



MONTESSORI

ACADEMY OF CHAMBERSBURG

2022-2023
COMMUNITY
HANDBOOK

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School Leadership

Administration

Director of Education: Mrs. Heather Edmond, hedmond@montacad.org

The Director of Education's role includes the following:

- be responsible for the day-to-day educational programs of the school, including curriculum and the Montessori culture of learning,
- supervise teachers and other school faculty,
- recruit new students and lead the admissions process,
- ensure consistent and timely communication, building positive relationships with the families of our students,
- support students in enjoying a successful and positive experience at Montessori Academy of Chambersburg,
- seek and develop community partnerships, and
- oversee the school's compliance with standards and regulations.

Director of Operations and Advancement: Dr. Stefanie Basalik, sbasalik@montacad.org

The Director of Operations and Advancement's role includes the following:

- provide control and supervision of all buildings, grounds and equipment and oversee maintenance and repairs as needed,
- manage and oversee recruitment and marketing,
- allocate resources, monitor and approve expenditures and manage accounts receivable and payable, including Procure and Tuition Express,
- oversee all aspects of the financial aid process,
- coordinate volunteer activities, and
- organize annual fundraising activities including the annual auction, Giving Tuesday, the Big Give, Race for Education, etc.

Faculty and Support Staff

Head teachers are licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In addition, all Primary and Elementary teachers are required to obtain Montessori training. In selecting new faculty members, Montessori Academy not only looks for academic and teaching competence, but also for the personal qualities and motivation necessary to be a successful Montessori teacher.

In addition to the classroom teachers, the Montessori Academy also employs assistant teachers who support the educational program of the Academy.

Faculty and Staff

Lisa de Salis- Administrative Assistant/Receptionist
Kristin Valentine - Toddler Teacher
Carrie Mong - Toddler Teacher
Sarah Durden - Children's House Teacher
Cathy Davidson - Children's House Teacher
Katelyn Schindler - Children's House Teacher
Kim Kulla - Children's House Teacher
Meghan Baugher - Children's House Teacher
Alison Gilbert - Lower Elementary Teacher

Emily Cost - Lower Elementary Teacher
Alicia Runkle - Upper Elementary Teacher
Kim Walter - Middle School Teacher
Jody Mell - Assistant Teacher
Kendall Hamilton - Assistant Teacher, Substitute
Stephanie Whitlock - Assistant Teacher, Librarian
Kristin Byers - Assistant Teacher
Alexia Timmons - Assistant Teacher
Hillary Skipper - Nurse

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors oversees the growth and direction of the school. Additionally, Board members are expected to make commitments to fundraising and to be responsible for chairing committees in their areas of expertise and interest.

The Executive, Finance, Governance, Advancement, Personnel, and Building and Grounds committees discuss topics within a committee structure and the committee, in turn, makes recommendations to the Board.

Parents can request to attend the public portion board meetings as non-active guests-at-large. Any individual requesting to address the Board must submit a request in writing to the Board president. The written request should include the individual's name, affiliation, and the issue of concern.

Executive Committee

President: Carianne Rawlings
Vice President: Angelique Ridore, MD
Treasurer: Barbara Kehr, EdD
Secretary: Lekha Patel
Member at Large: Brett Snyder

boardpresident@montacad.org

Board Members

Rebecca Jablin
Adam Reeder
Chris Howes

Liam Chatterton
Suzanne Trinh
Mike Metz

Montessori Academy of Chambersburg

History

In 1988, the Montessori School was founded for preschool children. Based on the teachings and philosophy of Maria Montessori, the school offered unique educational and developmental experiences unlike anything else found in Franklin County. The school quickly grew to include children from 18 months through 6th grade.

In 1999, Montessori Academy, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation, was formed to direct and oversee the elementary program for 1st through 6th grade students. In response to the community's need for an alternative middle school program aimed at preparing students for a secondary/college preparatory education, the Academy was expanded to include 7th and 8th grades.

In 2007, the Montessori Academy and the Montessori School merged to form the nonprofit Montessori Academy of Chambersburg. The Academy offers a comprehensive Montessori education for students aged 12 months through 8th grade.

A Board of Trustees licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS), governs Montessori Academy.

License & Affiliation

Montessori Academy is licensed by the Department of Education of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Department of Welfare; accredited by the Middle States Commission of Colleges and Schools; and a member of the American Montessori Society and the National Association of Independent Schools.

Mission Statement

Montessori Academy, guided by the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, immerses students in a diverse community that values creativity and nurtures each student's social, emotional, and academic growth.

Philosophy of Education

Montessori Academy aims for excellence in its programs, operations, and students by hiring qualified, dedicated, professionally competent staff; maintaining appropriately equipped facilities; being proactive in planning; making sound business and financial decisions; and responding to the needs of students, families and the institution. Guided by these statements of mission and philosophy, Montessori Academy strives to create a safe, caring, stable environment that is child-centered, family-oriented, and community-focused.



Maria Montessori

Our Belief Statements

We believe in creating a prepared environment that calls to the child.

We believe the journey of education is driven by love of learning and encompasses traditional academics, practical life skills, self-discovery, and creativity.

We believe that the teacher/student relationship should be built upon clear communication and expectations, the child's individual needs, and self-discovery and exploration with teacher guidance.

We believe that our students should build a relationship with the global community in order to become productive members of society.

We believe positive interactions between home and school allows for the child to develop to their fullest potential.

We believe the decisions we make today steer the course for the future.

Portrait of a Graduate

THEY ARE GLOBAL CITIZENS. Montessori Academy graduates are members of a broader community. They are civic-minded, taking care of their environment and embracing diversity. They are students of the world, leading others to make a difference through appreciation and empathy.

THEY ARE LIFE-LONG LEARNERS. Embracing Montessori philosophy, they are self-motivated and proactive learners. They are excited about and vested in their own learning and enjoying sharing their innovative thinking with others.

THEY ARE CRITICAL THINKERS. Being able to reason and filter information from the world around them, Montessori Academy graduates are confident when creating solutions or posing ideas. They listen to others thoughts and opinions and form their own. They make connections between what they have learned and apply these to real-world concerns.

THEY ARE TRUE COLLABORATORS. Appreciating others strengths and valuing their opinions, Montessori Academy graduates are team players that can work with adults and children of any age. They are confident in their abilities, have a healthy sense of self, and believe their contributions matter. Their moral and ethical behavior enables them to work with others to resolve conflict.

THEY ARE MONTESSORIANS FOR LIFE. Their self-motivation, resourcefulness, constructive work habits and the relationships they have formed enable them to take on big challenges throughout their education. These lessons never stop shaping who they are and who they hope to be.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Montessori Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, gender, or national or ethnic origin. Montessori Academy of Chambersburg serves all families, regardless of Limited English Proficiency.

Addressing Racism

Racism has no place in our community.

Montessori Academy expresses outrage and sadness as the list of lives lost to racial injustice continues to grow.

Montessori Academy is committed to creating a safe and inclusive community for our students and families. One of the very reasons our school was established is to "maintain a nonsectarian Montessori school which does not discriminate against individuals based on race, creed, religion, age, gender, sexual preference, physical or mental disability in either admission or employment practices." We want all members of our community to feel welcomed, respected, and valued.

The holistic Montessori curriculum encourages equity, inclusion, and diversity. Our Portrait of a Graduate states that, "Montessori Academy graduates are members of a broader community. They are civic-minded, taking care of their environment and embracing diversity. They are students of the world, leading others to make a difference through appreciation and empathy." Systemic racism in our nation will not be solved overnight. We believe we must be part of the solution.

Admissions Policies and Procedures

Admissions Policy

Montessori Academy of Chambersburg's admission policy is based on the educational philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori that children learn best when the environment supports their natural desire to acquire skills and knowledge independently. We strive to serve a broad range of students with varying cultural, socioeconomic, religious, racial/ethnic backgrounds and abilities who we feel will contribute to and benefit from a Montessori learning environment. Education for all children, including those with special needs, will be done within the parameters of the Montessori philosophy and its implementation in the classroom.

The Montessori Academy of Chambersburg is committed to building long-term partnerships with families. This partnership works best when the parent beliefs and expectations are aligned with the Montessori philosophy.

Criteria for Eligibility

Infant and Toddler Program (12 months to 3 years)

1. Children must be 12 months of age at the time of enrollment.
2. Children may not be enrolled into the Toddler program if their third birthday occurs prior to the first of December the year of enrollment.
3. Children must demonstrate the ability to separate from parents/caregivers after a reasonable period of adjustment and with consideration of the individual needs of the child.

Children's House (3 years to Kindergarten)

1. Children must be three years of age prior to December 1 of the year of enrollment.
2. Children must be toilet trained and wear cloth underpants. "Toilet trained" is defined as the ability to respond appropriately to the need for elimination and the ability to complete the toileting process independently. Occasional accidents are developmentally appropriate at this age and staff will give reminders for toileting if necessary.
3. Children will be eligible to begin their Kindergarten year if they will be five years of age by September 1.
4. Although not required, Kindergarten parents who make a three-year commitment to the Lower Elementary program will be given priority enrollment for their children.

Elementary Program (6 years to 12 years)

1. Children must be six years of age by September 1.
2. A signed authorization for the release of school records from previously attended schools must be provided to Montessori Academy of Chambersburg.

Middle School Program (12 years to 14 years)

1. Children must be twelve years of age by September 1.
2. A signed authorization for the release of school records from previously attended schools must be provided to Montessori Academy of Chambersburg.

Additional Admission Information for Children Requiring Special Accommodations

All children are considered for admission to Montessori Academy of Chambersburg. Our admissions procedure takes into account our ability to accommodate particular students' needs. Students who have needs that fall within our ability to reasonably accommodate them may be accepted with additional stipulations. Montessori Academy of Chambersburg is committed to providing accommodations provided that no significant changes to the program are required and that the child does not pose a risk to themselves or others.

For school-age students, parents must present a recent diagnostic assessment by qualified professionals which identifies the child's needs within a mainstream environment. Periodic assessments may also be required during the school year and prior to re-enrollment. During this time, a holistic assessment will be made by all involved personnel to determine the following:

- The child's progress in adjusting to the Montessori curriculum and classroom.
- Whether the environment supports the developmental needs of the child within Montessori philosophy.

