

The Montessori School of the Mahoning Valley

2019-2020 Family Handbook



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www.msmv.org

“Young people must have enough freedom to allow them to act on individual initiative. But in order that individual action should be free and useful at the same time it must be restricted with certain limits and rules that give the necessary guidance.”

Mission Statement

The Montessori School of the Mahoning Valley, a child-centered community of families and educators, provides a quality educational environment that develops independent, life-long learning while instilling respect, responsibility, and resourcefulness.

School History

The Montessori School of the Mahoning Valley, Inc. was founded in 1976 by Suzanne Stettler. The school began in the educational wing of the First Unitarian Church located at 1105 Elm Street in Youngstown, where 2 Primary (pre-school) classes and 1 All Day Primary (kindergarten) class were offered. In 1983, an Elementary program was added under the direction of Steve Gyomber.

By the mid-1980s, the school had outgrown the facilities at the First Unitarian Church. In 1985, the school was relocated to 2008 Lynn Avenue in Youngstown where the school remains today.

Due to the explosive growth of the school, a new building was constructed in 1997. In memory of the school's founder, the building was named Stettler House. In 1998, Darlene Wolf headed the Adolescent program, added to serve students in grades 7 – 8th. Originally located in Stettler House, the Adolescent program has moved to the Lower Level of Children's House due to the increase in enrollment. The 2007-2008 school year saw the graduation of our tenth Adolescent class.

In 2016-2017, MSMV celebrated its 40th Anniversary. The Administration and Staff look forward to serving and educating the children of the Mahoning Valley for years to come.

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School Contact Information

The phone will be answered in the administrative office between 8:00 - 4:00 Monday through Friday when school is in session. Between 7:30 and 8 a.m. and after 4 p.m. please leave a message on our voicemail, and we will return your call as soon as possible. You can also contacting us via the email addresses listed on the cover of this Handbook.

Teacher Contact Information

You may contact your child's teacher via phone at 330-788-4622 during the teacher's office hours as listed below:

Primary: 3:20pm – 4:00 pm

Elementary: 3:20pm – 4:00pm

Adolescent: 8:00am – 8:15am, 3:00pm – 3:30pm

Please note: For the safety of the students and out of respect for others, staff will not discuss classroom issues, child-rearing issues, or engage in other conversations with parents while responsible for the care and safety of students. This includes on the playground, during recess, dismissal, Extended Care, or in the car line. Please make arrangements for these conversations by leaving a message in the office. The staff member will return your call as promptly as possible.

School Website Address

The parent access for our school website can be found at www.msmv.org.

A password is required to access the Parents section of the website. If you have not received log-in instructions, please contact the office. The Parent section provides access to our school newsletter, a form for logging in your volunteer hours, our school newsletter and calendar, and more! Please visit often.

Hours of Operation

Administrative Office: The school office is open Monday – Friday from 8:00am to 4:00pm when school is in session. During the summer recess, office hours are by appointment only. The school office is located on the second floor of the Children's House.

Programs: Our programs operate as follows:

Half-Day Primary Program (ages 3-4)

Monday – Friday from 8:30am – 11:30am.

All-Day Primary (Kindergarten)

Monday-Friday from 8:30am-3:07pm

Elementary/Adolescent Programs

Monday-Friday 8:30am-3:00pm

Extended Care Programs

Monday-Friday 7:30am-8:30am and 3pm-5:30pm (ages 3-14)

Extended Care operates on days when school is in session.

School Cancellations

The decisions to close or delay school are made independently and take into account many factors. We do not automatically follow any of the public school districts. Please check the sources below daily during periods of inclement weather. We recommend checking multiple sources as technical difficulties at the stations may prevent one of them from displaying our information in a timely manner.

Emergency closings due to weather will also be announced on the following local stations:

WFMJ channel 21 WYTV channel 33 WKBN channel 27

School closure information can be found on the above listed television station websites' school closure page. Parents can sign up to receive texts in case of school closure at either of the two following websites:

<http://www.myvalleyweather.com/schoolclosings/>

<http://www.wfmj.com/link/454656/21-news-text-alerts>

MSMV staff will send a call/text announcing school closure as well. If you are not signed up to receive emergency texts, contact the office for more information.

Our school draws students from a wide geographic area and not all areas will be experiencing the same weather. It is ultimately your decision whether or not you should travel to school when roads are treacherous if we do not cancel classes on a particular day. Please notify the office by 9 AM. For more information on attendance and the weather please see the section on Attendance.

Non-Discriminatory Policies

The Board of Trustees of The Montessori School of the Mahoning Valley, Inc., located at 2008 Lynn Avenue in Youngstown, Ohio, has adopted the following non-discriminatory policies:

The Montessori School of the Mahoning Valley, Inc. recruits and admits students of any race, color, gender, or ethnic origin to all its rights, privileges, programs, and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational programs and athletics/ extracurricular activities. Furthermore, the school is not intended to be an alternative to court or administrative agency ordered or public school district initiated desegregation.

The Montessori School of the Mahoning Valley, Inc. will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, or ethnic origin in the hiring of its certified or non-certified personnel.

Open Door Policy

We have an Open Door Policy for our parents. We welcome our parents to come in and observe or visit your child's classroom at any time. We do suggest calling in advance to make sure the students will be in the building. Classes may be on field trips, nature walks, outdoor study, etc. In accordance with ORC 3301-37-07, all parents shall report to the school office upon entering the premises.

Each year we schedule VIP Nights so our students get to show their parents how they work with the materials in their classrooms.

Our Open Houses and Open House Observation days are geared toward the education of next year's prospective parents regarding enrollment. We also invite parents of prospective students and university education students to observe our classrooms by appointment. A driver's license or photo ID must be presented in the office before adults outside the Cooperative may observe the classrooms.

School Inspection Reports

A copy of the school's PSCC/SACC inspection report is on file in the school's office. A copy of the yearly compliance report is posted in the general office area. Parents may request a copy of this report from the school or from:

Office of Early Learning and School Readiness
25 South Front Street
Mail Stop 305
Columbus, OH 43215-4183.

Parental complaints may be directed to the Ombudsman at 614-466-1221 or the Early Childhood Education Office at 614-466-0224. These numbers are also posted by the compliance report in the general office area. (As per PS37-03-F)

4 Tenets of a Montessori Education

1) The "Whole Child" Approach

Goal: The primary goal of a Montessori program is to help each individual child reach their fullest potential in all areas of life. Activities promote the development of social skills, emotional growth, and physical coordination as well as cognitive preparation. The curriculum and the environment empower children, ignite their creativity, and build a strong sense of self, allowing them to enjoy the process of learning and the excitement of accomplishment.

2) The Prepared Environment

Children learn more by touching, seeing, smelling, tasting, and exploring than by just listening. To that end, the whole learning environment- room, materials, and social climate - is carefully designed to ignite a child's natural desire to learn through exploration and discovery. The Montessori classroom reflects the following:

- Order and Beauty of the Environment
- Everything is easily accessible to the child
- Fosters patience
- Encourages the child to make choices. A child who is not able to make choices will always depend on others
- Develops independence, which is the vital foundation for development of freedom and discipline from within.
-

3) The Teachable Moment- Sensitive Periods

Through her scientific observation, Maria Montessori discovered sensitive periods in children. A sensitive period is a time in a child's life when he or she is deeply interested in and highly motivated to learn a particular skill or understand a piece of information. It is during this unique time that he or she learns a task easily. It is the role of the Teacher to identify these sensitive periods in each individual child and link the child to the appropriate learning activities and materials found in the prepared environment.

4) Montessori Materials

Through her extensive observation of children, Montessori discovered several activities children enjoyed and repeatedly gravitated to throughout their day. From this learning, Montessori developed "beautiful" materials that stimulate, isolate, and self-correct a specific activity or skill. Her materials are multi-sensory, and demonstrate concepts at the concrete level, and move to the abstract.

Educational Program Offerings

Montessori programs are based on a developmental curriculum, not grade levels. All classrooms are multi-aged. The three-year age span in each class is based on the philosophy of the family unit. Just like in a family environment where younger members learn from the experience of the older ones, children in a multi-age group setting learn from each other. Children learn to negotiate, cooperate, and accept ideas other than their own. Since all children are at different stages in their learning and development, negative competition between children is practically non-existent.

Children have freedom of movement, and independence is fostered.

Primary Program (ages 3 – 6)

Dr. Montessori put the “joy” into the journey of learning with her “hands on” approach.

Children work with concrete materials during the early years so as to successfully transition to abstract concepts. To facilitate exploration and discovery, the classroom is organized into 5 key areas:

- Practical Life – care of self and one’s environment
- Sensorial – refinement of the senses to maximize learning
- Mathematics – concrete introduction to abstract math functions
- Language – development of spoken and written language, phonetic approach to reading
- Cultural – exploration of natural sciences, geography, history, and anthropology

All-Day Primary Program (Kindergarten – ages 5-6)

The five and six year olds are beginning to unfold as young leaders, beginning readers, and budding mathematicians. The third year is the most fruitful part of the Montessori experience. Everything children have internalized during the 1st and 2nd years comes together to create a unique way of learning.

The 5 year-olds are the “leaders” in the multi-age morning classroom. They serve as role models for the 3 & 4 year-olds and gain confidence and build self-esteem as they demonstrate lessons to the younger students. The 5 year-olds spend their afternoons with peers refining their reading and language skills through lessons that include parts of speech and word study (compound, antonym, synonym) and doing more advanced projects and group work such as publishing phonogram booklets, sewing, tracing continent maps, making flags of countries, learning math facts, and working with fractions. The program is recognized by the State of Ohio Department of Education as Kindergarten.

Lower Elementary Program (ages 6-9)

For the already accelerated preschool child, the Montessori elementary classroom provides a smooth transition with an overlap of some material in the first year. However, the elementary objectives are different from those in the preschool program. The child is directed toward abstraction, and away from the pedagogical materials.

The curriculum is interdisciplinary, with an emphasis on the association between the different areas of study. For example, the natural sciences lead to the social and physical sciences. All areas of the curriculum are introduced with a “Great Lesson”. These lessons spark the child’s imagination and excite them to learn more.

During this second plane of development, sensitive periods for Imagination and Intellect become apparent. The ability to imagine space and time enable exploration beyond what the five senses can perceive. A sensitive period for construction of language begins, as children become fascinated with the structure of languages.

Educational Program Offerings (continued)

Unlike many traditional curriculums, Montessori approaches knowledge from a global perspective. Dr. Montessori felt that the study of history should begin with a general view of the universe. She developed a series of experiments that reveal the laws of the universe to the child. After this general understanding, the lessons deal with the origins of life and proceed to the development and history of language, writing, and mathematics.

Upper Elementary Program (ages 9-12)

The students continue advanced work in mathematics (reasoning and skill) and language arts (literature and composition) at their own pace. Because the student at this level has a predisposed desire to learn about culture, our three-year curriculum covers the timeline of human development over the centuries, highlighting major contributions and events across all disciplines. Students learn about prehistoric cultures, ancient civilizations, the medieval period, the Renaissance, the Victorian era, and modern history and culture.

Characteristics of the Upper Elementary classroom:

- I. Academic work is self-paced
- II. Teacher observation, student reflection, and standardized testing assess progress
- III. Peer teaching enhances self-esteem
- IV. Students work together, developing collaborative skills

Adolescent Program (ages 12-14)

The adolescent craves real, hands-on work and needs relationships with adults who are “real world experts”, beyond their teachers and parents. Adolescents take an interest in exploring the community first hand as active participants. We take our students out to businesses and professional workplaces for them to experience life, business, and education. Students operate their own small business or other projects of their choice, such as publishing a yearbook or periodic newsletters, child care and enrichment programs, and service projects in the community.

