Administrative Office. All parents, visitors, and volunteers need to sign-in and get a visitor's badge.

8.2 Lunch and Snack

8.2.1 Lunch

A Montessori Academy issued lunch box is required for daily use for Toddler and Primary Students. It is given to each new student when the initial registration fee is paid. (Broken lunchboxes should be replaced promptly for continuous ease of use by the child. New lunchboxes are available in the office for \$20.)

Lower Elementary and older may use the Montessori Academy lunchbox (at a cost of \$20/each) OR an alternate lunchbox of the families' choosing. Lunchboxes may not have characters and may not be flashy/distracting.

We encourage the use of labeled containers instead of plastic baggies. Containers should be easy for students to open by themselves.

Refrigerators are not available for the storage of lunch items/drinks. Lunches may be kept cool by putting a frozen cool pack in the thermal lunch box. Write your child's allergies on the top of the lunch box with a permanent marker. Please send any necessary utensils.

Each child is allowed a minimum of 30 minutes to eat lunch each day. Children will bring home, in the lunchbox, uneaten items so parents are able to adjust lunch proportions appropriately.

Please send two cloth napkins or adult washcloths and a sealable water bottle daily. A small bottle of milk (unflavored) may be sent.

8.2.1 Lunch (continued)

We encourage parents to send lunches that reflect good nutrition by using the food groups in preparing lunches. A nutritious snack or lunch means one which provides nutritional value in addition to calories. We ask for your support as we establish and maintain healthy habits. Keep in mind that the lunch should include protein as well as be nutritional in terms of vitamins and minerals.

You may not send the following items to school for either snack or lunch: Jell-O, pudding, anything with chocolate chips, cupcakes, frosted cookies, sugar-coated cereals, candy, chewing gum, chips, and similar high-calorie low-nutrition foods.

Only UE & Older students may bring food to school that needs to be warmed in the microwave. You are welcome to send items that need to stay warm in a thermos that fits in the lunchbox.

TD- MS Students may not order in food.

HS only - there may be times when the High School students receive permission to go off campus for lunch. There may also be times when High School students receive permission to order in lunch.

8.2.2 Toddler/Primary Snack

Your classroom will communicate the logistics of morning snack – students might bring an individual snack from home or there may be a snack rotation provided by parents. Please send an extra snack in the Montessori Academy snack bag if your child stays for After School Care.

8.2.3 Elementary-HS Snack

Students bring individual healthy snacks in their lunchboxes each day to be eaten during the morning. The teachers will advise you concerning their room's policy. Please send an extra snack if your child stays for After School Care.

8.3 Dress Code

School Dress Codes are necessary for the safety and utility of the school environment. As we expand our outdoor classrooms and Montessori curriculum across all levels, it is important for students to be prepared for a variety of weather conditions.

Each family is allowed to make the best determination about what their child's preferences and needs are and must follow general considerations listed below.

- Clothing must allow for: maximum safety and movement and be appropriate outdoor exploration such as running, jumping, climbing, and getting dirty.
- Clothing must allow for indoor activities such as sitting in chairs, sitting on the floor, and be appropriate for any specials the child has such as PE and Art
- Each level may have special considerations and requests about the function clothing must provide (for example Toddlers who are potty training will have different needs than Lower Elementary or High School students. Kindergarten students will need a red polo for field trips.)

In general, the dress code is as follows:

- Pants, skirts, and jeans without holes
Note: Shorts and skirts should not be so short as to be confused with undergarments. They should allow students to sit in chairs and on the floors/ground and still remain fully un-exposed.
- Tops without characters (such as superheroes, cartoon characters)
Note: crew cut or collared – must cover to the waistline
- Footwear that is easily do-able by the child and is appropriate for all activities in the child's day
- Footwear without characters, sounds, or lights

8.3 Dress Code continued

- Rain gear must be brought on rainy days to allow for outdoor play
- Winter clothing that provides warmth during outside time
- Clothing must be functional for the child and should not cause undue distractions

Note: We dress for success and for the job at hand.