Steps in the Admissions Procedure

Step 1 - Parent Meeting and School Tour

The first step in our admission process is to make an appointment for a parent meeting and school tour. We request that children are not present for this initial meeting so that families are able to devote their attention to the facility and information provided during the tour. During the meeting and tour, you will converse about your child, Montessori methods, principles our school follows and enrollment possibilities and procedures. This will help provide an opportunity to determine whether Montessori Academy of Chambersburg is a school in which your child will thrive.

Step 2 - Classroom Observation

We request that at least one parent observe a class in session as they consider our school. Observations are held between 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. This 30-minute observation can be done in conjunction with the tour if scheduled during these time parameters. If the observation is not done the day of the tour, families may contact the office to schedule a different day.

Step 3 - Submit Application

Once the parent tour and observation are completed, an application and with a \$50 non-refundable application fee may be submitted. Applications for school-age students must include a signed authorization for the release of records.

Step 4 - Child Visit

Upon receipt of the application, a student admissions observation will be scheduled. The process for the visit at each level is as follows:

- Toddler – No admissions observation is required. A visit to the school or at the child’s home will be scheduled with the child’s teacher and parents/guardians before the child’s first day of enrollment in the program.
- Ages 3 - 5 (Children’s House) – The teacher will invite the child to independently visit a classroom. During the visit, the teacher will interact with the child, teach a lesson, and carefully observe the child for indications that the child is ready to learn, including the ability to follow simple verbal directions, express feelings effectively, and demonstrate self-control. The visit will last approximately 30 minutes and will take place after school hours.
- Elementary and Adolescent Students – The teacher will invite the child to visit a classroom for one or two full days. The teachers will observe the student’s social interactions, conduct basic academic assessments, and observe the student’s suitability for learning in a Montessori environment. If further information is needed, the teacher may request an additional after-school appointment with the child.

Step 5 - Admission Decision

The Administration and teachers will confer to determine the appropriateness of admission based on the child’s readiness, his or her potential for a positive interaction with the class, and the family’s commitment to the program. The Director of Education will communicate the admission decision to families in a timely manner following the visit/interview.

Step 6 - Enrollment Contract

Following a positive admission decision by the Director of Education, an acceptance letter, enrollment contract, and request for a non-refundable deposit of \$500.00 will be sent by postal mail. The family should return the completed contract and deposit within two weeks of receipt. If the child is withdrawn from the Academy after July 1, the parents are obligated to pay the full annual tuition for the school year.

Step 7 - Classroom Placement

Upon receipt of the signed contract, the Administration will determine into which class the child will be enrolled. Specific requests are considered in classroom placement, but not are not guaranteed.

Provisional Enrollment Period

Enrollment at Montessori Academy is an ongoing process. As part of this process, Montessori Academy has an eight-week provisional enrollment period for students who are new to the school or transitioning to a new program. During this period, teachers continually gauge the ability of the school to meet the individual needs of the child. Teachers also observe and gather pertinent information to assess the child’s progress.

If deemed necessary by the teachers and Director of Education, a meeting will be requested with parents to discuss the student’s progress and continuation in the program. Montessori Academy of Chambersburg expects that students will experience a normalization, or adjustment period, as they begin a new routine with new teachers and classmates. If at any time during the provisional enrollment period it is determined that the child is not normalizing or progressing successfully, a meeting will be scheduled between the family, teacher, and Director of Education. This meeting may result in a request for outside evaluation or assistance, placement in another program, or dismissal of the child from the school. If necessary, the Administration will work with the family to find a more appropriate educational placement for the child.

Admissions when School is Not in Session:

Montessori Academy of Chambersburg accepts applications on an on-going basis contingent on current enrollments. For those students applying when school is not in session, the process will be slightly modified from that stated above. Families and students are still required to visit the school and meet with a teacher at the child's instructional level for the student admissions observation prior to an admission decision.

Financial Aid Policy

Philosophy

Financial Aid at Montessori Academy has a two-fold purpose:

- To provide deserving students the opportunity for a high-quality education which otherwise might be unobtainable for them;
- To provide Montessori Academy with a student body reflecting a broad social and economic mix.

For these goals to be achieved, it is essential the ability to pay the full tuition not be the deciding factor in determining whether or not a promising young person may attend Montessori Academy.

Procedures

Parents applying for financial aid must fulfill the following requirements:

- Complete the Parent Financial Statement (PFS) online at sss.nais.org/parents. Include all information and full explanations for all items. Parents should be sure to list Montessori Academy (#3019) on the SSS report.
- Upload W-2s and tax documents to the SSS website.
- Mail a printed version of the PFS, Federal IRS Tax Form 1040 with all supporting schedules, W-2 forms and State Tax Returns by February 20th to Montessori Academy attn: Financial Aid Committee
- Complete a re-enrollment contract and submit a \$500 deposit for the coming school year
- Financial aid contracts are mailed to families to accept, sign, and return to the Academy. Once a financial aid contract has been signed by the parents, the \$500 deposit is not refundable.

Note: Even if tax forms cannot be completed by February 20th, the PFS must still be submitted by that date to ensure preliminary round consideration. Final action will not be taken until receipt of all tax forms and information. Computations based on the PFS will be adjusted to reflect figures shown on the tax forms.

Timeline

- December 20th: The SSS Financial Aid Site is open for completing applications.
- February 20th: The Financial Aid application is due. A photocopy of Federal and State Tax Forms and all W-2 forms must be mailed to Montessori Academy in order to be eligible for first-round consideration.

Because Montessori Academy accepts students on a rolling basis, new families may apply for financial aid at any time in the school year. Financial aid determination for new applicants will be made within two months from the time all documentation is received.

Confidentiality

Financial information submitted by parents in support of aid applications is held in confidence by the Financial Aid Committee. Financial Aid applicants are not identified at Montessori Academy, except as necessary to qualify them individually for designated scholarships. All financial aid information and awards constitute a confidential agreement between Montessori Academy and the recipient family. Breach of confidentiality on the part of the recipient family can result in amendment and/or removal of the financial aid award.

Selection

Candidates who have been admitted to Montessori Academy and whose families qualify, on the basis of financial need, for financial aid sometimes outnumber those whom the school can afford to support. Therefore, choices must be made on individual merit. Although need is the first and absolute requirement for Financial Aid, the final selection may also be based on the need to balance the student body enrolled of individual classes.

Renewals

Financial Aid awards are re-evaluated through an application process on a yearly basis. Parents are required to file an annual Personal Financial Statement (PFS) and all supporting documents. Recipients are expected to perform academically at a level commensurate with their ability and to adhere to the school's standards of personal conduct.

Priorities

Consideration for financial aid is given in the following order.

1. Applications from current recipients who have completed all renewal requirements on time.
2. New applications from currently enrolled students, if completed on time.
3. New applications from candidates accepted for admission for enrollment, if completed on time.
4. New and renewal applications completed after the specified deadlines, as long as funds remain available. Amounts awarded to this final group may be reduced as our budget nears depletion.

Funds are not reserved for families whose PFS or tax forms are received late.

Family Contribution

The Financial Aid Committee attempts to meet each family's demonstrated need as fully as possible. Those who avail themselves of this assistance, however, are expected to share the effort to extend our resources as widely as possible by contributing as much as they can to their child's education. Failure on the part of parents/guardians to meet their tuition commitment may result in financial aid being revoked.

Computation

Montessori Academy subscribes to the principles and services of the School and Student Service for Financial (SSS), which provides, at the request of parents, a financial analysis based on the confidential statement of need, known as the Parents' Financial Statement (PFS). SSS reports provide a starting point for the Montessori Academy Financial Aid Committee, which makes all final decisions on Financial Aid amounts.

SSS processes applications from December through July, but forms should be sent in no later than February 20th to be received at Montessori Academy in time for priority consideration. Promptness in meeting deadlines is vital.

Montessori Academy reserves the right to request additional information prior to making a financial decision on an award and may recalculate a family's eligibility. In addition to financial aid provided by Montessori Academy, there may be other funding programs available. If the family's income meets guidelines for the other outside funding programs, families will be required to complete those additional applications before a financial aid decision is finalized.

All students who receive financial aid must maintain a commitment to excellence and conduct themselves in accordance with the Academy's expectations. Montessori Academy reserves the right to amend or withdraw financial aid awards based upon mitigating circumstances, changes in information, changes in a student's standing at his/or current school, or other reasons determined by the Financial Aid Committee in consultation with the administration.

Appeal Process

To appeal a tuition assistance decision, a family should address the financial aid committee in writing and include any additional information and/or special circumstance that has occurred since the submission of the application that would warrant reconsideration. It may also be helpful to submit additional information that may not have been included on your original application, such as monthly expenses, copies of recent pay stubs or unusual expenses. However, because offers will already have been made to other families, Montessori Academy cannot guarantee that funding will be available to modify offers based on information received after the deadline.

Student Records

Handling of Student Records

Information from student records will be released only under controlled circumstances and only when the release will benefit the student, his or her family or professional research, or when required by law.

Student records are confidential and accessible only by staff, or others approved by parents. Non-custodial parents who have retained educational rights can gain unrestricted access to student records, unless they are denied or restricted by court order. A copy must be filed with the Academy upon the child's enrollment, or within 30 days of a new/updated court order. A release must be signed by the parent or guardian, authorizing the school to share information with others. The Academy maintains student records for at least seven years after the child has left the school. Unless otherwise directed by parents, the Academy will forward health and immunization certificates, progress reports, evaluations, standardized test scores, and all incident reports and documentation leading to the withdrawal or graduation of the student. Official transcripts will be forwarded upon request when the account is paid in full.

Withdrawal

If, in the judgment of the Administration of the school, it is not in the best interest of a child or the school for the child to continue attendance, withdrawal from school may be the only alternative. In this instance, some or all of the following procedures will be implemented:

- The Director of Education will observe the child and assist the teacher in assessing and resolving the situation(s).
- The Teacher and Director of Education will meet with the child's parents and discuss the situation.
- A full professional evaluation of the child may be required by the school within a specified period.
- In the case of a behavioral problem, the parents may be asked to keep the child at home for a period of time, extending from one school day to a full week.
- If, in the judgment of the teacher and Director of Education, the child cannot be accommodated within the school and its philosophy, the parents will be counseled to remove the child from school.
- Documentation of the above steps will be placed in the student's record.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Student records, as maintained by Montessori Academy, are maintained in a confidential manner in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). More information about FERPA and families' and students' rights under FERPA, can be found at www.studentprivacy.ed.gov.