Our academic program prepares the students for high school level work in a pre-college preparatory environment while the “real life” projects prepare them for life. They learn to create, plan, organize, implement, and assess their own projects.

Extended Care Program

The MSMV Extended Care program is based on the same principles found in the Montessori classroom. Children continue to learn and grow in a prepared environment that encourages respect, responsibility, and resourcefulness. Children may participate in such activities as arts & crafts, music, dance, cooking, drama, and outdoor play.

Children age 4 and under staying for Extended Care after the Half-Day Primary Program are required to participate in a rest period, as required by the State of Ohio. Our rest period begins at 1 pm. Pick-up times for Half-Day Primary students in Extended Care are 12 pm, 12:30 pm, and any time from 3:07 until 5:30 pm. These transition times are the least disruptive to our napping students.

These students lay down for a rest period on mats provided by the school in their classrooms. If a child falls asleep, s/he is permitted to sleep as long as the child needs. Sleeping children are wakened gently by 2:30 pm to prepare for the next transition time. Children who do not fall asleep during the rest period are welcome to get up and continue to work in the classroom as they did in the morning work period.

Educational Program Offerings (continued)

After School Extended Care provides children ages 3-14 the chance to enjoy some good old-fashioned fun outdoors running, digging, playing and creating. A light snack is offered between 4 & 5 pm. During inclement weather, the children spend time indoors with games, puzzles and crafts.

Head of School

Our Executive Director is Montessori trained with credentials in Montessori School Management from the American Montessori Society. The Executive Director is the head of school, educational program director, curriculum director, admissions director, and is responsible for educating staff, parents, and the general public about Montessori theory and educational practice. The Executive Director also serves as the chief operations officer and advisor to the Board of Trustees.

Head Teachers

Our head teachers are all Montessori trained in the Montessori Method of education through either the Association Montessori Internationale or the American Montessori Society. The Head teachers are responsible for setting up the “prepared” classroom environment, making it inviting and stimulating for the children. They guide the students by “following the child” using careful observation as an assessment of the child’s needs and interests.

Their assistants support the classroom, allowing head teachers concentrated time giving lessons and observing students.

Staff Training

All staff is trained and reviews are conducted annually during August Teacher Report Days regarding Orientation Training. Orientation training will include behavior in an emergency; disinfecting equipment and materials; hand washing procedures; reporting suspected child abuse and staff/child ratios. Discipline policies; management of communicable diseases; and care and use of cumulative records are also reviewed, as well as outlet covering requirements.

Our extended caregivers, as well as our Primary teachers and assistants, are trained in First Aid, Communicable Disease Awareness, CPR, and Prevention & Recognition of Child Abuse & Neglect in accordance with state laws.

Communication Between Programs

MSMV teachers, their assistants, and extended caregivers are encouraged to communicate with one another regarding children’s behavioral and health issues to assist the child in having a successful experience at MSMV. Out of respect for the individual, adults are not to talk about students issues in front of the students or talking “over their heads”. Staff members handle student issues with care and confidentiality.

Continuity of Care

Because Half-Day Primary Extended Care students stay with their head teachers and assistants during the hours of 8:30 to 3:07 pm the continuity of care is consistent. When children participate in before or after school Extended Care, they are in the care of the same caregivers from day-to-day; it is easy and comforting for the child to know whom they should approach for help and guidance at any point in their MSMV day.

Educational Program Offerings (continued)

Professional Development

Teachers are encouraged to continue their ongoing quest for refined understanding and implementation of the Montessori Method, childhood development, and subjects of the curriculum, both through staff development opportunities at the school and elsewhere. Our school has formed a Licensed Professional Development Committee made up of professional educators which helps guide certified teachers with their professional development choices.

Enrollment Procedures

The process usually begins with a telephone inquiry during which an observation appointment is suggested. An observation allows the parents to see our facilities, experience the dynamics of a Montessori classroom, and determine if Montessori would be appropriate for their child(ren).

An information packet containing an overview of the Montessori philosophy, program offerings, and an application is given to the interested party. If the application is returned with the required fee, a meeting is scheduled between a head teacher and the child to determine if Montessori can meet his/her needs. During this time, the parent(s) meet(s) with the Executive Director.

A letter confirming or denying enrollment will be sent to the interested party. Notification of waiting pool status, if any, will be communicated at that time. If the student is accepted, an enrollment contract will be enclosed. Upon receipt of the signed contract and the tuition deposit, enrollment is complete.

The student may attend class once the following are on file:

- Original Birth Certificate
- Custodial Agreement (if applicable)
- School Records Release (if applicable)
- Emergency Medical Authorization
- Medical Statement (within 30 days)
- Student Immunization Record
- School Directory Permission
- Authorization for Transportation
- First Aid Consent
- Media Release
- Waiver of Liability
- School Bus Notification (if applicable)

New students and their families are subject to an eight-week probationary period. If, during the course of the eight-week period or upon its conclusion, the teacher and/or Executive Director determines the student or family will not be best served by a Montessori education, or that successful participation in the Montessori community is unlikely, the student may be required to seek schooling elsewhere.

Educational Excursions (Field Trips)

School days may be utilized for educational excursions. Excursions have educational value and are integral to the Montessori Method. No child will accompany a field trip without a signed permission form filed in the office. If an added risk of physical injury is possible, parents must also sign a legal release form. The head teacher always brings a copy of every student's medical and emergency forms on educational excursions. Children who for whatever reason will not participate in an all-class educational excursion will not attend school for the duration of the excursion, and will be counted as absent.

Withdrawal Procedures

Information regarding withdrawal from school is located in the enrollment contract signed by all students' parents/guardians. It is the responsibility of all parents/guardians to read and understand the enrollment contract.

Financial Information

School Finances

MSMV is supported mainly by the families of our students through tuition, fees, and fundraising efforts. Because we are a chartered nonpublic school, the State of Ohio provides nominal Auxiliary Services for students in the following programs:

- All Day Primary
- Elementary
- Adolescent

Auxiliary Services may supplement our eligible programs with part-time specialists, and classroom texts and materials.

In addition, MSMV is also eligible for a nominal Administrative Cost Reimbursement from the State of Ohio for all mandated administrative and clerical work.

Tuition Plans

A non-refundable advance tuition deposit, along with an enrollment contract, is required for enrollment. Two payment plans are offered:

Standard Plan: On July 1st, one half of the gross tuition is due. On December 1st, the remaining tuition balance is due in full.

Monthly Plan: Tuition payments are deducted from your checking account. The gross tuition minus the Advanced Tuition Deposit plus a service charge is divided into eleven (11) installments. The first payment is due July 1st. Tuition payments are completed in May.

Tuition Statements

Tuition statements are issued electronically, according to your payment plan schedule. Transactions for tuition, Phys Ed, and supplies, along with the amount due, are found on the MSMV tuition statement.

Service Fees

- All payments are due on the 1st of the month. A late fee will be assessed for all payments received after the 10th of the month in which they are due. Late fees are cumulative from month to month.
- A charge will be applied for all returned checks.
- A fee will be charged for copies of invoices or statements, so please remember to save your invoices for childcare tax-credit purposes.
- All accounts must be current before enrollment for the next school year can be guaranteed.
- Requests for student records will be honored upon payment in full of all past due accounts.

Additional Program Fees

Physical Education – MSMV contracts with community providers for our physical education curriculum. Every All Day Primary, Elementary, and Adolescent student is required to participate. The amount of Phys Ed fees depends on the types of activities the children will participate in, and covers the expense of phys-ed instructors, programs and transportation of students. Phys Ed fees are included with your tuition payment plan and appears on the first page of your monthly statement

Upper Elementary Trip – The Upper Elementary class plans a class trip annually. The cost of the trip normally ranges from \$200 - \$350.

Financial Information (continued)

Supplies / Field Trip Fees—The school will provide a list of necessary classroom supplies in our summer packet. MSMV buys supplies in bulk -- a supply fee is required for each student. In addition, nominal fees may occur for field trips (generally in the \$5-\$12 range).

Co-op Fees –The Board of Trustees decides annually the amount of Cooperative Fees will be, and the amount is announced before or during the Annual Meeting of the Cooperative each September. Families have the opportunity to reduce or eliminate the fees by participating in volunteering and fundraising throughout the year. The volunteering and fundraising cycle begins May 16 of the previous school year and continues through May 15 of the current school year. Co-op Fees are invoiced after May 15 of the current school year.

Late Form Fees - charged for registration forms which are not received in the school office by the designated deadline.

Extended Care Fees

Contracted Rate For families needing regularly scheduled care: Extended Care fees are billed on an hourly rate, on a contract basis. Extended Care statement is payable upon receipt. For current rates, please inquire with the Business Assistant in the office.

Occasional Use Rate: For families who wish to use the program on a drop-in basis. Extended Care statement is payable upon receipt. Fees will be billed the month following use.

Fee Statements: Fee Statements are issued monthly. You will receive a separate electronic statement when fees are incurred. Extended Care payments are made by cash or paper check only. Extended Care fees cannot be paid via ACH withdrawl from checking. Be sure to check each month to avoid late fees for the amount due.

Family Discounts

The second child in an immediate family will receive a 10% discount on tuition. Subsequent children will receive a 20% discount.

Financial Aid

MSMV awards a small amount of financial assistance for tuition each year to families for whom--after making every sacrifice and exhausting all resources--a Montessori education would be unattainable. The maximum amount of all discounts and financial aid awards cannot exceed 50 percent of a family's tuition bill, and most financial aid awards are less than 50 percent of tuition. The dollar amount available depends upon that year's school budget. The size of each award depends upon the number and the needs of the applicants. Family Gross Income and reasonable household expenses are used to determine need. All awards are made at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

Financial Aid is not available for Extended Care Fees.

Financial Aid applications are due no later than May 1st for the following school year. For more information or an application, contact the office. Financial Aid inquiries, applications, and awards are kept strictly confidential.

School Communication Vehicles

Family Handbook: The MSMV Family Handbook is a valuable resource which provides information on our philosophy, admissions, tuition policies, attendance, and general school policies. Each family receives the handbook at the start of the school year; please read it thoroughly and place it in an easily locatable spot for easy reference.

School Communication Vehicles (continued)

Calendar: The school calendar is distributed in the summer packet and is included on our school website. School events and breaks are listed. Changes and reminders will be published in the weekly newsletter; be sure to update accordingly. Urgent notices will be sent as needed via paper or email. Parents can also utilize our school calendar through Google Calendar.

Conference Days: Mandatory conferences are scheduled for all students twice a year; they are one of the methods we use to communicate your child's progress in lieu of report cards. Conference days are not to be considered opportunities to go out of town or take vacations. The dates are published in the school calendar during the summer to allow you plenty of opportunity to arrange your work schedule. We will publish when it is appropriate to call and schedule your appointment in the newsletter. Parents with multiple children are encouraged to call promptly so that appointments can be coordinated. You will receive a copy of your child's progress report at your conference.

There is no school or regular extended care on conference days. Because it is important for you to attend conferences, we provide childcare during your conference appointment(s) on regularly scheduled conference days as a courtesy.