For Lower Elementary - High School:

Students may bring their own bag or backpack. Specific dimension requests will come from the teachers and be based on cubby space and storage.

Additional Dress Code Notes

- For performances, students are normally required to wear a white shirt or blouse (with or without MA logo) and black pants or skirt. Black shoes or dress shoes are preferred for these events. Some concerts and plays have costumes, and parents will be notified accordingly.

8.4 Rest Policy – Primary Students

At Montessori Academy, we believe strongly in the importance of sleep and rest for children. Adequate sleep is essential for children's physical and emotional health, and a lack of sleep has a strong negative impact on both behavior and learning. We encourage all families to make sure that your children are getting the 10-13 hours of sleep recommended for the Primary age group by the American Academy of Pediatrics, and we help by providing a daily rest time for all Primary children.

For Primary children under Kindergarten age, rest time is approximately one and a half hours. For Kindergartners, rest time is approximately 30 minutes. During rest time, all children are expected to lie on a mat and rest quietly. Children are not required to sleep (though most do), but we do require that all children be able to rest without disrupting other children. Even if children do not sleep, this rest time gives them a chance to relax and recharge after a busy morning of work and play.

If your child is unable to rest without disrupting the other children, you may have to shift to the half day schedule.

8.5 Independence in the Restroom – Primary Students

We do expect all our Primary students to be toilet trained. This means that they are independent in the restroom. They go to the restroom on their own, not when directed by parents or teachers. They manage their clothing on their own, and they wipe on their own. Of course, for very young children, this is a process, but they should be attempting the full process independently before beginning Primary.

We understand that children may have accidents as they transition into Primary, and Primary teachers will work with those children to help them be successful. If frequent accidents continue after those early weeks, we will need to ask for your assistance. Primary teachers have up to 24 children in their care with a broad curriculum of materials to present, and they cannot give up that instructional time with other children to work continually on toilet training.

Our Student Support Process will be implemented as needed to address these issues. There may be times when the student support protocols reveal that another environment will better meet a child's needs and the caregivers will be asked to withdraw the student. This is a 'no fault' policy and the enrollment contract will be released without penalty.

8.6 Enrichments

8.6.1 Physical Education (Kindergarten & Older)

Gym Shoes (All K – 6th Level Students): Students must have appropriate shoes to wear on PE days.

All K – 6th Level Students are invited to participate in PE classes unless written permission for non-participation has been received. The doctor or parent should send a note and state the reason and length of time that the student will be unable to participate.

Medical Conditions – If a student has a medical problem such as an allergy or asthma, please send a detailed explanation to the office with multiple copies (with your signature) for your child's classroom teacher and each of the other teachers with symptoms and warning signs and appropriate measures to be taken should an emergency occur. Please make sure to add your emergency phone numbers to the note and please keep the numbers current.

8.6.2 Spanish

Primary students are exposed to different foreign languages in class through their cultural studies. Kindergarten and Lower Elementary students attend a Spanish class once a week. Upper Elementary students attend Spanish twice per week.

8.6.3 Art

All students K and older attend **art** classes each week. Two art shows each year showcase the fabulous work of all students. This thorough curriculum is presented in a three-year cycle and explores visual art from every historic period and art forms from around the world.

8.6.4 Music

Students at Montessori Academy experience music in every level. Our Toddler and Primary students have a music time each day in their classrooms taught by their teachers. The Kindergarten students have a special music class once per week in the music room in the Fine Arts Building. The Lower Elementary students have general music with singing and have the option to study violin using the Suzuki method, with a certified Suzuki teacher. Third level students also train with recorders. In Upper Elementary, students have general music and a choice of further studies in choral music, strings, or band with highly qualified specialists.

[Lower Elementary Suzuki Violin Program](#)

8.7 Birthday Celebrations

Montessori schools throughout the nation observe a child's birthday with a "Celebration of Life" ceremony. Your classroom teachers will communicate the specifics for how birthdays are celebrated in each classroom.