Financial Policies

The Academy is a private non-profit 501 (c)(3) cooperation, supported by tuition revenues and charitable contributions. The annual fee for tuition and the materials fee, which includes the costs of books and supplies,

are set by the Board of Trustees at the annual budget review meeting.

Payment of Tuition and Fees

Tuition is paid on a yearly, biyearly, or monthly basis. The first commitment toward tuition is a nonrefundable deposit of \$500 that is credited toward the tuition for that school year, and is due upon receipt of the enrollment or re-enrollment contract. Monthly payments must be authorized for either automatic withdrawal or credit card payment. Checks are accepted for yearly or biyearly payments only. There will be a fee for insufficient funds. Monthly payments are withdrawn over nine payments.

An annual materials fee of \$225 for toddler and Children's House level students or \$200 for grade 1-8 students is owed with the first tuition payment.

All toddler and preschool age children must pay for a minimum of five mornings per week. Families may pay additional tuition for one, two, three, four, or five afternoons per week for preschool children. Children from kindergarten through eighth grade attend full days and are charged a full-day tuition rate.

After July 1 of the upcoming year, the full annual fee for the upcoming school year, less any financial assistance provided, must be paid, regardless of the student's withdrawal from school or absence for any part, parts, or all of that school year. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) signature(s) on the enrollment contract indicates acceptance of full financial responsibility of the annual fee for their child at Montessori Academy of Chambersburg. In the case of extreme financial hardship, injury, illness, death, unexpected relocation, or other extreme hardship, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may apply to be released from their contract. The decision to release an applicant from his/her contract is made by the Board, based on the recommendation of the finance committee.

Any exception to these procedures for an individual family should be discussed with the administration, who will then share the proposed exception with the finance committee while maintaining the confidentiality of the family making the request.

Financial Aid

We recognize that a Montessori education can be a significant investment. In order to make a Montessori education accessible to qualifying families, a limited amount of financial aid is awarded to qualifying applicants. Awards are made according to financial need as indicated by guidelines from School and Student Services. Financial Aid is provided by the generosity of current and past friends and families of Montessori Academy and scholarships funded by Corporate/Business Sponsors through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program. Our financial aid policy outlines the process for applying for financial aid.

Change in Financial Situation

Should there be any extenuating circumstances that would prevent parents from paying on a timely basis, alternative payment options should be discussed confidentially with the administration prior to falling behind on tuition commitments. Montessori Academy reserves the right to dismiss a student on the basis of a delinquent account. It is Montessori Academy's goal to work with families to ensure students remain enrolled at the school.

Collection Procedures

- All students will have a credit card or bank account attached to their ProCare account. If payments are not made before the due date, payment will be either charged to the credit card on file, with appropriate fees added, or deducted from the bank account on file.
- If payment is denied by the bank or credit card, the designated responsible party will be contacted by phone within ten business days.
- The administration will inform the finance committee of any parent or guardian whose account is more than 30 days overdue and who has failed to respond to the contact by Montessori Academy.
- Failure to respond to the contact by Montessori Academy may result in dismissal of the student.
- Montessori Academy may not release student records (other than health records) and recommendations to other schools if an account is not in good standing.
- Montessori Academy may not offer a re-enrollment contract to families unless their account is in good standing.
- Financial aid will not be offered to families unless their account is in good standing.
- Failure to pay or meet with the administration to develop a payment plan to resolve an overdue balance may result in the account being sent to a collections agency.

COVID-Specific Financial Policies

Policy for Tuition Credit Relief Due to COVID-19

In order to sustain the quality of the education parents have come to expect at Montessori Academy of Chambersburg, we must continue to support our teachers, cover all of our non-teaching expenses, and invest in innovative ways to deliver our curriculum for our students. At the same time, we recognize that not having children in school can create a financial hardship for families when their children must be home due to a move to remote learning by the school, or children presenting symptoms that, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, would have permitted them to attend school.

Montessori Academy strives to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment for our students and staff throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic. We recognize that our COVID-related policies and procedures can, in some situations, have a significant impact on student attendance. We understand that the educational impact of increased absenteeism is felt disproportionately among our youngest students, for whom distance learning may not be an effective option.

Therefore, we recognize that there are additional factors that need to be considered in determining when it is appropriate to consider issuing credits that can be used against future tuition. In determining when a family is eligible for reimbursement or credit toward tuition and/or fees, we will utilize the following guidelines for COVID-related exclusions:

The following situations are considered to qualify as COVID-related exclusions:

1. Asymptomatic children who are excluded due to COVID-related exclusions of their siblings.
2. Children who are excluded from school due to minor symptoms of illness that, prior to COVID-19, would not have prevented them from attending school.
3. Children whose families are awaiting the results of COVID testing or subject to isolation/quarantine after a positive COVID diagnosis or exposure to a positive COVID case.
4. Other COVID-related circumstances may be reviewed by the Administration to determine eligibility.

Toddler and Preschool Students

1. Toddler and Preschool Students who are excluded from school for five (5) consecutive school days due to COVID-related exclusions, will be entitled to tuition credit for any additional consecutive days that the child is not permitted to attend school.
2. During a period of substantial spread in the community, families of toddler and pre-kindergarten children may choose to keep their children at home and receive tuition credit.

Kindergarten Students

1. If an individual kindergarten student is off campus due to COVID-related exclusions, we will offer daily distance learning activities after the first day of consecutive absences. If a kindergarten student is excluded from school for five (5) consecutive school days due to COVID-related exclusions, the family will be entitled to a reduction of 50% of their tuition for any additional consecutive days that the child is not permitted to attend school.
2. During a period of substantial spread in the community, families of kindergarten children may choose to keep their children at home and participate in distance learning activities. The at-home learning will include both synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences for students and the family is not eligible for a tuition reduction.

First through Eighth Grade Students

1. If students in grades 1-8 are off campus and we are offering daily distance learning for these levels, no tuition change will be made. The daily at-home learning will include both synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences for students.

2. If an individual student in grades 1-8 is off campus, we will offer daily distance learning after the first day of consecutive absences and no tuition change will be made. The daily at-home learning will include both synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences for students.

Contracted ExCEL Before and After School Program

1. Families will not be responsible for contracted EXCEL fees when a student is absent from school for five or more consecutive school days due to COVID-related symptoms or exclusions.
2. If the students' whole class is off campus with Distance Learning, the family will not be responsible for contracted EXCEL fees for any days during the off-campus period.

Procedures for Applying for Tuition Relief

1. Families who wish to apply for tuition credits or reimbursement, based on the above criteria, will complete a Request for Tuition Relief form and submit it to the Director of Operations and Advancement.
2. The Director of Operations and Advancement, in consultation with the Director of Education, when appropriate, will review the request, consult school records and communications, and determine the appropriate level of tuition relief on a case-by-case basis.

Academic Programs

Montessori Philosophy

The primary goal of a Montessori program is to help children reach their full potential in all areas of life. Activities promote the development of social skills, emotional growth, and physical coordination, in addition to academic preparation. The Montessori philosophy is based on tailoring the environment to the specific developmental needs of each individual child and fostering intrinsic motivation for learning.

Each Montessori classroom operates on the principle of freedom with limits. Guided by individual work plans, children work either alone or with others, using a wide array of multi-sensory materials, textbooks and resources. The aim is to encourage active, self-directed learning and to strike a balance of individual mastery within small group collaboration.

Montessori children are adaptable. They learn to work independently and in groups. Since they have been encouraged to make decisions from an early age, these children are problem-solvers who can make choices and manage their time well. They have also been encouraged to exchange ideas and to discuss their work freely with others. Montessori programs help children develop the confidence to face challenges, overcome difficulty and take responsibility as an active participant in their educational experience.

Academic & Enrichment Programs

Students are divided into multi-age classrooms with an average student to teacher ratio of 10:1. Our programs include the Primary Program, which includes the Toddler Room (ages 12 months-3 years) and the Children's Houses (ages 3-6); the Elementary Program, which includes Lower Elementary I (grades 1 – 3) and Upper Elementary (grades 4 - 6); and the Middle School Program (grades 7 & 8).

Based on the prepared environment and respect for the child, the Toddler Community nurtures the innate curiosity and independent spirit of the child. Materials and activities are tailored to skills that are valuable to toddler development and help enable children to care for themselves, the environment, and each other. Students in the Toddler Community attend Montessori Academy a minimum of five half days per week.

The goal of the Children's House is to foster a love of learning and gain an understanding of global citizenship. Students engage in opportunities to develop self-regulation, social awareness, peer relationships, and leadership. At the kindergarten level, students attend five full days.

Lower Elementary students build on their emerging understanding of concrete concepts and skills. They independently explore mathematics, physical science, biology, geography, and history, to form a greater understanding of the world in which they live. They work in a collaborative environment to discover their unique interests through the use of daily work plans. As students progress through Lower Elementary, they will build upon previous knowledge by revisiting concepts with wider scope and greater detail.

Students in the Upper Elementary program follow a comprehensive and rigorous curriculum structured around a three-year continuum. Each subject is supported by integrated research activities and independent study designed to promote curiosity and self-motivation. At the culmination of the program students design and present a project that showcases both the skills and content encompassed by the Upper Elementary curriculum.

Based on a two-year continuum, the Middle School program is designed to prepare students for the demands of public and private high schools. The Middle School curriculum is designed with an interdisciplinary approach that promotes inquiry-based learning opportunities. Students refine their critical thinking skills and engage in opportunities to hone problem solving skills through both creative thinking and deductive reasoning.

Community Outreach Programs

In keeping with our Montessori mission, community involvement is a key aspect in nurturing the discovery of the joys of living in a diverse global community for our students.

Students have performed services in soup kitchens, clean-up activities in various parks and recreational areas, helped out at animal shelters, and collected and distributed toys for the Salvation Army Toys-for-Tots campaign. They have created food baskets; planted shrubs, trees and flowers at various community and retirement centers; and held a variety of performances for retirement villages, including singing performances.