Newsletter: MSMV publishes a weekly newsletter, typically distributed on Thursdays. It is the responsibility of every member of the Cooperative to keep up-to-date by reading each newsletter carefully; any changes or updates will appear there. A hard-copy of all newsletters is kept in the School Secretary's office for any Cooperative member's reference.

To reduce paper waste and expense, the newsletter is sent digitally. Families without a computer or smartphone should contact the office.

School Directory: We annually publish a MSMV Directory that lists families, students, addresses, phone numbers, and classroom listings. A paper copy of the directory is sent home with your child shortly after the beginning of the school year. Our school directory shall be used for no purpose other than communication concerning school matters among students, families, and staff. The Directory Permission form must be completed in advance; please note that if a family chooses not to list their information in the directory, we cannot release that information to you if you call the office for it.

Website: Our school's website, www.msmv.org, includes a secured website for Parents. This is the place to go to login your Cooperative participation in volunteering and fundraising, to see our school calendar online, to access needed forms, etc. We hope that our families will regularly visit our school website to supplement the other forms of communication we use at our school.

Email: The school office and the Board of Trustees use email to communicate with families of the cooperative. Please contact the office with your preferred email address. It is the responsibility of each parent to regularly check their emails for school notifications, keep the office informed of current email addresses, and adjust spam filters to permit bulk emails from the school office email accounts.

Communication Vehicles (continued)

Message board: The message board is used to post reminders and announcements. Any messages for the chalkboard must be approved in advance by the Executive Director.

Student folders: Classrooms may send home student folders daily, weekly, or monthly. Please give it prompt attention every time it comes home. Folders must be returned to school the next day.

Posters, flyers, and handouts: In order to advertise upcoming events at MSMV, posters, flyers and handouts may be used. To protect our students, families, and the school, no posters, flyers, or handouts of any kind may be distributed on school grounds by members of the Cooperative or the public without express permission and prior approval by the Executive Director. Those wishing to distribute information on school grounds must provide the document to the Executive Director at least 5 business days prior to the proposed date of distribution.

Emergency Phone Tree: An emergency phone tree has been established so families can receive emergency information regarding **non-weather related school closures**, and will be initiated by the administration. Members of the staff will contact families in the event that classes or a school event must be cancelled due to unusual circumstances.

Bright Arrow: This system is used to send “All-Calls,” texts, and e-mails to entire classrooms or the entire school. Topics may include classroom updates, upcoming events, school closures, health notices, and other updates as necessary.

Drive Through Drop-Box: We encourage families to give children responsibilities to foster independence, including giving the child notes and papers from home to turn in at school. Occasionally families will have forms or contracts to turn in, notes for the office or teachers, account payments, or fundraising materials which they do not want to leave in the hands of their child. For this reason, we have a locked drop-box located in our drive-through on the driver’s side for families to deposit these items during arrival/dismissal times. The locked box is emptied daily during business hours. Please note: Families are still welcome to deliver items to the school office personally or via their child.

Minutes of Board Meetings: The minutes of each meeting of the Board of Trustees is available to view in our school offices after their acceptance as approved at the next meeting. In cases where no quorum is present to accept the minutes, the minutes will be available after they are accepted (usually at the next scheduled meeting).

Social Media: Our school has a Facebook fan page for currently enrolled, alumni families, and the public as well as a private Facebook group for current parents/guardians of currently enrolled students only. Information on upcoming events, news about relevant issues, and other information can be found on our Facebook pages. Although social media sites can be helpful ways to keep up-to-date, our Facebook pages are only supplementary to our school newsletter and other school communications vehicles. Please be sure to utilize these other methods of communication regularly.

School Communication Vehicles (continued)

Mailboxes: Students in Extended Care may be provided with mailboxes to ensure school folders with paperwork are not left behind. If mailboxes are being used, it is the responsibility of the parent to check their child's mailbox.

Cell Phones and Similar Electronic Devices: While advances in technology have made communications immediate and ubiquitous. Internet access--both the good and the bad--is now available in the palm of the hand. Even basic cell phones without internet connection can provide texting, photography, and video. Cell phones and similar electronic devices are distracting and disruptive to both students and adults in our safe and peaceful educational environment.

Student Use: Students may not use cell phones or other similar electronic devices on school grounds, with "use" being defined as accessing any function of the device, including turning it on. The term "cell phone and similar electronic devices" means any portable communication device that is capable of sending and /or receiving audio, video, picture, electronic mail or text messages. Such devices shall include, but not be limited to, any beeper, cell phone, iPod, game boy, or other similar device. We strongly urge that these devices be left at home. Adolescent students may bring either Kindles or Nooks to school only if the internet capability is turned off or accessible through our password protected wireless only. The school is not responsible for loss or damage of personal electronic devices.

Students may use the school's phones for emergency calls. Student cell phones shall be turned off and inaccessible at all times during regularly scheduled school hours, during arrival and dismissal periods, and during Extended Care unless for with express permission by the adult staff member on duty; violation may result in cell phone confiscation by school staff and is considered serious misconduct. (see Student Code of Conduct.)

Adult Use on Campus: Our parking lot is a cell phone restricted zone: adults dropping off or picking up students from school must refrain from cell phone/texting communications in the car line or parking lot while children are visible out-of-doors. This is a safety precaution to ensure drivers' full attention when children are present.

We ask that parents and volunteers silence their cell phones when volunteering during school hours, when doing business in the school offices (such as getting a tardy slip, turning in payments of paperwork, etc), during classroom observations, and during parent/teacher conferences or meetings with the administration. Proper cell phone etiquette should be observed.

Audio, video, and photography of students: Some families have declined allowing the school to photograph or video record their children for posting on the Internet or other publication. The school is not responsible for video, photographs, or audio recordings taken or digitally published by non-staff parents on campus or at school events. However, we recommend, out of respect for the wishes of fellow Cooperative members, that all families please contact a child's parents before posting images or video you have of their child online, whether it is a school-related event, or otherwise.

Discipline Policy

Our school believes that discipline is a process that is supported by student choice-making, respect and responsibility. This allows the child to understand that actions have consequences. Basic classroom rules are developed in collaboration with the students and discussed in class at the beginning of each school year and whenever a need arises thereafter. Purposeful activity within the Montessori classroom helps the child to focus on self-directed work, thus avoiding many behavioral situations.

Discipline is developed in a positive manner, never through the use of physical force, ridicule, or sarcasm. One of the desired goals of Montessori education is to foster and sustain strong habits of self-discipline. Teachers endeavor to be firm, just, consistent, and impartial, yet display compassion for the child. Children are respected and misbehaviors are handled with the following practices to build the self-concept of the child:

The actions of a child are criticized, not the personality. "Johnny, I don't like your actions." Generalizations (e.g. "you're always hitting") are avoided so that the child does not feel trapped by misbehavior stereotypes.

Careful physical restraint (bear hug) is permitted when a child appears out of control, as contrasted with single-handed grips which usually evoke a defensive if not destructive response.

The child is encouraged to verbally express feelings so that he/she may define them. Active listening on the part of the adult or other students involved in the conflict promotes respect for self and others.

The teacher sets the tone for bringing the child into harmony by avoiding harsh words and sudden reprimands.

Montessori philosophy dictates that adults closely observe students, anticipate their behavior, and change the surrounding environment to help them. In order to alleviate negative behavior, we may employ an assigned seat in the classroom, a quiet work time in an adjoining room under adult supervision, or a visit to the office.

Students are given time to gain control. They are given the choice to return to the classroom when they can control their behavior. Repeated episodes of negative behavior will prompt a phone call to the parent to schedule a conference.

Please inform your child's teacher of any major changes in your child's routine or home life. Your child will exhibit reactions to these changes in the classroom. It is more productive and helpful to the child to be proactive in helping them deal with change than reactive to the consequences.

MSMV's actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:

- 1) There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting.
- 2) No discipline shall be delegated to any other child
- 3) No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- 4) No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats and/or derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse.
- 5) No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box or a similar cubicle.
- 6) Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
- 7) Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame or frighten a child.
- 8) Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use.

9) Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability, and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.

10) MSMV shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance at MSMV.

Student Code of Conduct

Students of The Montessori School of the Mahoning Valley are expected to respect others, their work, and their rights, including the right to work in a safe and peaceful atmosphere that allows for concentration.

Minor Misconduct

Students who engage in the following behaviors are committing minor misconduct:

Interrupting others at work, Failure to complete work, Disruptive silliness, Touching others' work without permission, Breaking classroom community rules, Running in the classroom, Yelling in-doors, Carelessness in handling materials, items, or possessions, Carelessness or failure in returning materials to their designated places, Making repetitious disruptive noises with mouth, pencils, feet, hands, etc., Taking another student's work or possessions away from them, Hiding from staff members.

Students engaging in these behaviors will be given gentle redirection from the staff towards work which will engage the interest of the student. Daily encouragement first thing in the morning should be employed for students who are engaging in misconduct due to lack of normalization to the classroom. Staff members shall record misconducts as they occur as to document for further disciplinary actions.

Repeated minor misconduct indicates the need for a parent/teacher contact by phone or in person. Verbal redirection, assigning a seat in the classroom or temporarily in the office, and/or guidance in repairing minor damage to the environment, etc, may be used as consequences.

Serious Misconduct

No student shall engage in activities that are disruptive to the orderly education process in the classroom or other areas, or that interfere with the potential safety and security of the students or staff by doing any of the following:

Refusing to do work, Willful defiance, Damaging, destroying, or theft of school or personal property, Recurring, severe temper tantrums, Throwing materials, tools, books, or toys not intended for throwing, Hitting, kicking, shoving, biting, or scratching students or staff members, Pulling the fire alarm except in the case of actual fire or safety emergency, Using threatening, aggressive, or offensive gestures, language, or behaviors toward any student or staff member, Disabling or circumventing school safety devices, including Internet security, Possessing or providing pornographic materials, including electronically transmitted images, text or audio i.e. Internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant, or wireless hand-held device, either overt or covert, Using a cell phone on school property, Leaving the school property without permission and/or without a parent- or school-approved adult.

Students engaging in these behaviors may be confined to the office for the day as an in-school suspension, or may be sent home for the day subject to Executive Director review. Staff members shall document serious misconduct and turn in the report to the Executive Director as to document for further disciplinary actions.

Parents/guardians failing or refusing to pick up a student or to provide timely transportation of said student when contacted due to serious misconduct will be subject to review by the Executive Committee as per part f. of the Parental Code of Conduct.

Student Code of Conduct - Serious Misconduct (continued)

When a student is repeatedly offensive on a major scale, the “strike out system” may be employed:

The parents, Executive Director, and teachers meet to determine the nature of the child’s offense and the positive behavior desired.

The student and parents are warned that if misbehavior of a specific nature occurs, the student will be sent home after the situation is reviewed by the Executive Director.

If the student is sent home more than twice after the above formal warning “strikes out”, the student cannot return. The student is expelled.

Due Process for expulsion is as follows:

A student should be given specific charges in writing with notice to the parents.

Parents and student may be given a chance to appeal through a Fairness Committee made up of one school faculty member, the President of the Board, and an appointed outside, experienced administrator.

The student has a right to rebut adverse testimony.

According to the school enrollment contract, the school may terminate the contract if the administration and teacher determine the child is not thriving or will not thrive. Such contract termination is final and not subject to expulsion due process.