Party Invitations may be brought to school to be placed in the child's Friday folder ONLY IF all children in the class are invited. **We are not authorized to distribute parent e-mail addresses.**

8.8 Electronic Device Policy

On occasion, and for older students, Montessori Academy provides access to technology as a means to enhance their education. The purpose of this policy is to assure students recognize the limitations the school imposes on their use of these resources. At Montessori Academy, we focus on the whole child and we take into consideration the child's mental, physical, and emotional health, as well as their stage of development. Studies have shown that students do not benefit from the use of personal cell phones, and there is no reason a student needs to use a personal cell phone during school hours.

We are fortunate to have access to a variety of technology including laptops, cameras, the Internet, etc. We expect students to use these items responsibly and only for schoolwork.

General Technology Use Guidelines

- Use computers to practice basic keyboarding skills
- Use the internet to research class projects and complete assignments
- Use the computer to share knowledge by creating student presentations
- Learn to create a student blog or website

Cell Phone, smart watches

- Students may not use cell phones or smart watches during school hours.
- Cell phones and smart watches may be kept in lockers or cubbies during school hours on silence or turned off.

In cases when guidelines are not followed by the student:

- Serious or repeated violations of internet, online services and/or email use could result in permanent loss of internet, online services and/or email privileges, and other disciplinary action consistent with the Community Guide. If a student's misuse of internet, online services and/or email is in violation of the law, such misuse shall be reported to the appropriate authorities and could be punished as a criminal offense.
- Personal blogging, tweeting, texting and personal usage of social media sites (such as, but not limited to, Twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok, and Facebook) is not permitted without the express approval of the instructional staff for the course(s) in which a student is enrolled. Further, students are prohibited from posting, using Montessori Academy resources to any Internet site outside the official Montessori Academy network, or through any electronic media, any material that identifies students or provides any information that would be considered confidential according to FERPA or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA).
- First violation: The student is reminded and redirected to appropriately use technology.
- Second violation: Loss of computer or technological privileges for the day
- Third violation: Loss of computer or technology privileges for a week
- Fourth violation: Loss of computer or technology privileges for two weeks and a parent conference is scheduled and possible loss of technology use for the long term.
- Due to the nature of Middle and High school utilizing computers and technology for learning, special student support protocols will be put in place should a student repeatedly disregard our guidelines. This could result in an un-workable learning environment and MA would be forced to dissolve the student's enrollment contract.

8.8 Electronic Device Policy (continued)

Acceptable Use Agreement for Students

- I understand that school-owned technology devices are shared community equipment.
- I will be respectful and responsible for my use of any and all equipment.
- I agree to the following: All computers having Internet access must be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner.

Failure to adhere to this Agreement will result in revocation of access privileges, restitution for costs associated with damages, and may result in disciplinary action. When using Montessori Academy's technological devices, network or Google Apps, I understand and agree to:

- Limit the use of school computers, personal computers, the Internet and Google app to school work and appropriate learning activities.
- Not download, stream, or otherwise view media on the Internet unless it is assigned by a guide.
- Unless otherwise instructed, use computers inside and at a table.
- Leave all computer settings as found. Do not load software or make adjustments to computers.
- School laptop computers should be returned to the appropriate spot and plugged in after use.
- Food or drink may not be consumed at the same table as a technological device.
- Use good manners and appropriate language.
- Keep personal passwords private.
- Not share personal information about myself or anyone else on the Internet. This includes name, address, phone numbers, personal photos, etc.
- Never post pictures on the Internet without permission of my parent(s) and teachers.
- Show respect for all hardware and software that I use.
- Be financially responsible for replacing/repairing any device I have broken with a deliberate act or through negligible use.
- Leave my personal cell phone and smart watch on silent or off, and in my locker or cubby during school hours.