Programs such as visiting elderly care facilities, offering invitations to student hosted events, and becoming involved in community activities enhance our students' clear sense of personal and civic responsibility and respect for others.

While the COVID-19 pandemic will require creative problem solving from our Montessori community, we remain committed to finding ways that our students can continue to participate in community outreach activities in innovative ways that maintain the health and safety of our students and others.

Honor Code

Because Montessori Academy believes that education includes the development of integrity and honor, in addition to expecting honesty in all of our day-to-day interactions, we have an honor system in place which applies to all academic work and behavior while enrolled at our school. As an educational community, we are bound to establish, maintain, and uphold a principle of honor and to keep our conduct consistent with it. We ask all students to uphold the following pledge:

“As a member of the Montessori Academy community, I hereby agree to honor its standards of respect, integrity and truth. On my honor, I pledge that I will not lie, cheat, or steal. In all my endeavors, I will work toward building trust by upholding, in spirit and in letter, these standards.”

Violations are regarded as serious offenses for which a student calls into question his or her place in school.

It is the expectation of the faculty that all assignments, classroom assignments, classroom activities and projects submitted by each student represent his or her own work. The submission of any project reaffirms full acceptance of the pledge: “Upon my honor I have not plagiarized this work.” Teachers will actively instruct students in the identification of plagiarism and the proper citation of sources, as is developmentally appropriate. When using books or articles in the preparation of papers, a student must give proper credit to the sources used for passages, words or ideas. Failure to do so is plagiarism and therefore an honor offense.

Homework, Grading & Testing

Montessori Academy students work diligently throughout the school day. We believe that students learn through play as well as through academic work. Homework may be assigned to all elementary and middle school students as needed, increasing incrementally in frequency and extensiveness, to help in the transition to high

school. Homework may also be assigned when class work and projects are not completed in the time provided during class.

Students are assessed in a variety of ways at the Academy. For children in the Primary Program, Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary, work is assessed using a developmentally appropriate grading system. For children in the Middle School, in-class assignments, projects, presentations, homework, and tests are numerically graded using the following scale: 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; below 70 = N (Needs Improvement). Report Cards for all students are issued quarterly. In addition, the Terra Nova Standardized Test is given every year to students in third through eighth grades. Results are used in the continued evaluation of our academic program and are provided to parents/guardians in reference to their own child.

Available Services for Students

Lincoln Intermediate Unit (LIU) 12 provides auxiliary services for students in grades K-12 who are residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and attend nonpublic schools in Adams, Franklin and York counties. These services are intended to provide students with support to help them succeed in their regular education program in the nonpublic school.

The available services are in four major areas:

1. Speech/Language Services

The speech and language therapist works to isolate students' deficits and deliver quality instruction for improving communication skills, through partnering with and supporting school staff and families.

- Provided by PA-certified speech/language therapists (primarily in grades K-6)
- Typically conducted individually and/or in small groups
- Speech /language screening (typically grades K and 3)
- Therapy provided for speech and/or language difficulties.

2. School Counseling Services

The school counselor provides quality guidance services for our students, staff, and parents while acting with integrity and accountability to support the educational and emotional needs of those whom they serve.

- Provided by PA-certified elementary school counselors
- Classroom guidance lessons in targeted skill-development areas such as
 - self-awareness and self-management
 - social awareness and relationship skills
 - responsible decision-making
 - bullying prevention
 - conflict resolution
- Individual and small group educational counseling
- Referral to other school and community-based resources as needed
- Career and college planning and preparation

3. Instructional Services

The reading and math teacher partners with Montessori Academy to plan, implement, and support a quality education delivered with integrity and accountability.

Reading Intervention and Remediation

- Provided by PA-certified reading specialists
- Pull-out small group direct instruction, supplemented by consultation with the classroom teacher
- Diagnostic and benchmark assessments and progress monitoring used to guide instruction.
- Targets skill remediation for students performing below grade level
- Emphasis on early-intervention in K-3, but also available in the upper grades

Mathematics Intervention and Remediation

- Provided by PA-certified elementary and secondary teachers
- Pull-out small group direct instruction; supplemented by consultation with classroom teacher
- Diagnostic and on-going assessment used to guide instruction and monitor progress
- Targets skill remediation for students performing significantly below grade level
- Emphasis on early intervention in primary grades, with support also available in upper grades

4. Psychological Services

- Provided by PA-certified school psychologists
- Identification of instructional/classroom interventions/strategies/accommodations
- Includes consultation with teachers, administrators and parents as well as potential targeted evaluation of specific academic, cognitive and/or social/behavioral concerns
- Not used for labeling a disability or identification of the need for special education

Attendance Policies

Regular attendance fosters essential work habits that promote higher levels of learning. Please try to schedule vacations, doctor and dentist visits when school is not in session. Please notify the Academy by 9:00am if your child is going to be absent. All absences must be accompanied by a written excuse upon the student's return to school. The written excuse can be a note or email (info@montacad.org) from a parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence. Notes not received within three days of absence will be coded unexcused.

Excused Absences

1. Personal Illness: A doctor's note may be required if deemed advisable by the school administration.
2. Illness in the Family: Absence shall not apply to children under fourteen years of age.
3. Quarantine of the Home: Absence of a child from school is limited to the length of quarantine as fixed by proper health officials.
4. Death of a Relative: Absence is limited to a period of three (3) days unless a reasonable cause may be shown by the parent or guardian for a longer absence.
5. Emergency or set of circumstances which, in the judgment of the Administration, constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school.

6. Students may be excused for family trips of an educational nature. Such absences are excused if a written request (Education Trip Request Form) is received in advance and approved by the Director of Education.

Excessive Absences

Montessori Academy of Chambersburg requires that enrolled students attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State of Pennsylvania. Continuity in the learning process is seriously disrupted by excessive absence.

Absences totaling more than 9 days during an academic year are considered to be excessive. A letter will be sent to parents, as a reminder of good attendance, when students miss more than 9 days. Students who miss 15 days of school may be required to submit a medical excuse for further absences. When a medical excuse is required, the doctor must confirm the date for each missed day of school.

Any student who misses a significant number of days in a semester may have difficulty meeting the academic expectations of the classroom, and parents will be required to meet with the Director of Education.

Communication

The Academy encourages open, supportive communication. We welcome questions and comments. Appointments with the Administration are available during and after school hours.

Correspondence from school is often put in your child's backpack or School-Home Communication folder. Please send folders back to school the next day. Our newsletter also serves as a valuable source of communication from the Academy. In addition, our Academy website and Facebook pages contain a wealth of information regarding upcoming events and current happenings.

Child Custody Decrees and Communication

Child custody decrees must be on file in the office and updated promptly whenever changes are made.

Most school information (newsletters, conference forms, etc.) is sent only to the parent/guardian(s) whose address(es) appear with the child's name in our directory information, as provided during the application process. Additional parents/guardians may request to be on our mailing list for such information by contacting the office. The Academy will share appropriate information about the child and school programs with a non-custodial parent upon request, unless there is a court order to the contrary on file at the office.

In order to preserve a positive and productive learning environment and positive campus climate, all parents/guardians are required to have civil and respectful interactions with one another when on campus. Parents/guardians are expected to communicate about each of the child's parents/guardians in a respectful and appropriate manner while on campus and while communicating with and in the proximity of Academy staff and other members of the campus community.

To best support the child, we encourage respectful communication and updates regarding the child's current custody arrangements and potential future changes to custody. However, the Academy requests the right to remain unbiased in the custody concerns of our students. It is not appropriate or acceptable for a parent to

attempt to involve the child's teachers or other Academy staff in custody issues, beyond an unbiased report of facts and observations that may be required by law.

Failure of any parent/guardian to act in a respectful manner in regards to all of a child's parents/guardians and their custody arrangements while on campus and while communicating with the campus community, as well as attempts to involve staff in custody issues in manners beyond their legal obligations, may result in administrative action, up to and including barring the adult from participation on campus and/or termination of the enrollment contract.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Formal conferences are held twice a year, in fall and spring. Student dismissal and pick up on conference days will be at 12:00 p.m. Report cards will be distributed at the fall conference. Teachers are available for other conferences at the request of parents.

Parental Concerns

The Academy desires to work with families in gaining mutual understanding and support to benefit each child within the Montessori environment. Inappropriate behaviors demonstrated at school are best handled and resolved at school, although parents may be notified and called on for support (see Policies & Procedures). Parents having concerns with classroom instruction and procedures should first contact the teacher for clarification. If more information is needed, or if the question is in regard to the management of the school, the parent should contact the Administration. Teachers and administrators are available by email or phone.

Adult Contributions to a Positive and Safe School Climate

Parents/guardians and other visitors to campus are expected to consistently communicate and interact with and about Academy staff, students, and other members of the Montessori Academy community with mutual respect, including, but not limited to, verbal, written, and physical interactions. Parents, guardians, and visitors of the Academy are expected to follow standards of appropriate behavior while on campus and field trips including, but not limited to, the Standards of Conduct Policy (p. 24), Weapons Policy (p. 25), Drugs, Alcohol, Smoking, and Vaping Policy (p. 26), and Bullying and Harassment Policy (p.27). If Administration deems that the parent/guardian's communication, interactions, and/or behavior negatively impacts school safety or climate, the Academy may submit a written warning to the parent/guardian and may take action, up to and including barring the adult from participation on campus and/or termination of the enrollment contract.

Classroom Observation

Changes to Classroom Observations during the Pandemic

This year, we hope to see the school open for more visitors, however, the Administration does reserve the right, as part of our Health and Safety Plan for pandemic response, to restrict all non-essential visitors from accessing classrooms during school hours. This decision is aimed at reducing the number of individuals that children will contact during a regular school day. Therefore, you may schedule an opportunity to observe the classroom via the observation window during the school day. If you have questions or concerns about this plan, please reach out to the Administration for more information.