Parental Code of Conduct

The MSMV Parental Code of Conduct consists of the following expectations the school has for parental behavior:

- a. Demonstrate respect for all adults and children, the school, and the school’s programs and become involved in the life of the school community by giving of your time, talents, and finances.
- b. Attend regularly scheduled Parent/Teacher Conferences, orientations, and parent enrichment events.
- c. Read the school newsletter weekly and other recommended materials, including the Family Handbook and Volunteer Guidebook.
- d. Work collaboratively with the staff to foster the development of the child. The Portrait of a Graduate (POG) is depicted within the Parent-Teacher-Child Triangle. (see pages 53-54 of this handbook) The respective roles of the partners, listed in priority order, are described below the triangle.
- e. Work in harmony with the school environment when at home with your child. Children develop a love of learning and become responsible, independent, and capable when parents’ values and expectations are consistent with those of the school and are reinforced on a consistent basis at home.
- f. Commit to growth in parenting in a Montessori way. Parents are expected to become proficient in applying Montessori philosophy at home. This begins with the general principle, “Never do something for your child that he can do for himself.” Allow your child to engage in all of the simple tasks of everyday life that a child can do for himself at each stage of development. Montessori education may also entail learning a communication style that is different from the way in which you were parented. This is a commitment that takes time and will likely involve change, which typically involves some level of discomfort. However, you are not alone or isolated in your journey of growth as a parent.
- g. Model respect for others by demonstrating respect for everyone associated with the school. Respect begins with civility and deepens into trust. Our most fundamental behavioral guidelines for the children are: “respect yourself, respect others, and respect the environment.” We expect the

Parental Code of Conduct (continued)

same from adults, parents, and school staff, at all times and in all relationships within the school community.

h. We expect every member of our community, students, parents, and staff, to be willing to accept full responsibility for their attitudes, actions, and ultimately for their lives. This includes speech and outward behavior.

i. Support your child by speaking of his/her teachers, classmates, and school in positive terms.

j. Familiarize yourself with, maintain respect for, and abide by the school's policies and procedures.

k. Follow the school's problem solving process (2.8.1) when you have a concern.

l. Honor your commitments to the school. Look for ways to make a positive contribution to the life of the school. Through your behavior, you contribute to your children's moral development and to the culture and climate of our school, which they experience on a daily basis. Get involved in the life of the school community. At MSMV, parent involvement is not only strongly encouraged, but is an integral part of everyday life.

m. Contribute to the Annual Fund. MSMV families are expected to give beyond tuition by supporting school fundraisers and the Annual Fund. Our goal for the Annual Fund is 100% participation, with every family making a monetary donation that is meaningful to their family. The amount of the gift is not important—every gift is appreciated.

n. Maintain active, direct, and respectful two-way communication with the school.

o. Read communications that are sent home, including but not limited to notes, forms, emails, newsletters, flyers, statements, and calendars.

p. Inform the school promptly of any changes in your child's life. Parents are responsible for keeping contact information current and informing the school of any changes in custodial arrangements. If the custodial arrangements of your child have changed since you enrolled the child, it is your responsibility to provide a copy of the current court order to the school.

q. Active communication involves parents sharing observations and concerns about their child with the child's current teacher. In matters large and small, remember the principle of respect; even when there is disagreement, disagree respectfully, and follow the school's problem-solving process. Teachers contact parents when additional information or assistance is needed to help the child.

r. Children prosper most when the adults in their lives work in harmony and resolve conflict through side-by-side problem solving rather than face-to-face confrontation or by involving others who are not part of the problem or the solution. Respectfully asking for information, striving to see other perspectives, and remaining open to possible solutions are critical elements of collaborative problem solving.

s. At least one adult representative of the family must attend the Annual Meeting of the Cooperative each September, and to vote on the election of Board Members and business brought before the Cooperative as outlined in our Constitution and Bylaws.

Problem Solving Procedures

Our School Problem Solving Procedures use a respectful, collaborative approach and consist of respectfully addressing only those persons who are directly part of the problem or the solution. This is the method we teach the children; parental modeling of this method is critical to the successful development of these skills. Please use this method when having an issue with any person(s) in our school community or cooperative--including teachers, school staff, administration, committee chairs and members, the Board of Trustees, etc.

1. Go directly to the person for whom you have questions or concerns. Involving others who are not part of the part of the problem or the solution may make you feel better, but it will not help solve the problem productively.
2. Start by respectfully asking for information. Often conflict arises from misunderstanding and miscommunication; gathering information is a more productive starting point than confrontation.
3. Listen and strive to see other perspectives. Often the other adult has to balance decisions based on consideration of many factors. Listening to and understanding the other person's perspective is often the first step in collaborative problem-solving.
4. Remain open to possible solutions. The outcome you preconceive may be less satisfactory than a solution discovered collaboratively.
5. If no accord can be reached, agree to disagree respectfully; then collaborate on a way to go forward peacefully.

Proper Lines of Communication for Child-Centered Issues

Step 1. Communicate directly with your child's teacher.

Your child's teacher is the best source of information about any issue related to or impacting your child in the classroom or school environment. Many times during the course of a child's development there are hard issues to consider or you may have questions about something that occurred during the school day. Working directly with the teacher in a spirit of collaboration is the most effective way to get additional information, resolve any issue, and to build a solid partnership between school and home for future work. To speak to anyone else about the issue may make you feel better, but it will not help your child.

Step 2. Going beyond the classroom.

Involving the Executive Director in classroom centered issues is an option of last resort and is to be used only when problem solving efforts between the parent and teacher have been exhausted. All conferences with the Executive Director are by appointment and can be scheduled by contacting the office. The Executive Director may choose to invite a member of the Board of Trustees to participate in a conference as s/he deems necessary.

Parent Complaints

Whenever a parent complaint concerning a teacher or another staff member arises, it shall be referred to the Executive Director study and possible solution. The parent should have attempted to resolve the problem with the teacher or staff member himself/herself first before complaining to the Executive Director. Parents who try to bring grievances directly to board members shall be referred first to the Executive Director.

The individual employee involved shall be advised of the nature of the grievance and shall be given opportunity for explanation, comment, and presentation of the facts as he/she sees them, to the Executive Director.

Parent Complaints (continued)

- a. If the Executive Director is part of the grievance, it still shall be referred to him/her for direct communication with the complainant.
- b. If direct communication does not resolve the problem, the complainant shall submit a written statement of the grievance to the President of the Board, copied to the Executive Director. The board president will mediate and investigate the matter.
- c. If the President is unable to mediate the grievance, he/she shall appoint, in consultation with the persons involved, a subcommittee of the Board to mediate and investigate the matter.
- d. If the subcommittee does not effectively mediate the grievance, its recommendation to the Board shall be reviewed in closed session by the Board, which shall make a definitive resolution of the matter.
- e. No grievance between the Executive Director and parents of the school shall be taken to the parent community or made public.

Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Behavior

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior by any student/school personnel in The Montessori School of the Mahoning Valley is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school as per 5.12.2 Serious Misbehavior and/or 5.12.4 Due Process.

Definition: "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, in accordance with House Bill 276, mean any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts including electronically transmitted acts i.e., Internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand-held device, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward other students/school personnel with the intent to harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:

Causing mental or physical harm to the other student/school personnel including placing an individual in reasonable fear of physical harm and/or damaging of students'/personal property; and, Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student/school personnel." (ORC 3313.666)

Prevention: Certain aspects of the Montessori environment may ameliorate any potential problem with harassment, intimidation or bullying in school or at school-sponsored events such as: Respectful responses to harassment, intimidation or bullying concerns raised by students, parents or school personnel;

Documentation of conflicts to determine the nature and scope of the problem;

Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;

Avoidance of gender stereotyping (e.g., males need to be strong and tough);

An attitude that promotes communication, friendship, assertiveness skills and character education;

Modeling by school personnel of positive, respectful and supportive behavior toward students;

Creating a school atmosphere of collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others;

Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Behavior (continued)

Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere.

Formal Complaints: Students and/or their parents or guardians may file reports regarding suspected harassment, intimidation or bullying. Such written reports shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation and/or bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the Executive Director for review.

Informal Complaints: Students, parents or guardians and school personnel may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator, or other school personnel. Such informal complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying, including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of the prohibited behavior(s), and the names of any potential student or staff witness. A school staff member or administrator who receives an informal complaint shall promptly document the complaint in writing, including the above information. This written report by the school staff member shall be promptly forwarded to the Executive Director for review.

Anonymous Complaints: Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school staff member(s) who receive the complaint. The anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint shall be limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint. Such limitation of investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged perpetrator), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

Teachers and other school staff, who witness acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying, as defined above, shall promptly file a written incident report concerning the events witnessed and the intervention steps taken.

Teachers and other school staff who receive student or parent reports of suspected harassment, intimidation, and bullying shall promptly notify the Executive Director and/or his/her designee of such report(s). If the report is a formal, written complaint, such complaint shall be forwarded promptly (no later than the next school day) to the Executive Director. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a teacher or other professional employee, he or she shall prepare a written report of the informal complaint which shall be promptly forwarded (no later than the next school day) to the Executive Director.

The Executive Director and or his/her designee shall be promptly notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected harassment, intimidation or bullying. Under the direction of the Executive Director or his/her designee, all such complaints shall be investigated promptly.

Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Behavior (continued)

A written report of the investigation shall be prepared when the investigation is complete. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying were verified, and, when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action shall be included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.

If after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying by a specific student are verified, the Executive Director or his/her designee shall notify in writing the parent or guardian of the perpetrator of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in such notification.

If, after investigation, acts of bullying against a specific student are verified the Executive Director or his/her designee shall notify the parent or guardian of the victim of such finding. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Disciplinary Actions: Harassment, intimidation and bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in seriousness and impact on the targeted individual and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of “harassment, intimidation or bullying,” as defined above will generally warrant disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such prohibited behaviors whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action is a matter for the professional discretion of the Executive Director.

When acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences as outlined in 5.2.1 Serious Misbehavior; however, the determination of the seriousness of the offense is at the professional discretion of the Executive Director, and may not need to have been a repeat offense to warrant disciplinary action, as in other misbehaviors. Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified shall not be the basis for disciplinary action.

In and out-of-school suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation.

Non-disciplinary Interventions: When verified acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying are identified early and/or when such verified acts do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of harassment, intimidation or bullying, its prohibition and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered harassing, intimidating or bullying. Such counseling may be given by school personnel including but not limited to teachers and/or teacher’s assistants.

If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, the supervising adult shall promptly redirect students to peaceful conflict resolution such as calm discussion other tactics for opening positive communications. As often as possible, students should be given the opportunity to practice conflict resolution skills with adult supervision. Peer mediation may be considered. Special care, however, is warranted in referring such cases to peer mediation. A power imbalance may make the process intimidating for the victim and therefore inappropriate. The victim’s communication and assertiveness skills may be low and could be further eroded by fear resulting from past intimidation and fear of future intimidation. In such cases, the victim should be given additional support. Alternatively, peer mediation may be deemed inappropriate to address the concern.

Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Behavior (continued)

School personnel are encouraged to address the issue of harassment, intimidation or bullying in other interactions with students.

School personnel may find opportunities to educate students about harassment, intimidation and bullying and help eliminate such prohibited behaviors through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. School personnel should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student/school personnel, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of “harassment, intimidation or bullying.”

Staff Intervention Strategies for Protecting Victims

Supervise and discipline offending students fairly and consistently;

Provide adult supervision during recess, lunch time, and during times of transition;

Maintain contact with parents and guardians of all involved parties;

Inform school personnel of the incident and instruct them to monitor the victim and the offending party for indications of harassing, intimidating and bullying behavior. Personnel are to intervene when prohibited behaviors are witnessed;

Check with the victim regularly to ensure that there have been no incidents of harassment/intimidation/bullying or retaliation from the offender or other parties.