I also understand and agree that I may not:

- Use computers, I-Pads, tablets, smart phones, school computers, personal computers or other technological devices to access personal e-mail, play games, or to do other personal projects without permission.
- Search, view, edit, or retrieve materials that are not related to educational purposes.
- Access, view, or alter any schools records, documents, and files.
- Change settings on computers, I-Pads, tablets, and other technological devices; load software; or make other adjustments.
- Upload, download, or create computer viruses.
- Send or display offensive messages or pictures.
- Use obscene language.
- Harass, insult, or attack others.
- Damage computers, computer systems, or computer networks, and any other technological devices.
- Attempt to harm or destroy another user's documents, data, and files.
- Violate copyright laws.
- Use the passwords of other users or create new passwords on shared technological devices.
- Use the network for solicitation and commercial purposes.
- Share student or staff home addresses, phone numbers, or other private information.
- Engage in any activity that violates a school policy or local, state or federal law.

8.8 Electronic Device Policy (continued)

I understand and agree that the use of the Internet is a privilege and not a right. The use of the Internet must be consistent with the educational objectives of Montessori Academy. Inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges, restitution for costs associated with damages, and may result in school disciplinary action (including suspension or expulsion) and/or legal action. I agree to use the Internet only for class projects and assignments.

Montessori Academy will utilize a proxy server to restrict Internet access to inappropriate content at school. This filter only works when students are accessing the Internet via the school's network while on school property.

I understand and agree that if I abuse this acceptable use policy, I will be subject to discipline.

Right to Inspect/Monitor

I understand and agree that Montessori Academy's teachers, assistants, staff, substitutes, and office staff may review student files and communications to maintain system integrity and to ensure that users are using the system appropriately and responsibly. Students shall have no expectation of privacy in any information stored on Montessori Academy's servers or in their use of school computers. Parents can contact school administration if they have concerns regarding their child's account.

I understand and agree that Montessori Academy may offer students access to Google Classroom/Google Apps.

Google Classroom/Google Apps makes it easy for students to collaborate and turn in assignments to teachers online. It also allows students to work on documents from home, the public library, or any other computer with an Internet connection. To qualify for use of Montessori Academy's network, equipment and Google Classroom/Apps, I must be willing to abide by the rules of acceptable use. I understand and agree that my parents are informed about these policies and rules.

Internet access is designed for educational purposes and Montessori Academy will continue to take available precautions to eliminate controversial material. However, it is impossible for Montessori Academy to restrict access to all controversial materials and Montessori Academy may not be held responsible for the student's improper use of the network or Internet.

Parents have full responsibility for supervision if and when their child's use is not in a school setting.

(A copy of this acceptable use and safety policy will be provided to families to agree to and sign)

8.9 Graduation Requirements – High School Specific

| SUBJECT | GRADE | CREDIT | CLASS/DESCRIPTION |
|-----------------------------------|----------|--------|---|
| English | 9 | 1.0 | English 1 |
| | 10 | 1.0 | English 2 |
| | 11 | 1.0 | English 3 or English 1010 and 1020 Dual Enrollment options |
| | 12 | 1.0 | English 4 included in Capstone Project; English 1020 and 1020 Dual Enrollment options |
| Math | 9 | 1.0 | Integrated Math 1 |
| | 10 | 1.0 | Integrated Math 2 |
| | 11 | 1.0 | Integrated Math 3 |
| | 12 | 1.0 | Integrated Math 4 or Dual Enrollment |
| Social Studies | 9 | 1.0 | U.S. History |
| | 10 | 1.0 | World History and Geography |
| | 11 | 1.0 | Government (.5) & Economics (.5) |
| Science (with lab instruction) | 9 | 1.0 | Biology 1 |
| | 10 | 1.0 | Chemistry 1 |
| | 11 | 1.0 | Anatomy and Physiology or Physics |
| World Language | 9 | 1.0 | Spanish 1 or French 1; State requires two credits in same language |
| | 10 | 1.0 | Spanish 2 or French 2 |
| Fine Art | varies | 1.0 | Art, Band, Strings, Chorus, others |
| Wellness | varies | 1.0 | Lifetime Wellness alone or included in Anatomy and Physiology |
| PE | varies | .5 | PE or 72 documented hours of outside sport or physical activity |
| Personal Finance | 11 or 12 | .5 | |
| Electives | 9-12 | 3.0 | Art, Band, Strings, Chorus, Language, Computer, Business, Psychology, Philosophy, Sociology, additional PE, Medical Therapeutics, Medical Health Science, Independent Study, others |
| Capstone | 12 | 1.0 | Senior Capstone project |