Classroom Observation Procedures: Pre-Pandemic

Classrooms are open to parents and visitors by appointment. Although the Academy welcomes parents to visit the school at any time, freely walking in and out of classrooms unannounced is not permitted. Parents present

for other meetings, or early for school dismissal, should wait in the lobby. Observers should complete the Classroom Visitation Request form at least 24 hours in advance of the visit. In addition, one observer is permitted at each classroom, in order to decrease the amount of distractions. Throughout the year there may be specific dates set aside for special observations. Tours for the general public by appointment begin in late September and continue throughout the year.

Opportunities for Family Involvement

Expectations

It is our expectation that parents will support Montessori Academy in every respect. By choosing to enroll their child at the Academy, the family commits to trust, support, and collaborate with the staff of Montessori Academy in their endeavors to provide an educational experience that will meet each of their child's developmental needs. Continuity between home and school is probably the greatest support that parents can offer children in this school experience. Since families choosing Montessori Academy generally share values, goals and attitudes compatible with the Montessori philosophy, families and the school can build a growing relationship to enhance the child's development. Mutual education and communication are the primary components of such progress. Through educational programs and opportunities for communication, the Academy hopes families will create a consistency furthering the child's intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth.

Volunteer Support

Volunteer support remains an integral part of our school culture and community success, so we are excited to welcome volunteers back to campus. If you want to help but scheduling prevents school visits, participation in fundraising efforts and sharing of your time, materials and/or skills help reduce expenses, enrich our resources, and benefit our Annual Fund and Capital Fund. Committee Chairpersons or Board Members may contact you for help.

In addition, our parent organization is an active and engaged part of our Montessori community. Volunteers are an integral part of the many activities that Montessori Academy Parent Organization (MAPO) orchestrates to enhance the community and learning environment for our families and students. A list of all events is given to parents at the beginning of each year, and volunteers may sign up to be contacted for those events and activities of personal interest. These can also be found on the Montessori Academy Facebook page.

We encourage family members with a talent, career, hobby, or special interest they would like to share with the children to schedule information sharing times with the teacher. These presentations may potentially be scheduled with the class virtually, in compliance with school procedures during the Pandemic.

You need not wait to be contacted to volunteer; you can initiate involvement in these ways:

- Calling your child's teacher or the office and letting us know how you are interested in helping.
- Watching the newsletter, the MAPO Facebook page, and your email for requests for assistance.

Your time, talent, support and example of service are vital to so much of what makes the Academy strong. Our desire is to provide your child with the best education possible and the highest quality environment available. Simultaneously, we hope to instill in our students a commitment to service by modeling this spirit in our own lives. With your support, our shared philosophy and work will enrich the lives of the children.

Policies and Procedures

Standards of Conduct Policy (Approved 08/04/2020)

Philosophy

The code of conduct for students is driven by the following Montessori Academy belief statements:

- We believe that the teacher/student relationship should be built upon clear communication and expectations, the child's individual needs, and self-discovery and exploration with teacher guidance.
- We believe positive interactions between home and school allows for the child to develop to their fullest potential.
- We believe the decisions we make today steer the course for the future.

Montessori Academy assumes that students are trustworthy and will conduct themselves with good judgment at all times and in all places. The Academy believes discipline is a process in which students are supported in developing self-control, making responsible choices, and developing respect, citizenship and scholarship. When students enter Montessori Academy, it is understood that both they and their parents agree to support all rules of the institution as outlined in the community handbook while the student is enrolled in the school.

Procedures for Addressing Inappropriate Behaviors

Basic class rules are explained to students during orientation, and rules are based upon respect for each other and the school. Modeling and group discussions help children see and understand acceptable behavior. Positive redirection and purposeful activity may help avoid many behavioral problems. The amount of external control imposed may vary according to the child's age and abilities. Self-disciplined children who act responsibly have greater freedom of choice in the classroom. With consistency and fairness in mind, teachers remind children of the appropriate behavior expected. Positive redirection or application of natural or logical consequences follow if students do not comply.

Whether a problem involves two people or the whole class, problem solving is taught to students. We try to resolve problems in the context of the setting and people involved. However, if staff efforts at redirecting inappropriate behavior are not meeting with success, or behavior is extreme, additional steps will be taken, and parents will be notified by the teacher.

Procedures for Addressing Inappropriate Behaviors

- **First Offense:** The teacher explains or reviews class or school expectations. The teacher determines appropriate in-class consequences for the behavior (e.g. apologies, loss of playground privileges for one day, etc.)

- Second Offense: The teacher personally communicates the problem to the Administration and the child's parent/guardian and applies the appropriate in-class consequences.
- Third Offense: The teacher again communicates the problem to the child's parents/guardians and applies the appropriate in-class consequences. The child meets with the Administration to discuss the problem. The Administration may schedule time to observe the student in the context where the inappropriate behavior is occurring. The administration may then schedule a meeting with the teacher to make specific recommendations based on the observation. If deemed necessary, the administration will contact the parents/guardians.
- Fourth Offense: The administration requests a conference with the parents/guardians and applies the appropriate consequences. These consequences may include, but are not limited to, loss of school privileges to attend a field trip or special event, loss of bus privileges, suspension or expulsion.

In situations involving violation of a major school rule or serious academic problems, or if at any time a student's influence is considered harmful, or his/her presence in the school is regarded as undesirable, the school reserves the right to require immediate withdrawal.

Disciplinary procedures will be taken for the following:

- Purchase, use, possession, transport or sale of alcoholic beverages or other drugs or drug paraphernalia, except as prescribed by a physician (see Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, and Vaping policy)
- Possession or use of firearms or other weapons, or explosives (see Weapons on School Grounds policy)
- Harassment (see Bullying & Harassment policy)
- Inappropriate use of the Internet and computer resources (see Internet & Computer Resources)
- Inappropriate behavior on the school bus (see Bus Conduct Policy)
- Inappropriate clothing (see Dress Code)
- Inappropriate behavior on Academy sponsored field trips
- Stealing or vandalism of school property
- Other behaviors deemed unacceptable by the faculty and administration

If the teacher indicates that additional resources may be required to support the child in adhering to Academy expectations, an outside evaluation may be requested. The Director of Education will schedule a conference to discuss evaluative resources with the family.

Staff will document repeated disruptive behavior or physical aggression. A student may be asked to leave the school if the Administration deems the behavior unacceptable or detrimental to other students or incompatible with the school's standards. In addition, if a family declines the school's requests for additional evaluation or support to assist the student's success or continued placement, the student may be required to withdraw from the Academy.

Weapons Policy

Weapons and replicas of weapons are strictly forbidden on school property. The Board prohibits possession and use of weapons by students at any time on school property.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, school property means the school, schoolground, school buses, or vehicles used for official school purposes, at any school event or field trip, or at any school-sponsored activities that are held off school property.

Weapons shall include but are not limited to firearms; bullets; knives; metal knuckles; straight razors; explosives; noxious, irritating or poisonous gases; poisons; drugs or other items fashioned with the intent to use, sell, harm, threaten or harass students, staff members or parents. “Dangerous Weapon” means any weapon, device, instrument, material or substance, which under the circumstances in which it is used, attempted to be used or threatened to be used is readily capable of causing death or serious physical injury.

Procedures

Any staff member discovering a weapon, will remove the weapon from the student and immediately report the incident to the Administration. The weapon will be secured by the Administration until reporting the weapon to police or returning it to the parent or guardian.

The Administration will report all weapon offenses to parents.

Students or adults possessing weapons on school property may be reported to the police.

Appropriate disciplinary and/or legal action will be taken regarding anyone who possesses weapons or assists possession in any way.

Disciplinary action follows the discipline policy, although the administration reserves the right to immediately implement any consequence deemed appropriate, including immediate suspension or expulsion.

Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco and Vaping Policy

It is the responsibility of Montessori Academy to safeguard the health and safety of all students. Since the abuse of substances constitutes a health hazard, Montessori Academy strictly prohibits the use, possession, sale or distribution of any drug, alcohol, tobacco or vaping substance.

Drugs & Alcohol

Definitions

For purposes of this policy drug refers to any prescription, patent, or controlled substance, alcohol, misbranded substance (“look-a-like” drugs), volatile chemicals, or drug paraphernalia. For purposes of this policy, school property means the school, schoolground, school buses, or vehicles used for official school purposes, or at any school event or field trip.

Procedures

Any student found possessing any of the above will be sent to the Administration and the following consequences will be applied as appropriate:

- Parents/guardians will be notified, and a conference will be held.
- Student possessions will be searched, and State Police may be notified.
- The student may be referred to an approved drug counseling agency.
- The student may be suspended for 3 to 10 days.
- The student may be expelled from school.

If there is evidence that a student is functioning under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance, immediate medical attention will be sought, and parents/guardians will be notified.

Tobacco and Vaping

Definitions

For purposes of this policy tobacco refers to tobacco including a lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe or other smoking product or material and smokeless tobacco in any form, including items related to vaporizers and vaping. For purposes of this policy, school property means the school, schoolground, school buses, or vehicles used for official school purposes, or at any school event or field trip.

Procedures

If a student is caught smoking or in possession of tobacco or vaping products, the administration will be notified, and the following consequences may be applied:

- The parents will be notified.
- The student may lose school privileges.
- The student may be suspended or expelled.

Bullying and Harassment Policy (Approved 08/04/2020)

Bullying and harassment are unacceptable behaviors at Montessori Academy. It is unacceptable when a person intentionally inflicts injury or discomfort upon another person, through physical contact, through written or verbal expressions, or other emotional or psychological methods. Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying.

Definition

For the purposes of student behavior the following definition of bullying shall be used: Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting that is severe, persistent or pervasive and that has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with a student's education.
2. Creating a threatening environment.
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

A person is bullied when he or she has expressed dissatisfaction verbally or demonstrated his or her discomfort with a situation and is still repeatedly exposed to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons over a period of time.

Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that has the intent or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's school performance or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment. The basis for harassment includes, but is not limited to age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, or sex.

Bullying and harassment shall include but are not limited to face-to-face or cyber malicious teasing, or teasing which is repeated, name calling, mocking, spreading rumors, threatening statements, taking someone's possessions through intimidation, ethnic or racial slurs, pushing, hitting, kicking, spitting on or at someone, or slurs regarding one's age, color, disability, religion, or gender.

Procedures

Consequences of bullying and harassment shall include, but are not limited to written and verbal apologies, loss of privileges (e.g. riding the bus, playground, field trips), parent conference, suspension, or expulsion from the Academy, and referral to law enforcement officials.