Other Methods of Redress for Complainants

In addition to, or instead of, filing a bullying/harassment/intimidation complaint through this policy, a complainant may choose to exercise other options, including but not limited to filing a complaint with outside agencies or filing a private lawsuit. Nothing prohibits a complainant from seeking redress under any other provision of the Revised Code or common law that may apply.

Training

In the course of our Montessori curriculum, students will be provided with age-appropriate information on the recognition and prevention of harassment, intimidation or bullying, and their rights and responsibilities as humans to live without harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Students will be encouraged to use their words to resolve peer conflict, and to report to school staff members conflicts they cannot successfully resolve.

Parents will be provided with information about this policy and procedure, as well as information about other school rules and disciplinary policies. This policy and procedure shall be reproduced in student, staff, volunteer and parent handbooks.

Information regarding the policy on harassment/intimidation/bullying behavior shall be incorporated into employee and family handbooks and in training of volunteers with direct contact with students.

In accordance with H.B. 276, ORC section 3319.073, the school will provide four hours of training in four component areas: child abuse, violence prevention, substance abuse, and positive youth development to teachers, and administrators who work with children in Kindergarten through 6th grade every five (5) years. Time spent by school employees in the training, workshops or courses shall apply toward any state or district mandated continuing education requirements.

Due Process - Expulsion

A student should be given specific charges in writing with notice to the parents.

Parents and student may be given a chance to appeal through a Fairness Committee made up of one school faculty member, the President of the Board, and an appointed outside, experienced administrator. The student has a right to rebut adverse testimony.

Transportation Policies

Modes of Transportation

Many parents find that car pools work well. All drivers must be noted on the Authorization for Transportation or Emergency Medical Information form (name, relationship, phone). The school will not release your child to anyone not on these lists unless we have a phone call or note from you. We regularly check driver's licenses until we get to know all drivers by sight.

If there is someone to whom your child should NEVER be released, please note this on the Authorization for Transportation form AND call the office.

Busing for students age 5 and up may be available through your public school district because we are a chartered, non-public school. You must contact the head of transportation in your district to make all the arrangements. If your district decides busing is not practical, you may be eligible for reimbursement. Contact your local public school system for details and instructions.

In the Parking Lot

It is the responsibility of all cooperative members to notify everyone permitted to pick-up or drop-off you child of all our transportation policies. Everyone driving in our parking lot will be held responsible for compliance to these safety rules.

The speed limit is 5 mph at all times on school property. No matter how late you are for work, safety of our students is the most important thing!

Students are greeted and dismissed through the car line. Always follow the cars ahead of you through the drive-through canopy; never pull out of the car line without following the flow of traffic. No car may ever park or be left unattended while in line or under the canopy. There is a designated Handicapped Parking space for use by those with a Handicap placard or license plate.

When students are using the blacktop area for recess, we place orange cones across the parking lot. NEVER, NEVER drive around the cones!

Wait until a staff member indicates dismissal/greeting is beginning. Due to emissions, vehicles may not idle for more than 2 minutes under the canopy. NEVER CUT IN FRONT OF VEHICLES WAITING IN THE CAR LINE.

During afternoon dismissal, the bus students must have safe access to the school buses. Therefore, when the students are ready to walk to the bus, the school buses may momentarily block the parking lot entrance/egress to avoid cars driving around them and potentially injuring students/teachers on the way to the bus. Please stop your vehicle and be patient during the bus loading process. Never follow behind the children as they walk to the bus as this is very dangerous.

Pedestrian Traffic

For the safety of all children, use the carline drop off procedure. If you need to enter the building to go to the office or carry something inside, please park your car after you drop off your child and use extreme caution when walking in the parking lot. Students may NEVER walk through the parking area unescorted either before or after school. Parental escort through the parking lot is the rare exception and not the rule. If you absolutely must escort your child through the parking lot during drop off or dismissal, please do not cut across the parking lot between cars in the carline.

Do not arrive prior to your designated dismissal time. We must keep Lynn Ave. clear of parked traffic and our parking lot clear in case of emergency. If students are not outside ready to dismiss at the designated time, the first car in the carline must wait with its front bumper by the sidewalk gate.

Transportation Policies (continued)

Pedestrians should follow these procedures:

Park in one of the designated parking spots on the left-hand (west) side of the parking lot. Do not park in the handicap spot near the Landmark Garden or leave your vehicle in the car line. Walk along the fence, by the front end of the parked cars. Do not walk behind the parked cars. Stay on the grass as you approach Children's House. Wait in the grass next to the kitchen ramp until all the cars have stopped moving AND you receive permission from the staff member on duty to proceed under the canopy to the Children's House porch gate. USE EXTREME CAUTION!

Late Pick-ups

Any student who has not been picked up by 15 minutes after his/her dismissal time will be signed into Extended Care and charged the occasional use rate minimum charge of \$5.00 for any amount of time up to one hour. Additional hours will be charged as incurred at \$4.50 per hour. Billing for this charge will appear on the monthly statement. Pick-up of children from Extended Care after our 5:30 pm closing time will result in a \$5 charge for every 5 minutes the child remains in our care.

Routine Arrival

Under no circumstances may a car be parked or left unattended with the engine running in line or under the canopy.

Students arriving between 7:30 – 8:15 am must be escorted into the school using the ramp to the kitchen door. Parents must park in a designated parking spot and escort their child(ren) into the building. Students arriving between 7:30 – 8:15 am will be checked into Morning Extended Care, and the appropriate fee will be assessed.

Students who ride the bus and arrive before 8:15am must enter Children's House via the kitchen ramp and wait indoors until 8:15 am. Bus riders must walk together as a group through the parking lot using extreme caution.

All students arriving for school between 8:15 – 8:28 am must use the front gate/greeter procedure to enter the school. NEVER allow children to exit your vehicle while waiting in line without a greeter present.

Enter the drive and pull to the right until all children are on the porch before driving up to the drop off zone. Always drive forward far enough before stopping so that three cars may be unloaded simultaneously - one by the kitchen ramp, one by the porch gate and one at the sidewalk gate. Instruct your child to wait until the staff member or student helper opens the car door. Wait until the staff member notifies you that all students have safely reached the porch before pulling out.

Routine Dismissal – 11:30 AM, 3 PM and 3:07 PM

Primary students are dismissed at 11:30 am. Elementary, and Adolescent students are dismissed at 3:00 pm. All-Day Primary students are dismissed at 3:07 p.m.

All students are dismissed from the Children's House porch and ramp. Students will be assisted into their cars. Always drive forward far enough under the canopy to allow three cars to be loaded simultaneously—one by the ramp, one by the porch gate, and one by the last gate.

Students taking the bus will be escorted by a staff member to their bus for boarding. The parking lot traffic will be temporarily halted for the safety of the bus students walking to the bus.

Our school shares a lovely neighborhood with several family residences. Street congestion and blocked driveways are a significant concern in our neighborhood. Therefore, do not arrive prior to dismissal times. If a queue of cars develops on Lynn Avenue, leave all neighborhood driveways open, and give consideration to residents attempting to exit.

Transportation Policies (continued)

Carline Grace and Courtesy

Please give this information to all persons on your Authorized Transportation and Emergency Contacts list.

The teachers have many duties and must execute them on a tight schedule during transition times; at 11:30 AM dismissal they have to get back inside to eat lunch before their afternoon class starts. Please encourage your child to follow the rules of car line courtesy—and follow them yourself:

Assist the teacher with fastening of car seats as needed

Refrain from asking the child or the teacher if the child “behaved” or “had a good day”

Do not engage the teacher in conversations. Say “hello” to your child and “thank you” and “goodbye” to the teacher. Wait until the teacher has closed the car door to engage your child in conversation

Proceed toward the exit as directed by the staff. This will enable the other families in the car line to pick up their children promptly, model grace and courtesy to your child, and allow the teacher to safely and efficiently execute her transition period duties.

Our parking lot is very narrow, with parking along the west side and traffic on the left. It is not a very conducive environment for conversations from car-to-car. Please make arrangements for play-dates, etc, by using your phone when you leave school grounds; you’ll find the phone numbers of families who wish to be listed in our school directory.

NEVER honk your horn in the carline! It is disruptive and you may be signaling someone to drive before it is safe.

Routine Dismissal – Extended Care

Parents of After School Extended Care students must park in our designate parking area and enter Children’s House through the kitchen ramp entrance to enter the school to pick-up their child(ren). The parent must sign-out their child(ren) on the extended care list provided by one of our extended caregivers. If the children are playing outdoors, parents must proceed to the extended care staff member on the playground to sign out their child(ren). NEVER TAKE YOUR CHILD WITHOUT SIGNING OUT WITH THE EXTENDED CARE STAFF.

Pets on Campus: NO PETS are allowed on our playground. Please keep pets in a cage, kennel or carrier or your car when bringing pets with you to the school campus. For instructions on animals for demonstration purposes, see “Show and Tell” in this handbook.

Changes in Your Routine

If your child is going home with another child or with another approved driver, will be picked up early, or any other changes you need to discuss with the office, please call the office and send a note in to the teacher. Please do not give verbal or written messages to staff members while they are working the car line.

Attendance

Due to the importance of the social, emotional, and academic benefits of arriving at school on time and maintaining good attendance, students are encouraged to attend school daily arriving at 8:15 a.m., when doors open, providing them with ample time to socialize, prepare for the school day, and ensure participation in valuable opening activities. Because of the cooperative learning nature of Montessori education, students can miss critical spontaneous learning opportunities at school when absent or tardy.

Students are expected to be in class before 8:30 every day. Students arriving at or after 8:28 a.m. must check in at the office with their parents prior to going to class. All tardiness and absences become part of each student’s permanent record.

Attendance (continued)

Unexcused tardiness and absences will be notified by the office via a phone call to parents at home or at work. This procedure helps to maintain the safety of all students.

MSMV students are subject to all the provisions of the compulsory education laws of the State of Ohio. Section 3321.04 of the Ohio Revised Code provides that every parent, guardian, or other person having charge of any child of compulsory school age must send such child to school. The statutes governing school attendance are very specific and leave little option for school authorities to excuse children from school.

DEFINITIONS

EXCUSED ABSENCE - Absence of students from school at the request of the parent/guardian and with the consent of school authorities and in compliance with Section 3321.04 of the Ohio Revised Code. Reasons for excused absences and/or tardiness to school (based on Ohio Attendance Laws)

1. Personal illness
2. Serious illness in the immediate family involving hospitalization
3. Death in the family
4. Emergency (validity determined by the Executive Director)
5. Religious holidays (advance notification needed)
6. School bus calamity (mechanical breakdown or a substitute driver)
7. Treacherous road conditions due to severe weather
8. Involvement in auto accident
9. Medical or dental appointment which cannot be done on student's own time
10. Legal appointment which cannot be done on student's own time
11. Limited travel time pre-approved by the student's teacher and the Executive Director after written request by the parent at least two weeks in advance of the planned travel time. Travel time may be disallowed or limited for any student due

to reasons noted under the Travel section of Notification of Absence

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE - Absence of students from school at the request of the parent/guardian and not in compliance with Section 3321.04 of the Ohio Revised Code. The following are examples of unexcused absences:

1. Oversleeping
2. Personal illness of more than three days consecutively without a doctor's excuse,
3. Missing the bus
4. Staying out of school an unnecessary length of time because of a doctor's appointment
5. Babysitting
6. Trips to barber or beauty shops
7. Needed at home
8. Couldn't get a ride
9. Staying up too late due to working, studying, traveling, socializing, etc.
10. Deciding to take a personal day
11. Younger siblings too tired/cranky/messy
12. Parent/guardian too tired/sick/headache
13. Taking too long to eat breakfast/get ready for school
14. Family vacation or unapproved travel time (not requested in writing at least two weeks prior to the initial date of travel and approved by the teacher and the Executive Director)
15. Suspension
16. Other excuses which do not correspond with the above list of excused absences.