- Course of study is flexible and adaptable to student's interests, within the state required credits. Independent studies, various other guided classes, and internships are examples of other pathways of study. Teachers and counselor will collaborate with student to individualize high school curriculum.
- 40 hours of community service expected each year. To be completed on and/or off campus.
- ACT is required (no minimum score), typically taken in spring of junior year
- Microeconomy participation encouraged
- Clinical Medical Assistant certification (CCMA) offered

8.10 After School Care

MA is not able to provide ASC for MS/HS students.

During ASC, your child will have outdoor and/or indoor activities and time to socialize with their friends. Unlike the school day hours, most aftercare staff are not trained Montessorians, but have the love for childcare, adhere to our Montessori principles, and school's philosophy just the same. If your aftercare child is enrolled in a school provided club, they will be dismissed back to that aftercare class once their club time is complete.

8.11 Extra-Curricular Activities

A variety of Extra-Curricular Activities are offered for additional fees. A complete listing is included on the Montessori Academy website. Unless otherwise indicated by reduction of fees for certain months, club teachers generally make up the lessons at their convenience, rather than reduce the monthly fee.

To sign up for Extra-Curricular Activities:

1. Complete the enrollment form(s) via online registration – these can be found at www.montessoriacad.org : Academics > Extra Curricular Activities
2. Submit payment to the Administrative Office. Checks should be payable to the teacher. Payment options vary by instructor.
3. Additional extra-curricular activities may be added throughout the year.
4. To drop an activity, written/electronic notice must be given to the instructor.

A.1 Acknowledgement of Policy Book – ALL Students



2022-2023

Acknowledgment of Montessori Academy's Policies & Procedures

Dear Parents,

We are delighted to have your family with us for the 2022-2023 school year!

Here is your newly revised **Community Guide**. Please take time to read through it carefully. Sign this form and return it to your child's room or the Administrative Office. By doing this, we are assured that you have indeed received this important communication from Montessori Academy. Thank you!

All Parent Response: *I have read and do understand all of the policies and procedures contained in the Community Guide and the Community Guide to Pandemic Protocols and I will abide by them.*

I also have received access to the following documents:

- Child Abuse and Neglect Information (MA website & Appendix 2 of Parent Handbook)
 - [Mandated Child Abuse Reporting Training](#)
 - [CDC Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention](#)
- Summary of Child Care Approval Requirements ([MA website](#))

Toddler & Primary Parents (specific to Department of Education): Daily Attendance - I acknowledge that upon arrival each day, my child is signed into the program by Montessori Academy staff personnel. Depending on chosen dismissal schedule, my child will be signed out of the program by MA Personnel or by an authorized pick up person.

Primary Parents: The Department of Education requires us to present a Personal Safety Curriculum to Primary Students every year. We have chosen [Second Step Child Protection Unit](#) as our curriculum. There are 6 themes that will be covered on a yearly basis. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Administrative Office.

Parent or Guardian Signature:

Date:

(1) Student's Name:

Room Number:

(2) Student's Name:

Room Number:

(3) Student's Name:

Room Number:

(4) Student's Name:

Room Number:

A.2 Child Abuse Information



Dear Parents –

Montessori Academy is required to present information concerning child abuse to parents each school year. Our teachers and staff are required by the Department of Education to report any suspected child abuse directly to the Department of Children’s Services. A complete copy of the DOE rules (including those concerning child abuse) is available in the Administrative Office.

Please visit: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/whatiscan.pdf> for the Child Welfare Information Gateway Publication on Child Abuse.

Additional Resources:

- [Mandated Child Abuse Reporting Training](#)
- [CDC Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention](#)