Students who believe they or others have been bullied must promptly report such incidents to the administration.

The administration shall handle the report objectively, neutrally and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint. Verbal and written complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective or preventive action be taken when allegations are substantiated.

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include the following:

1. Counseling within the school
2. Parental conference
3. Loss of school privileges
4. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities
5. Suspension
6. Expulsion
7. Referral to law enforcement officials

Internet and Computer Resources Policy (Approved 08/04/2020)

The purpose of providing Internet and computer resources to the students of Montessori Academy is to support research and educational activities. The use of these resources is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in disciplinary action. Students are permitted to use the internet for educational purposes related to school assigned topics and are expected to exercise responsible behavior when using equipment and conducting research. Students and parents must agree in writing to our policy annually before computer resources are made available.

In accordance with Montessori philosophy, we expect the internet will be used safely and in ways that will not cause damage to any individual. Students will be instructed in expectations for the safe and responsible use of internet and technology resources.

Student Owned Electronic Devices Students are permitted to use their personal electronic devices for educational purposes during class at the discretion of the teacher.

- Student owned electronic devices will be used only for legitimate educational purposes.
- Student owned devices are not to be used during lunch, while waiting for the bus or in the car rider line, during any emergency drills, in any instructional setting without permission, or during assemblies.
- The student must use the Academy's WI-Fi network. Under no circumstances may a student by-pass the network to use the device's carrier.
- The student owned electronic device is never to be utilized for purposes of copying, plagiarism, or cheating.
- Students choosing to bring electronic devices into the school surrender the right to keep private any content on the device.

- The Administration reserves the right to take any personal electronic device brought to school from the student until the end of the day or until a parent can pick it up.
- Students are solely responsible for the electronic device they bring to school. Montessori Academy does not accept responsibility for loss, damage or theft of any educational device brought to school by a student.

Inappropriate Use of Electronic Devices

Inappropriate use of both school and student owned electronic devices includes but is not limited to the following actions:

- deliberately abusing or altering the network or computer hardware or software
- viewing or downloading unacceptable material
- unauthorized sharing or accessing the account of another student
- using abusive, vulgar, or inappropriate language via computer resources
- entering any chat room
- cyber bullying
- using a student owned technology device during class or instructional environment without prior permission from the teacher
- playing unauthorized games
- accessing social media sites
- delivering or showing inappropriate content
- downloading or uploading of applications
- audio/video recording or photographing of any person on school property without teacher or administrator permission
- vandalizing school computers or electronic devices
- use of student owned electronic devices on school busses, unless permitted by the driver

If students accidentally view unacceptable material, they should immediately close the window and report the incident to a teacher or administrator. Students are obligated to report violations of this policy, including violations of the policy by another student. A violation of this policy will result in disciplinary actions outlined in the Standards of Conduct Policy and/or Bullying and Harassment Policy. In the case that a student shares, accesses, or initiates violent, sexual, or other inappropriate content, the administration will immediately discuss appropriate disciplinary actions.

Bus Conduct Policy (Approved 06/02/2020)

In order to ensure that all students are transported to and from school and field trips in a safe and orderly manner, students are required to follow the school bus rules.

All students riding buses are expected to observe the following:

- Bus riders are to remain in their seats until the destination has been reached and the bus has stopped.
- Seats are assigned by the driver. The assigned seats must be occupied until permission is given to make any changes.
- No person will be permitted out of his/her seat while the bus is in motion.
- Talking is permitted in a low conversational voice to those in the same seat, but loud talking or calling to people in other sections of the bus is forbidden.
- Obscene or vulgar language and teasing, bullying or harassing other students are absolutely forbidden.
- For the safety of all concerned, students are not permitted to have hands or heads out of the windows at any time.

- Throwing objects of any kind from the bus or on the bus is dangerous and is not permitted.
- Students may not get off the bus at any stop other than their own unless they have a signed note from the parents or guardians requesting such a stop. Only students who are assigned to the bus may ride that bus.
- Bus notes from parents are to be brought to the office and a bus pass will be issued for the student to give to the bus driver.
- The driver of any school bus shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the pupils being transported.
- No live animals or pets are permitted on the school bus
- Students may not use electronic devices on school busses unless permitted by the driver

The administrator may suspend a student from riding the school bus for up to 10 consecutive school days for engaging in gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to, the following:

1. Regular willful violation of the bus rules.
2. Willful injury or threat of injury to a bus driver or to another rider.
3. Willful and/or repeated defacement of the bus.
4. Repeated use of profanity.
5. Repeated willful disobedience of a directive from a bus driver.
6. Such other behavior as the Administration deems to threaten the safe operation of the bus and/or its occupants.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress within acceptable standards of cleanliness and modesty. Flip-flops, shoes that do not secure behind the foot, bare feet, and high heels are not permitted in school or on the playground for reasons of safety. Shoes and sneakers should be tied or fastened securely. Pants shall be worn at the natural waist. Bare midriffs, tank tops, or excessively tight or fitted clothes are not permitted. Students shall not wear excessively short shorts or skirts, or clothing with holes. Inappropriate language and logos (alcohol, cigarettes, sexual themes, weapons, etc.) are forbidden. The Director of Education reserves the right to decide the appropriateness of a student's clothing and to call parents to bring in an appropriate change of clothing. Hats may not be worn indoors, with the exception of some special occasions, under the direction of the teacher.

Students may not wear clothing or masks that cover the top half of their face, including jackets with decorative masks built into the hoods. The students' eyes must be visible at all times.

Students will not be allowed to participate in outdoor recess and physical education opportunities without appropriate clothing for weather and safety. Children should wear seasonal, playground appropriate shoes. Athletic shoes should be worn on days that your child is scheduled for physical education activities.

Students in the Toddler Program and the Children's House need a complete set of extra clothing. All clothing should be individually labeled with the child's name and packed in a sealed plastic bag that is labeled with the child's first and last name . Please send in an updated change of clothing, as needed, that is appropriate for changes in the seasons and your child's growth throughout the academic year. If your toddler is in the process of toilet learning, please send additional sets of extra clothing, as is appropriate.

Field Trips

Field Trips During the Pandemic

In normal times, field trips are an essential part of our school's culture and curriculum. However, we recognize that maintaining the health and safety of our school community is our most important priority during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the school will prioritize the implementation of virtual and outdoor field trip opportunities during the pandemic.

General Field Trip Information

Field trips are an important part of our curriculum. These experiences enhance the education of your child and participation is mandatory. Parents will be informed in advance of all field trips. The Permission Form must be signed and returned for the child to participate.

A buddy system is used on field trips. Each child will be paired with a partner. The buddy system will also be used for bathroom visits. No child shall be alone in a public bathroom.

Buses may be used for student transportation on trips. Parents may also be asked to provide transportation for groups of children. All parents must show proof of insurance, have proper safety restraints in the car, and have a cell phone. Cell phones will not be used for social calls while transporting children on field trips. A first aid kit and emergency health binder will also be taken on each field trip.

Revisions or Additions to Policies and Procedures

The Board of Directors and the Administration of Montessori Academy reserve the right to develop and implement policies and procedures on an on-going and as-needed basis. New policies and procedures will be included in the annual update of the Community Handbook and will be available to parents and staff in the office as they are written and approved by the Board of Directors.

Health and Wellness

Daily Health Screenings

During periods of high COVID-19 exposure or illness, the Administration will enact daily health screenings. At drop-off, parents will be asked if their child or member of the household has been tested for COVID-19 and if everyone in the household is healthy today. Following these questions, a staff member will perform a temperature check. Any child with a temperature of 100 or higher will not be permitted to enter the building.

Student Health

If your child becomes ill at school, you will be contacted to take our student home. Because children may have accidents or become ill while at school, it is essential that the school have on file the names of at least two persons who can be contacted in a parent/guardian's absence to care for a sick child. This information should be included on the Emergency Information Form. Please contact the office immediately when there are changes in emergency information.

Allergies

If your child has any allergies, either food or environmental, the Academy must be notified. This information, including the manifestation of the allergic reaction and actions to be taken, will be on file in the student's record book to be used in case of an emergency.

Parents/guardians must inform the office, school nurse, and appropriate teachers about their child's food allergies. Since it is impossible for parents to inspect everything eaten by their children at school, these children with allergies must be taught about foods which are safe, and foods which must be avoided so that faculty and staff can support affected children in maintaining safe food habits.

Symptoms Guide

In this time of COVID, it is especially important that parents keep children at home when they are not well. Giving a child Tylenol before school to reduce a fever can put everyone in our Montessori community at risk. By only sending your children to school when they are healthy, we can increase the likelihood that no one will contract COVID while at Montessori Academy.

Following is a list of symptoms to guide you in deciding whether or not 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:

- Fever (over 100 degrees F), rash, consistent cough, discharge of discolored or profuse amounts of nasal mucus, diarrhea, vomiting, or sore throat.

If you think your child might be contagious (such as pinkeye or the flu), do not send your student to school until you know the child is no longer contagious.

If a child is sent to school with symptoms of illness, Montessori Academy reserves the right to send the child home.

Common Childhood Diseases

Following are a few facts about the common communicable diseases of childhood for your information from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

- Chicken Pox: Incubation period 14 to 21 days. Symptoms include slight fever, pimples, blisters and/or crusts in different stages. Excluded from school until lesions are scabbed over. Period of communicability: not more than 1 day before or 6 days after appearance of rash.
- Head Lice: Symptoms: persistent itching in the scalp. The insect is about 1/8" long in the hair around the ears and the back of the neck. The lice, which multiply fast, are almost always found in layers of hair underneath the top layer. White round nits (eggs) firmly attach to the hair shaft in the same area. A nit is about the size of a head on a straight pin, perfectly round and very hard. Children must be nit-free before returning to school or they will be sent home.
- Fifth Disease: Incubation period is 4 to 14 days. Symptoms are "slapped cheek" appearance with red, raised area on face - may have sore rash elsewhere. Excluded from school until seen and diagnosed by a physician.
- Pinkeye: Very contagious condition with redness and watering of eyes; pus may be present. Student is excluded until the eye is clear or until released by a physician to return to school.