ABSENCES WILL ONLY BE CONSIDERED 'EXCUSED' WHEN ACCOMPANIED BY APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION, I.E. DOCTOR'S EXCUSE, HIGH SCHOOL SHADOW DAY FORM, ETC. We ask that medical appointments be scheduled after school when at all possible.

Attendance (continued)

Advance notice must be given in writing at least two (2) weeks in advance of impending absence to the teacher and the Executive Director for the following Excused Absences:

- Religious Observance
- High School Shadowing Days
- Travel

While we believe that traveling can be educational, any frequent or extended absences from school are disruptive. Therefore, travel must be restricted to non-Conference days when school is not in session (Parent/Teacher Conference Days are NOT vacation days).

In the rare instance that a student must miss a day or two of school due to travel, both the teacher and the Executive Director must be notified in writing at least two (2) weeks in advance of the absence in order to be placed under consideration for excused absence. The Executive Director will then notify the parent of the excused or unexcused status of the impending absence. Travel time approval may be based on the individual student's developmental stage, classroom level, academic and social progress, previous attendance/tardiness record, upcoming classroom plans/events, and/or any other information which the teacher and Executive Director deem significant. Due to any of the above reasons, travel time may be disallowed or limited for any student.

Travel time reported verbally, or requested less than two weeks in advance of the initial travel date, will not be considered for approval. Unapproved travel time will count as unexcused absence. Assignments may be given by the teacher for completion during the absence, and must be presented to the teacher upon return to school. Failure to comply may result in the absence being deemed unexcused.

Absence and School Functions

Students who are absent for the day, are not permitted to participate in, or attend, after school functions, including but not limited to

Parents and VIP Nights, Family Enrichment events, social events, photo day and the Evening of Thanks.

School Sanctioned Events

Students who attend overnight school field trips will not be considered absent from school.

Students who, along with their parents, decide not to participate in overnight school field trips will be counted as excused absences as long as the parent submits a written excuse to the office at least two (2) weeks prior to the overnight field trip. The student will then stay home from school for the duration of the overnight school field trip.

Assignments may be given by the teacher for completion during the absence, and must be presented to the teacher upon return to school. Failure to comply may result in the absence being deemed unexcused. Students who miss a school field trip due to tardy arrival will be counted as unexcused absent for the duration of the field trip. The parent or guardian must pick the student up from school immediately. The student will return to class when the school field trip is over.

Snow Days

MSMV exceeds ODE requirements for minimum school hours when establishing the annual school calendar. When the school closes enough that it will fall below the minimum number of hours, the school must extend its scheduled year. Methods MSMV may employ for making up the minimum hours of student instruction include extending the school year, extending individual school days by 30 minutes, or remaining in session on weekdays for which school was not previously scheduled (Spring Break, etc.).

MSMV teachers may also opt to post assignments on our school portal/website, or use "Blizzard Bags" to make up not more than the equivalent of three (3) school days on a classroom-by-classroom basis.

Attendance Procedures (continued)

Notification of Absence

A student who is absent from school must have his/her parent or guardian call the school to report the absence by 9 AM on the day the absence occurs. The number to call to report an absence is 330.788.4622.

A student must present a written excuse, signed by a parent or guardian when they return to school after being absent. Absence due to illness of more than three days must be accompanied by a doctor's written permission to return. Such doctor's permission slips may not be signed by the child's parent if s/he is a member of the medical profession.

For attendance purposes, any full-day student arriving after 10:30 am will be considered 1/2 day absent; any student arriving after 12:30 pm will be counted as a whole day absent.

Parents must follow this procedure if their child/children will be absent from school on that day: A telephone call to the school office. This call must be received in the office by 9:00 am. Leave a message on the voice mail system if there is no answer. This can also be done the night before school.

A note confirming absence upon returning to school with reason for absence. All absences are considered 'unexcused' unless accompanied by a doctor's note, legal appointment note, school activity excuse, etc. (see "Definitions" above).

Failure to follow this procedure will result in disciplinary action. Excessive absence may result in expulsion.

Illness: If your child is ill, please give us a brief description of the symptoms when you call in; this helps us to track illness in the school environment and further implement prevention measures. If your child has any of the symptoms listed under "Illness at School" in our Medical Policies (please see below), keep your child at home. Students suffering from vomiting, diarrhea, or fever may not return to school until symptoms have been absent for 24 hours after the last bout without use of symptom relieving medication.

Students who have been absent three (3) or more consecutive days due to personal illness must present a doctor's excuse for re-admittance to school. Parents who are medical professionals may not write doctor's excuses for their children. Such a submission will not qualify as an excused absence.

Family Bereavement: A parent or other adult family member must call in by 9 AM if a student will be absent for family bereavement.

Closing of the Student's Home School District Due to Treacherous Road Conditions:

If treacherous road conditions close your child's home school district (the school district in which you reside) but MSMV is not closed, the student may have an excused absence for the duration of the treacherous road conditions.

As with any absence, parents must contact the MSMV office by 9 AM if a student will be absent due to treacherous road conditions.

Early Dismissals & Appointments

Parents must call the office by 9 AM or send a written note to school with the child in order to officially excuse a student from class. The appropriate staff will be notified of the student's departure (and return, if applicable). Early dismissals, other than for personal illness, are only appropriate for the following reasons:

Medical or dental appointment which cannot be done on student's own time

- Legal appointment which cannot be done on student's own time
- Serious illness in the immediate family involving hospitalization
- Death in the family

The parent must first report to the office to sign out the child. The parent will then be instructed to proceed to the child's classroom. If returning, the parent must escort the child to the office for check-in, and then escort the child to his/her classroom (Adolescent students must be escorted to the office for check-in, but may go to their classroom unescorted afterward.)

If the child is to be picked up by a grandparent or other responsible adult, the parent must first call the office or send a written note to school with the child to make these arrangements. Upon arrival, the adult that the parent has cleared to pick up the student must report to the office to sign out the child. Driver's licenses of persons unknown to the staff will be checked and photocopied for our records by staff members before release of the child.

Tardiness

One important area of our curriculum is Grace and Courtesy. It is one of the ways the children learn the importance of respect for others. Late arrival is extremely disruptive to the other students in class which in turn is uncomfortable for the tardy student, because it shows a lack of respect for others.

We have found that most tardiness is parent generated. It is critical that parents allow ample time for morning preparations, transportation, and arrival at school. Chronic tardiness has proven to be detrimental to students' school performance. This applies to all students in all levels.

Students must be in their assigned classroom before 8:30 AM. Therefore, morning arrival time ends at 8:28 AM. Families arriving at that time or after will need to follow the instructions below.

Tardiness Procedures: When a child arrives at school after 8:28, the parent/guardian must bring the child into the office to check in. This procedure is for the child's safety. At 8:28 the carline areas are closed. It is not sufficient to leave the child either indoors or outdoors on school property—the parent/guardian must accompany the student to the office to check in. Failure to do so is considered an infraction of the Parental Code of Conduct, Sections G,H,& J Only five late arrivals are permitted, no matter what the reason, for the periods from the first day of school to the last day before winter break, and five late arrivals are permitted, no matter what the reason from the first day after winter break to the last day of school, inclusive. We know that the parent/guardian is in charge of structuring the family's morning, so if the parent/guardian is often late s/he will be contacted to explore what can be done at home to improve the situation for the child. If late arrivals become a chronic problem, the parent/guardian will be asked to take the child home when late rather than continue to disrupt the classroom on a daily basis. Failure to comply with this request is considered an infraction of the Parental Code of Conduct, Sections G,H, & J. The student will incur an unexcused absense in their records. In all cases, and with all students, a parent must accompany students arriving after morning greeting time to the school office. There are no exceptions. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE MAY TARDY STUDENTS OF ANY AGE BE DROPPED OFF OR LEFT TO GO UNESCORTED TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE.

Medical Policies

Illness at School

Healthy children and healthy classrooms are a top priority at MSMV. Simply stated, our illness policy is “Children must be able to function normally.”

Our staff members who are trained to recognize the common signs of communicable disease or other illness observe each child daily as the child enters the group.

If a student becomes ill while at school, the student will have for an opportunity to rest while under the supervision of the staff. A cot and clean linens will be provided for the student. An assessment of the student’s health status will be made to determine whether the student needs a little time to rest, or has an illness that warrants contacting the parent. If it is determined that the malady demands more than a brief rest, or if the student or staff have reason to suspect fever, the student’s temperature will be taken and noted.

The parent will be contacted immediately according to the instructions on the Emergency Medical Authorization form if the student demonstrates one of the following:

- Fever (99 degrees or higher)
- Vomiting (no matter the reason)
- Diarrhea
- Stiff neck
- Severe coughing
- Difficult breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Discharge in the eye area
- Unusually red, watery, puffy, crusty or itchy eyes
- Unusually dark urine and/or white stool
- Evidence of lice or scabies
- Unrecognizable skin rash or inflammation

Because we are not health care professionals, and cannot diagnose whether the student has a contagious disease, we will ask that you make arrangements for your child to be picked up immediately. Parents refusing or failing to pick up a child demonstrating one these symptoms, or failing to provide timely transportation for the child will be subject to part f. of the Parental Code of Conduct. Students sent home from school with any of the above symptoms will be considered excused absent for the remainder of that school day.

Children who are mildly ill (experience minor cold symptoms but none of the above mentioned symptoms) and are not well enough to participate in activities will be given a chance to rest and be observed by staff; the teacher may elect to have the child rest in an adjacent area in or near the classroom as long as the child is under adult observation. If this is done, the teacher will notify the office of the child’s condition. If the child appears to recover or feels better, the child may return to class. If the child continues to feel ill, the office will notify the parent or guardian and follow the general procedure for ill children. (per OAC 3301-37-12)

Communicable Diseases

A child who is suspected of having a communicable disease or parasitic infestation will be cared for in an area in the office or a section of a room not being used for regular class sessions, within sight and hearing of an adult at all times.

Confirmation of communicable diseases and/or parasitic infestations will be reported in writing to all co-op families the same day. Student privacy shall be preserved. Students will be readmitted to school dependent upon documented treatment from their physician.

Medical Policies (continued)

Children who were sent home with signs of parasitic infestation must come with their parent or guardian to the school Executive Director's office for a health inspection prior to the child(ren) being readmitted to class. Episodes of continued or repeated parasitic infestations may be referred to the county health department and/or Children's Services.

Administering Medicine at School

If you cannot schedule medication doses at a time when your child is at home, you must adhere to the following procedure. All medications, whether prescription or over-the-counter medication (such as pain relievers, fever reducers, cough syrups, cough drops, vitamins, food supplements) must be handed off from a parent to a staff member in the original package with the label intact and be accompanied by a Physician's Instructions for the Administration of Medication by School Personnel form, completed by your physician. Every dose will be logged, and the log sheet will be placed in the student's file. NEVER send medicine, including cough drops, lozenges, skin cream, etc. in a student's possession, unless it is a rescue inhaler.