Emergencies

At the beginning of each school year, parents must complete the Emergency Information and Authorization Form which requests telephone numbers where parents/guardians can be reached during the day. In addition to parent/guardian contact information, two additional individuals must be named as emergency contacts, with accurate day-time contact information provided. Please be certain to update the office if there are any changes in contact information throughout the year.

In case of an accident or sudden onset of illness, the Academy will not hesitate to seek proper care for your child. The child's individual emergency instructions on file in the office are consulted immediately and the parents are called. If necessary, the child will be transported to the Chambersburg Hospital either by staff vehicle or ambulance. Parents assume any resulting expense and hold harmless staff and volunteers assisting in such an instance.

The medical authorization that the parent/guardian signs will be taken with the child so that treatment can be given immediately in the absence of the parent/guardian.

With permission of the parent/guardian, we treat minor injuries with soap, water, antiseptics (i.e. Bactine), cold compresses, and bandages.

Immunization

All students must have a current Physical Examination Form (completed by the child's physician) on file in the office. A record of the student's last physical exam as well as the student's immunization history should be included on the examination form.

Students entering school need the following vaccines:

- 4 doses of tetanus.
- 4 doses of diphtheria.
- 3 doses of polio.
- 2 doses of measles.
- 2 doses of mumps.
- 1 dose of rubella.
- 3 doses of hepatitis B.
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) vaccine or history of the disease.

Students attending 7th grade need the following:

- 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap)
- 1 dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV)

Physical examinations are required prior to entry for all children and again when children are entering kindergarten and sixth grade. A waiver can be signed if your personal beliefs prohibit immunization.

Medications

No prescriptions or over-the-counter medicine will be given without written notice from you. The first dose of medication should not be given at school. Medication must be brought to school in its original container. The container must be labeled with the child's name, the name of the drug, dosage and frequency. Prescription medications must be stored in original containers that are labeled by the pharmacist with your child's name and prescription/dosage information. The pharmacist who fills the prescription will provide an additional container if requested.

Do not put medicine in lunch boxes. We will not administer medications put in a child's lunch box.

We will not administer medication found in an envelope, bag, tissue, etc. We will not allow a child to take any medication - even a cough drop - without the proper forms. If it comes to the attention of a staff member that a medication has been sent to school without following the proper procedures, the medication will be immediately confiscated by a staff member and securely stored in the school health room until a parent/guardian is notified and able to collect the medication.

Montessori Academy will have available, through the school health room, antiseptics and other mild nonprescription medications, which include Tylenol, Tums, and cough drops. Permission to administer these nonprescription drugs must be given on the Authorization to Administer Form. For certain nonprescription medications, a doctor's note may be necessary. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

Any staff of the Academy who becomes aware or suspects that a student has suffered, or faces a threat of suffering, any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the child, is required by law to file a report immediately with Pennsylvania State ChildLine

and Abuse Registry. The staff member will inform the Administration with a written documentation of the known or suspected abuse and the actions taken in reporting the known or suspected abuse, as is required by law, as soon as possible after filing a report. The Administration and staff is required by law to maintain the confidentiality of students, families, and reporting staff and to cooperate with any investigations into the alleged abuse or neglect by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services and/or the Office of Children and Youth.

Changes in Home Situation

Parents should inform the school if there is a change in the home situation such as a new baby, a severely ill family member, or a change in the child's daily routine. A change at home will likely be reflected in school behavior. Communication from parents will enable the staff to attune themselves to and cope with a child's temporary difficulties.

In the event of a change in custody, Montessori Academy requires a legal document stating the terms of the custodial agreement to be placed on file within 30 days.

Change of Address, Email Address and Telephone Number

When families move or change telephone numbers or email addresses during the course of a school year, it is critical that they notify the school office of these changes so the school can maintain necessary and appropriate contact with the family. If you move or change your contact information during the course of the year, please contact the school office with this change information. If you arrange transportation with your child's home district, please contact your district directly to update transportation arrangements and communicate changes promptly to the Academy.



Daily Guidelines

Campus Hours, Arrival and Dismissal

The school office is open during the school year from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. When coming to the school for any reason, please enter through the front doors and communicate with the front office from the vestibule. Do not go directly to the classroom or into the rest of the school building. The school office phone number is 717-261-1110.

Student Arrival:	8:30 am to 8:45 am
Dismissal for AM-only students:	12:00 pm to 12:10 pm
Dismissal for Bus Riders	3:00 pm to 3:15 pm
Dismissal for full-day Car Riders:	3:00 pm to 3:15 pm

Students are not permitted to enter the building prior to 8:30 am. unless they are registered and scheduled for ExCEL before care program. Our ExCEL before and after care program is available from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

For the benefit of all students and teachers, we ask that arrival and dismissal times be strictly observed. If an emergency arises causing you to be late, please call the school to make arrangements for your child. Prompt arrival allows for efficient daily health screening, aids success for students and offers special time/greetings with teachers and classmates. Late entries to class can create disruption for students and staff. If a child arrives after the appointed times for arrival, please bring the child to the office for health screening and sign in. Promptness at dismissal times reduces student anxiety and frees staff for other scheduled responsibilities. Chronic tardiness will require a conference with the Director of Education.

Arrival Routines

During morning arrival, two lanes of traffic will form in front of the building. The right lane is for Elementary and Middle School student drop off and buses. The left lane is for Toddler and Primary student drop-off located at the side entrance of the building. Families with both younger and older children will use the left lane and drop off all children at the Toddler/Primary Entrance.

Park in one of the spaces along the curb, unbuckle your child, and assist your child in wearing their facial covering. Upon arrival at the unloading point, please lower your window and a staff member will approach your vehicle to perform the daily health screening. The staff member will ask a standard set of questions, take your child's temperature, and visually assess the child for symptoms of COVID-19. The staff member will assist your child in exiting the vehicle and entering the school, as appropriate.

If your child does not meet criteria to enter the school, as outlined in our Health and Safety Plan, you will be directed to take your child home. The staff member will document the results of the health screening and report the results to the Administration for follow up. Please wait for vehicles in front of you to pull away; please do not go around or pass other vehicles unless instructed to do so by school staff.

Dismissal Routines

Families will receive a dismissal name placard that must be visibly displayed in the car at the time of pick-up. Attaching the placard to the sun visor in the car allows you to flip it down to display during dismissal time.

At dismissal, bus students will be dismissed before car riders. Buses will pick up at the front entrance of the building. Families of car riders who arrive before 2:55pm may not occupy the bus lane. If you are picking up a Elementary/Middle School student, and you arrive early, please park in the lot on the right side of the building (with the basketball hoops) to wait for the buses to load and exit. Please keep in mind that our “buses” are often vans and other small vehicles that are operated by local school districts and transportation agencies.

During car rider dismissal, two lanes of traffic will form in front of the building. The right lane is for all buses and Elementary/Middle School student pick-up. The left lane is for Toddler and Primary student pick-up, located at the side entrance of the building. Families with both younger and older children will use the left lane and pick up all children at the Toddler/Primary Entrance. Teachers or assistants will help students into their vehicles.

If you need to park and enter the school during arrival or dismissal periods, please park in an area away from the drop-off/pick-up traffic flow. Please do not leave your car unattended in the drop-off/pick-up lanes. When you enter the building, please do not leave your car running or younger siblings in the vehicle unattended. Enter the building through the main entrance.

General Information

- Please keep your child seat belted until your car is parked and have him/her ready for the health screening process, ready to exit with his/her facial covering.
- There is a 5-mph speed limit in the parking lot at all times. Please use extreme care during arrival and dismissal times.
- Please do NOT park in the Fire Lane or handicapped spaces.
- Please do not impede traffic flow by trying to talk to your child’s teacher during drop-off or pick-up. Speak with staff after arrival/dismissal or make an appointment.
- You must notify the office in writing if your child is to go home with someone who is not on your transportation permission list.
- If you pick up your child prior to regular dismissal time, please stop in the office to sign your child out.
- If you will be changing your child’s method of pick up for the afternoon, please inform the office before 1:00 pm in order to ensure the student is dismissed properly.
- Parents may take students other than their own home with them under the following conditions:
 1. the child’s parent calls the office about the arrangement and a record is made of the phone call;
 2. the child’s parent writes a note with his/her signature and the note is filed in the school office;
 3. the adult is listed on the child’s transportation permission list.
- Students may NOT go to a friend’s house via the school bus due to capacity and insurance limits.

Transportation

Busing is available for students in grades K-8 living in Chambersburg and most of the surrounding school districts. The Director of Transportation for each school district determines schedules for each area. Questions or concerns about busing should be directed to the Director of Transportation in the school district in which you live.

Birthdays & Holidays

If your child wishes to acknowledge a birthday or special holiday at school, please contact your child's teacher in advance to make arrangements. Please reach out to your child's teacher to determine if there is a way that you may be able to participate virtually. Class lists are provided for parent correspondence, upon request.

Lunch & Snacks

Children must bring their own lunches every day. The Academy encourages healthy eating habits and asks that your child's lunch include healthy foods. We encourage the use of reusable or recyclable containers for food and beverages. Please label lunch boxes, thermoses, etc. with your child's name. Please avoid lunch boxes or containers with violence, weapons, alcohol, drug or tobacco related motifs. Refrigerators and microwaves are available for student use.

Children at the Children's House level are provided with a healthy morning snack each day.

If your child has any food restrictions or allergies, please notify the office and the teacher.

Toys & Personal Belongings

Please encourage students to leave personal belongings at home, as they may become lost or broken. Explain to your child that toys and electronic devices (including electronic games, cell phones, tablets, and cameras) cannot be used during school, recess or break time unless approved for a specific activity with approval and supervision of a staff member. Children are welcome to bring books or other educational materials as they relate to class activities and sharing time. Label all items sent to school. The Academy cannot be responsible for loss or damage.

Any electronic devices brought to school must be turned in to a teacher when entering the classroom and will be locked in a closet until dismissal. These devices may be used at the teacher's discretion for school-related activities. A violation of the above procedure will result in the device being taken and kept in the office for the remainder of the day. A second violation will result in the device being retained until it can be handed over to a parent/guardian.