Food Allergies

MSMV promotes an interactive process between parents/guardians and MSMV staff concerning student with life-threatening allergies. The interactive process consists of a dialogue between the parent/guardian and the school with the objective of finding a mutually agreeable means by which a particular student with a life-threatening allergy can participate in the school's programs and activities through an identification of the precise limitations resulting from the allergy and potential reasonable accommodations that could overcome those limitations. All children with allergies who attend MSMV will be appropriately supervised with regard to foods and materials in the classroom containing the allergens to which they are allergic.

A child with any food allergy shall not be served any snack or food that has not been provided by his/her parent without the express written consent of their parent/guardian, as described in the procedures below. MSMV will strive to maintain a safe classroom for children with life-threatening allergies; however, parents must realize that allergens may enter our environment through unintentional means.

Procedure for parents of children with life-threatening allergies:

In order to have an Emergency Plan in place, all parents of children with life-threatening allergies/anaphylaxis shall:

- complete a Emergency Medical Authorization Form;
- submit to the administration the Allergy Action Plan, signed and dated by the child's physician;
- if the child's physician has prescribed medication to be used in the event the child develops an allergic reaction, s/he shall complete a Physician's Instructions for the Administration of Medication on School Premises Form authorizing the faculty/staff to administer medication, including the epinephrine auto-injector;
- provide all medications for emergency response as indicated in the Allergy Action Plan. (Please note that all medications need to be up to date (i.e. not expired), in their original containers, and clearly labeled; medications and instructions for dispensing must be brought in to the school personally by the parent/guardian, not by the student
- attend a meeting to discuss your child's life-threatening allergies with the Executive Director and the classroom teacher and assistant(s);
- ensure that all emergency contact phone numbers are current at all times and voicemails are set up to receive messages
- report immediately to the administration any changes in your child's medical condition so that the Allergy Action Plan currently in place may be modified.

Medical Policies - Food Allergies (continued)

All parents of children with life-threatening food allergies shall also:

- review and sign the MSMV Snack List and indicate which items your child is permitted to have and which he or she is prohibited from having;
- provide appropriate snacks for your child if so necessary, following school/state guidelines as provided on the MSMV Snack List and replenish depleted snack promptly;
- label clearly with your child's name all snack containers sent to school;
- review all classroom food-related activities, projects or works as presented by the teacher or other school communication and indicate any in which your child may not participate;
- bring a safe lunch to school in time for the student's lunch period if the student forgets to bring lunch (the school will not be able to provide lunch for students with life threatening food allergies is the student forgets to bring lunch)

periodically teach their child to:

- a. Recognize the first symptoms of an allergic/anaphylactic reaction.
- b. Know where the epinephrine auto-injector is kept and who has access to the epinephrine in the classroom.
- c. Communicate clearly as soon as s/he feels a reaction is starting.
- d. Carry his/her own epinephrine auto-injector when appropriate.
- e. Not share snacks, lunches, or drinks.
- f. Understand the importance of hand-washing before and after eating.
- g. Take as much responsibility as possible for his/her own safety.

It is important that children take on more responsibility for their food allergies as they grow older and are developmentally ready. The ultimate goal is that children eventually learn to keep themselves safe. As soon as it is developmentally appropriate, parents are responsible to teach them to:

- Communicate the seriousness of the allergy.
- Communicate symptoms as they appear.
- Read labels.
- Carry own epinephrine auto-injector.
- Administer own epinephrine auto-injector and be able to train others in its use.
- The responsibilities of the student with food allergies/anaphylaxis include:
- Take as much responsibility as possible for avoiding allergens.
- Do not trade or share foods.
- Wash hands before and after eating.
- Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Promptly inform an adult as soon as accidental exposure occurs or symptoms appear.
- Take more responsibility for your allergies as student gets older
- Develop a relationship with the teacher and/or another trusted adult in the school to assist in identifying issues related to the management of the allergy in school.

Medical Policies - Food Allergies (continued)

The school administration is responsible for:

- Conducting in-service training for appropriate staff regarding a student's life-threatening allergens, symptoms, risk reduction procedures, emergency procedures, and how to administer an epinephrine auto-injector;
- Keeping records of all such in-service trainings to ensure all appropriate staff has received them;
- Notifying parents of students with life-threatening allergies that there is no full-time nurse on staff;
- Notifying parent/guardian if student is suspected of experiencing an allergic reaction for the first time at school;
- Implementing a periodic anaphylaxis drill similar to a fire drill as part of the periodic refresher course;

To minimize food allergens from entering or spreading in the school environment:

- all parents/guardians/care givers shall be encouraged to refrain from serving children foods containing peanuts/tree nuts in the car while driving to school
- all children, faculty, staff and volunteers shall wash their hands prior to engaging in daily classroom activities
- any works containing allergens shall be removed from the classroom.
- staff shall use paper towels and a bleach solution or other approved cleaning agent when cleaning tables and chairs after food is served.
- teachers shall notify food preparation volunteers, classroom food donors, student teachers, aides, specialists and substitute teachers of the student's food allergies and necessary safeguards

To prepare for a major allergic reaction:

- all Allergy Action Plans shall be visibly posted adjacent to the telephone in each classroom
- all medications shall be stored in the metal Medication box in each classroom, away from children's reach
- faculty shall periodically review the Allergy Action Plans throughout the school year, so they may be fully prepared in the event of an emergency

In case of a major allergic reaction:

- the faculty/staff shall follow the Allergy Action Plan in place for the child
- the faculty/staff shall promptly notify the administration of the emergency
- the administration shall assist in attending to the child if and when necessary
- the child's parents shall be immediately be notified of the emergency
- School Safety Procedures

Accidents

All accidents occurring on school property or during school activities are reported to the office as soon as possible, and an Injury Report completed. Parents will be provided a copy of the Injury Report.

If the student is injured and does not appear comfortable enough to continue in class, the parent will be asked to pick up the child. Parents will be called in the case of any accident involving a student's head, neck, abdomen, or back regardless of apparent lack of injury.

The Building and Grounds committee will periodically inspect the buildings and school grounds for possible safety hazards and employ preventative maintenance.

Medical Policies - Food Allergies (continued)

Outdoor Supervision

School safety is the responsibility of all MSMV staff and students. Children are to be supervised by an adult in accordance with Montessori philosophy and based on the child's development.

Time spent out-of-doors is necessary to a Montessori education.

School Safety Procedures

Primary, All-Day Primary, and Lower Elementary students must have direct adult supervision at all times. The ratio of not more than twelve children per adult is maintained for Primary students in accordance with the State of Ohio Department of Education Preschool Child Care laws. Upper Elementary students have freedom of movement for purposeful work. This freedom is in direct correlation with responsibility. Children may run errands or use the restroom without direct adult supervision in the area designated for the program's use by the site plan if the children are within hearing of a staff member, a staff member knows the whereabouts of the children at all times and a staff member checks on the children every fifteen minutes.

Upper Elementary students may travel independently between Stettler House and Children's House, or to and from the trash and recycling centers, for example. Upper Elementary students also may use the outdoor areas adjacent to Stettler House as part of their classroom for outdoor work as needed. Children in groups of 2 or more, may be without direct adult supervision in the area designated for the program's use by the site plan if the children are within sight or hearing of a staff member in adjoining or adjacent space, a staff member knows the whereabouts of the children at all times, and a staff member checks on the children every fifteen minutes.

On the third plane of development, students' responsibilities and freedoms again increase.

Adolescent students in groups of 2 or more have freedom of independent excursion in the area designated for the program's use by the site plan if a staff member knows the whereabouts of the children at all times, and a staff member checks on the children every fifteen minutes. Supervision of Adolescent students outdoors may be maintained via walkie-talkie communication.

An adult supervises our playground during recess.

Visitors

Children's House and Stettler House are accessible only through our key code system. All visitors must report to the office in Children's House upon arrival. Visitors to MSMV are monitored through a camera system on the Children's House porch. Once visitors have been identified and admitted by office personnel, they must go to the office for sign-in. A name tag will be given to non-co-op members, and a copy of their driver's license will be taken and retained for our files. Non-co-op members visiting our school are escorted by a staff member whenever they move throughout the campus.

After School

After 3 pm dismissal, MSMV is only responsible for those children who are enrolled in after school activities and Extended Care students. Those children who have missed their rides or buses or whose "transport person" has not arrived must be checked into Extended Care and charged accordingly (see Transportation - Late Pick-ups).

Fire Safety

Fire drills are conducted once a month during the school year and are reported to the Fire Inspector. Students practice leaving the building in a safe and orderly fashion under the supervision of the staff. Our facilities are regularly inspected for fire safety by the local Fire Inspector.

Tornado Safety

Tornado drills are conducted once a month from April through June while school is in session. Both shelter-in-place and relocation drills are practiced. For relocation drills, all students and staff proceed to the lowest level of Children's House. Students assume a duck and cover position on the floor--kneeling with foreheads near the floor and hands clasped over the back of the neck, with fingers entwined. Students remain in the lowest level of Children's House until the all-clear is sounded, or until the tornado warning has expired. During shelter-in-place drills, Stettler House students gather in the Stettler House bathrooms and follow the tornado safety procedures. Teachers may read to the students, or music may be played, to keep the children calm during an actual tornado warning.

Our school is equipped with National Weather Service Radios which are tested each Wednesday.

Lockdowns

Lockdowns are called for when a situation suggests the safety of students and staff might be in jeopardy if they were to leave the building (e.g. suspected terrorist acts, neighborhood hostage situation, etc). During a lockdown, the students and staff would remain in their buildings with windows and doors closed and locked. Communications between the two buildings would be maintained via intercom, cell phone, and/or walkie-talkies. Depending on the circumstances requiring lockdown, the administrative staff will advise teachers whether to allow students to continue working as in a normal school day, or if they should adjourn to a "safe room"--a windowless area inside their building (the library in Stettler House, the extended care area on the lowest level of Children's House).

If advised to relocate children to their "safe room", teachers may keep children calm by reading or telling stories, singing, or quiet game play once there. A designated adult from each classroom will bring the classroom's locked medicine box with them to the "safe room". Parents/guardians will be notified via Emergency Phone Tree when it is deemed safe by federal, state, or local authorities for the parent/guardian to retrieve their child(ren) from school.

Active Shooter

School staff are trained and drilled on procedures for active shooter intrusion. "Run, hide and fight" are the recommended procedures in active shooter events. Students practice developmentally appropriate drills such as "Get Out" drills to give them the response tools necessary without inciting fear or worry.

Emergency Supplies

Emergency supplies such as drinking water, snack foods, batteries, flashlights, and walkie-talkies are located in central locations in both Children's House and Stettler House. These supplies should sustain every student and staff member for at least 12 hours.

Loss of Utilities

In case of loss of power, heat or water during school hours, the following steps will be taken: The administration office will contact the appropriate utility department or company. Each classroom will be notified of the situation.

If the situation is not resolved within an hour, the parent(s)/guardian/designated emergency person will be contacted by a staff member to pick up their child(ren).

Reunification

Students will remain in their classrooms until the designated adult comes to the classroom to sign them out.

School Safety Procedures (continued)

Adults unknown to school staff must present a photo I.D. and their name(s) must appear on the student's Authorized Transportation and/or Emergency Authorization forms unless verbal permission is obtained by a staff member from the parent/guardian to release the student to that person.

If the outage is school-based only, and causes health or safety concerns the staff will escort the students to a nearby, sheltered location to await pick-up. The sign-out and identification procedures mentioned above will be enforced at the new location.