Kindly check pockets for unfamiliar objects when your child returns home. These may be part of school equipment and are often very costly or difficult to replace or render the material unusable by other students. Items that may seem inconsequential or even appear to be a small toy may be part of an educational activity that will need to be returned. If a child deliberately damages material or the environment, the parents may be asked to repair or replace the damage or provide appropriate restitution.

School Ground Rules

All students are expected to honor the following school ground rules:

- All students must remain in the sight of a supervising adult unless they have specific permission otherwise. An adult must supervise all play structures.
- All students must respect the requests of supervising adults.

- All students must use respectful language and actions at all times.
- All objects and materials must be used appropriately (not aggressively); the use of sticks, rocks, dirt clods, sand, and snow as objects to throw or poke is unacceptable.
- Tackle and wrestling games are not acceptable.
- Games with “pretend” weapons and/or killing are not permitted.
- Sleds and snowboards are not permitted.
- Bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades and skates may not be ridden in the parking lot or on the school campus, unless permission is granted by the Administration.

Classroom Rules

All students are expected to honor the following classroom rules:

- We speak quietly, walk carefully and handle things gently.
- We wait our turn, and we are polite to each other.
- We allow others to work.
- We put things back where they belong.
- We keep things neatly on a mat or table.
- When we make a mess, we clean it up each time.
- We are gentle with others and with ourselves.

Playground Rules

All students are expected to honor the following guidelines while on the playground:

- Play within designated play areas. Get permission from a teacher or assistant before leaving the playground.
- Enjoy activities and equipment safely and respectfully.
- To use play structures, children should be able to reach them without assistance.
- Sand stays in the sandbox; it is not thrown.
- Students using balls and other playground equipment are responsible for returning them to the storage area.
- Adults will retrieve balls that go out of the playground area.
- Clothing is to be worn, not swung overhead or grabbed; appropriate shoes must be worn.
- Litter belongs in the trash can.

Closings and Delays

Inclement Weather Closings & Delays

The Academy follows the Chambersburg Area School District school closings and late openings in the event of inclement weather. Closings are posted on the Chambersburg Area School District website and area TV stations (WGAL and wgal.com) in addition to the Montessori Academy Facebook page. Registering a cell phone number with the CallFire form will allow your family to receive text messages in the event of a last-minute cancellation or delay.

If schools are delayed two hours, classes will begin at 10:45 a.m. for all full day students. School doors will not open for students until 10:30 a.m. Classes will be canceled for AM-only students and the morning ExCEL program will be closed. If school is dismissed early, please pick up your child as soon as possible. The

afternoon ExCEL program will be closed if there is an early dismissal. Please consider your individual commute to school and feel free to pick up your child if the weather conditions warrant it.

Whole-School and Partial School Closures due to COVID-19

If mandated, the school facilities will be closed to all students, except those students of essential workers, as defined by the state, who have made arrangements for childcare.

In the event that a member of our school community has a confirmed case of COVID-19, contact tracing will occur to determine the course of action with whole or partial school closure for the proper disinfection/quarantine of the facilities and materials.

In the event of a whole or partial school closure that affects your child, you will be promptly informed via email and phone call or message.

School Calendar

The most recently updated School Calendar is found on our website (www.montacad.org).

Giving at Montessori Academy of Chambersburg

Montessori Academy is a non-sectarian, 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational organization. Donations to Montessori Academy are eligible for tax deductions.

Montessori Academy of Chambersburg has two main sources of revenue: tuition and philanthropic support. The school relies on gifts of all sizes from teachers, staff, board members, parents, grandparents, alumni, and local businesses to help cover the expenses not covered by tuition alone and to broaden the educational experience of our students.

We ask every family to participate in annual fundraising efforts at whatever level is meaningful and comfortable for their family. We appreciate all efforts – each one makes a difference for the children in our school community.

The Gift of Time & Talent

We invite you to volunteer for the many ongoing initiatives throughout the school year. Serving as a parent volunteer is vital to enriching your child's education at Montessori Academy of Chambersburg. You will get the opportunity to meet other dedicated parents and volunteers. There are many opportunities to get involved, consider joining the parent organization, volunteering to help with the silent auction, or serving on the advancement committee and pitching in with fundraising. While these efforts are undoubtedly going to require innovation and flexibility in the era of pandemic mitigation, they are more important than ever.

As you think about your strategic philanthropic giving this year, we are asking every family to consider including your child's school in your plans.

Annual Giving – “The Montessori Fund”

Annual gifts make up the difference between what tuition covers and the actual cost of running the school. Such gifts are usually unrestricted (meaning that donors allow the school to spend them on whatever it deems necessary) and almost never are spent on items outside the operating budget.

The participation of all parents and board members in this fundraising effort ensures the stability and success of Montessori Academy. These funds are an integral part of allowing the school to accomplish its daily work. These funds supplement tuition income by helping pay for teacher salaries and benefits, teaching tools, educational technology and equipment, and continuing education for staff. Because operating costs go up, the annual fund must help balance the budget.

In September 2004, our current school building, custom designed to support our Montessori mission, opened with an investment of over \$2 million. Since mortgaging the construction, a portion of the contributions made to the Annual Fund may be applied to reduce this debt.

Capital Giving

Often major gifts are needed to meet building needs that cannot be met with tuition funds. This usually includes brick-and-mortar building projects and major renovations. For 2022-2023, needed renovations remain the replacement of the carpeting in the Big Room and in the Little Big Room, as well as painting the entire facility. Our lobby renovation, which was completed in 2018 is an example of a capital giving project that was sponsored by our board members. Capital gifts benefit students of all ages and enhance the indoor Montessori environment of our school.

The Silent Auction

The Silent Auction is the Academy's primary fundraiser. It is held annually, traditionally in November, and consists of a reception, dinner and silent and live auctions. All parents, friends, faculty, board members, administration and business sponsors are encouraged to participate. Donations to the silent and live auctions are solicited from local businesses and gladly accepted from anyone. Each year we look forward to the Silent Auction. It is a fun and lively event; proceeds are used for educational programs, supplies and field trips.

Race for Education

The Race for Education is our spring, student-participation fundraiser. Students request sponsorships from family members and friends then run as many laps as they can in an hour. All students participate in the Race and have a fabulous time. Funds raised through these donations are restricted funds which are used for previously identified purposes, such as new technology and new playground equipment.

Special Events

Special events not only raise budgeted revenue for the Academy, they also provide entertainment and opportunities to socialize with other Montessori families. All fund-raising activities are supported by volunteers who dedicate countless hours of work enthusiastically planning, staffing and participating at events to further the quality of education for our children.

This year, all special events will be carefully considered within our Health and Safety Plan as we strive to ensure the health and safety of our community.

Gifts in Kind

Our school accepts donations of needed goods and services. Corporations and local businesses can make donations to sponsor specific programs already in existence or for new programs or initiatives created per the donor's request.

These programs can range from, but are not limited to, our library, physical education programs, field trips, community involvement activities, financial aid, computer platforms, school furniture and/or school materials. Please contact the Administration for more information regarding specific needs.

Matching Gifts

As an employee benefit, hundreds of companies worldwide match their staffs' philanthropic contributions. Matching gifts allow you to double or even triple your gift to our school. After confirming that your employer is a matching gift corporation, get a matching gift form, fill it out, and send it to the school with your gift. The

school then submits the form to the company's matching gift department, which sends the money directly to the school. Also ask if your employer will match volunteer hours with a donation to your school, as some corporations do.

Other Opportunities for Giving

Contributions to Montessori Academy may be made in a variety of ways. The easiest and most expedient way to make a contribution is a cash gift which can be made online via our website. However, gifts of appreciated securities, insurance, and real estate may offer additional tax advantages.

Programs Supporting the Montessori Academy of Chambersburg

We are thankful for the support of local and national programs that support Montessori Academy of Chambersburg.

AmazonSmile – Amazon will donate 0.5 percent of the price of your eligible purchases to Montessori Academy of Chambersburg whenever you shop on AmazonSmile.

Box Tops for Education – Box Tops for Education credit can be earned digitally by scanning your store receipts. Download the Box Tops for Education app so you can participate in this easy way to add to our school's earnings. This initiative is coordinated through our parent organization, MAPO. Contact one of the officers for further assistance.

Giant A+ School Rewards – Do you use a Giant Card? If so, a percentage of your sales can be donated to Montessori Academy every time you shop. Sign into your account or register for an account to link your Giant Card to our school.

Business Opportunities for Giving

Business contributions can be made to Montessori Academy in any form or to any fund. Our local business community is a vital part of the success of our school. We encourage businesses to make such contributions to improve the quality of education offered, expand upon courses and offer new programs, contribute to student financial aid programs, and support building expansion and beautification.

Donations are tax-deductible and there are no preset minimums.

Corporate Educational Improvement Tax Credit Financial Aid Sponsor (EITC)

Financial Aid for Montessori Academy is funded by Corporate/Business Sponsors through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program. Businesses receive substantial tax breaks for their contributions up to \$200,000 per year. Please contact the office for more information about this fabulous program that benefits both the donating business and helps to increase the diversity of our community at Montessori Academy.

Financial Aid is available to qualifying students and is determined through an application process, which is submitted to an independent agency to determine need.

Community Handbook Acknowledgement Form

The 2022-2023 Montessori Academy of Chambersburg Community Handbook contains policies with regard to attendance, dress code, technology and cell phones, student conduct expectations and discipline management, grading/reporting/testing, information, and more.

The 2022-2023 Handbook provides detailed information on the effects that COVID-19 will have on operations and policies this academic year. It is essential that you review the handbook in its entirety to understand these changes. We appreciate your support in our efforts to provide a rich Montessori experience, while prioritizing the health and safety of our community.

PARENT AND STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

I, the parent/guardian of (student name) _____, hereby confirm that:

I have access to or have received a copy of the 2022-2023 Montessori Academy Community Handbook, and further understand the responsibilities expected of Montessori parents and students; the policies, procedures, rules, regulations and practices as stated in this document; and, that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and may be subject to disciplinary actions listed in the handbook.

Montessori Academy reserves the right to make changes to this document at any given time. I understand that I will be notified of any changes that are made.

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have received, read, and agree with the contents listed in the 2022-2023 Montessori Academy Community Handbook.

Parent Printed Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____