Fumes

In the case of a suspected gas leak, or other unidentified fumes from within the school that result in (or may result in) extreme discomfort or illness, an emergency evacuation will take place.

Once the students and staff have been evacuated, the staff will escort the students to Nementz IGA on the corner of St. Rt. 170 and Thalia.

The administration office will contact 9-1-1 and the appropriate utility department or company. If the situation is not likely to be resolved within an hour, parent(s)/guardian/designated emergency person will be contacted by a staff member to pick up their child(ren) once the students have been removed to safety. The sign-out and identification procedures mentioned above will be enforced at the new location.)

Dress Code

Clothing for the Classroom: We stress that students wear comfortable and practical clothing to school. Daily classroom activities include:

much work done on the floor; water & art materials used daily; food preparation; snack; outdoor lessons

Primary students clothing should have simple fasteners so they can use the restroom without assistance (and in time!) In addition, a sweater, labeled with the child's name, should remain in the classroom. Please keep hair ornaments, jewelry, and clothing ornamentation (fringe, beads, ribbons, etc.) to a minimum; they distract Primary students from their work and interfere with nap time for students in afternoon extended care. We can not be responsible for any valuables. At all levels, please use discretion with T-shirt messages. Language should be appropriate for a school environment. Character clothing can also be a distraction. Classroom teachers may designate further dress code considerations for their level based on the students' developmental level, needs, and level of distractibility.

Spare Change for Primary Students

All Primary students are required to bring in a labeled clear plastic "shoe box" with a complete change of clothing (socks, underwear, a top, shorts, and pants). Please label all items of clothing and the "shoe box". Should clothing become soiled, we will place it in a bag and send it home. Please send in a fresh set of clothing to replenish the spare supply the following day. When there is a change of season, or a growth spurt, please send in an appropriate set of clothes to keep up with the changing times.

Outerwear for All Students

Our students are outdoors daily. Please remind your child to dress according to the weather.

Fall and spring require dressing in layers for cold mornings and warm afternoons. Cold weather clothing must include shoes or boots with socks, a jacket or coat, gloves, and a hat.

Dress Code (continued)

Snowy days require snow pants and snow boots. Students without snow pants, snow boots, coats, gloves/mittens, and some sort of head covering (either hood or hat) are not allowed in the snow. Their outdoor time must be spent on the porch or the sidewalk. This is understandably upsetting to the students, so please provide the necessary outerwear daily.

Please label everything. Every pair of black or pink snow pants looks just like another. We have a Lost and Found on the Children's House ramp, but most things that go there are never retrieved. Don't run the risk--label everything!

School Lunches

MSMV does not provide lunches for any of our programs. Students bring lunches in insulated lunch boxes with frozen ice packs. Elementary and Adolescent students may also order lunches when available from the Adolescent or Upper El small business curriculum program.

Lunch Content

Lunchtime is an important part of the student's day. Parents need to provide "responsible lunches." We encourage you to allow your child to participate in the preparation of his or her lunch, reinforcing the Montessori tenet of fostering independence. Children should be able to pack their own lunches (with nutritional guidance) as early as ages 5 or 6.

Responsible lunches: a lunch of nutritious, healthy foods in developmentally appropriate portions, served in reusable containers. Lunches are a lesson for the child—the lesson of healthy nutritional and financial choices, appropriate serving sizes, caring for our environment, and "grace & courtesy" lessons.

Students are required to bring both a cloth placemat and napkin each day. Students are taught to eat a nutritious main course first, containing protein (sandwich, thermos of hot soup or food, salad, etc.). Second and third courses should consist of fruits and vegetables.

Feed your child what you should eat yourself. Healthy eating habits start early and your support is crucial to the nutritional education of your child. A balanced meal includes proper portions of protein, natural sugars and carbohydrates. Refined sugar, preservatives, and trans fats are unhealthy choices and are found in processed and pre-packaged foods. Processed and prepackaged foods are also expensive and contribute to landfills. On the following page is a list of foods that are good choices for school lunches and a list of foods that are foods to avoid.

Picky Eaters

We find that even the most particular eaters will eat almost anything when at school. Children who won't touch broccoli at home will devour it eagerly at school. And remember, when a child is hungry, s/he will eat. So don't shy away from nutritious foods under pressure from picky eaters; and don't model picky eating behaviors yourself at home!

How Much to Pack

Children under six do not have room in their stomachs for more than two or three courses. Often half a sandwich is plenty for a main course for children ages 3 to 4. Uneaten portions of anything that can be sealed will be sent home so you can see what your child has eaten. This will help you and your child to adjust portion sizes accordingly.

School Lunches (continued)

Keep in mind that children's appetites fluctuate from day to day and as they grow. As in all areas of the curriculum, we "follow the child" and will not force children to finish everything in their lunches.

Adolescent students are growing rapidly and have significant nutritional needs. It is characteristic of students at this plane of development to sometimes need reminding to eat a nutritious breakfast. Some families find it helpful to pack lunches the night before, and even breakfasts for Adolescents to eat in the car.

Main Courses: Every lunch must have a main course; this should be the protein source for the meal.

Main Course Good Choices:

Leftover dinner casseroles/soups/stews/pasta dishes in a thermos

A sandwich (or for Primary, a half-sandwich) on whole wheat bread and a filling like:

Nut butters and fruit spreads, deli-sliced natural meats, natural cheeses, tuna, chicken, turkey, roast beef, etc

Granola, Whole Grain Cheerios, Shredded Wheat, or other low-sugar, high-nutrition cold cereal; provide milk in a thermos

2nd & 3rd Course Good Choices:

Fruits and vegetables in their natural state or prepared in a healthy manner such as salads, purees, casseroles, natural applesauce, etc.

Good Choice Drinks:

Plain water and milk

Occasional Drinks: once a week or less

100% Juice, boxes or pouches

2nd or 3rd Course OCCASIONAL Choices: One of these may be served OCC a week or less

Vegetable chips or air-popped popcorn

Whole grain crackers (with soup as a main course)

Low-sugar whole grain muffin (small) with fruits or vegetables as ingredients

Yogurt Eaten With a Spoon (for good table manners) but check label for excessive sugar content.

A better choice is plain or Greek yogurt, mixed with fruit or fruit purees

Foods to Avoid:

Un crustables

Lunchables

Processed meats like hot dogs, pepperoni & "cheese foods" or "cheese flavoring"

White bread

Go-Gurt, squirtable or crushable yogurt

PopTarts or Toaster Struedels

Cereals flavored with candies, cookies, marshmallow bits, or otherwise containing high sugar amounts

Double- or triple-decker sandwiches

Fruit roll-ups or gummy "fruit chews"

GoGurt, Crushables, and yogurts marketed to kids with bright dyes and/or added candy "sprinkles".

Fatty or sugary dips for fruits & veggies

Flavored drinks that are less than 100% fruit juice loaded with dyes, such as Sunny D, HI -C,

Kool-Aid, Hugs, Crystal Lite

Soda and flavored waters

Avoid Desserts

Desserts are unnecessary in the school lunch, as they train the palate to expect something sweet after a meal--a very hard-to-break, unhealthy habit. Desserts include:

Prepackaged sweets and snacks such as donuts, cookies, pastries, Twinkies, cake, cupcakes, Rice Krispie Treats

Chocolate or candy of any kind

Save candy, chocolate, pop, and other sugary foods for home consumption on special occasions; none of these foods should be eaten on a daily basis.

Primary and Lower Elementary students do not have access to the microwave. We recommend a wide-mouthed thermal food jar for hot courses. Foods stay warm nicely if you pour almost-boiling water into the thermos, set the cap loosely on top (but don't screw it down) and let it sit for 10 minutes before dumping out the hot water and adding the heated food to the thermos.

Upper Elementary and Adolescent students may use the microwaves in their classrooms; however, please be advised that heating time shortens eating time. If your child is traditionally a slow eater, it might be wisest to use a thermos to ensure he/she has time to eat. Remember too that the social aspect of lunchtime is important at this stage of development, so microwave "line time" would be better spent conversing over their meals.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Because of our interest and lessons in caring for the environment, we urge you to use reusable containers that can be easily opened and closed by children when packing lunches. We discourage "pre-packaged" items because they produce a great deal of waste, are expensive, and are usually higher in fat, sugar, dyes, and preservatives. Your child's lunch should contain two cloth napkins – one to be used as a placemat and the other as a napkin.

Forgotten Lunches

We notify parents when Primary and Lower Elementary a student lunchbox is forgotten so the parent may drop it off. Please refrain from grabbing fast food and bringing it to school. If the lunchbox cannot be provided, we will provide a one-time-only courtesy lunch made up of foods on hand. Subsequent lunches provided by the school will result in a lunch fee of \$5 per lunch. The fee will be billed in your monthly statement. Please be advised we will not be able to provide adequate lunches for children with special dietary restrictions or life-threatening food allergies.

Snacks

Nutritious snacks are provided daily by the school for our Half-Day Primary and After School Extended Care program. These snacks consist of fruits or vegetables along with a grain product. Snack schedules are posted in the classrooms and Children' House kitchen for staff use.

Elementary students bring an individual daily snack from home, which should consist of a non-messy food from our Appropriate Foods list.

Adolescent students sign up on a weekly rotating snack provision schedule. Students should bring fresh fruit, vegetables, and/or healthy grain products for the class; a list of suggestions may be available from the teacher at your request.

Birthdays, Holidays, & Traditions

We have many beautiful traditions at the school which are celebrated in ways that are appropriate for the developmental level of the children. These Montessori Method-based traditions and celebrations are different than what you would find in traditional schools, and our children look forward to and relish the specialness of each one. We ask for your cooperation in providing these meaningful moments in your child's education.

Birthdays, Holidays, & Traditions (continued)

Birthdays

Birthdays are celebrated differently in each classroom. Please check with your child's teacher a few days in advance for more details. Snacks are to be provided on an invitation-only basis. If you are invited to provide a snack, make it a healthy treat such as raisins, fruit kebobs, cheese and crackers, muffins, or veggies/fruit. Please do not bring cupcakes, donuts, cake, ice cream, or any other high-sugar, high-calorie, low-nutrition food.

We also do not distribute treat bags; if you bring treat bags or unhealthy/uninvited snacks you will be asked to take them home again. Please don't place the staff in this uncomfortable position.

In order to accommodate summer birthdays, it is acceptable to celebrate a half-birthday or to celebrate at the end of the year.

If you are planning a private party for your child, please be sure to check our school calendar for school events before setting your date. We are a small community, and when events conflict not only does it limit the number of guests that may attend your function, it can have a devastating impact on our volunteering force, our fundraising capabilities, and our parent enrichment opportunities. **DO NOT** pass out invitations at school, even if you are inviting the entire class. Please utilize the school directory with children's addresses we provide each year to distribute invitations by mail.

If you are not inviting your child's entire classroom, please talk to your child about the importance of discretion – we are a small school and feelings can easily be hurt. Students may not discuss upcoming or recent birthday parties at school.

School staff do not deliver birthday gifts at school. If you have or will miss a birthday party and wish to deliver a gift for the child, please contact the child's parent for delivery arrangements outside of school.

Holidays

Holidays are celebrated differently in each classroom. Your child's teacher will either send home instructions or publish them in the newsletter.

Do not bring special snacks or treats to school for holidays unless your child's teacher has specifically asked you to, and be sure to bring only what s/he asks. If you bring unhealthy/uninvited snacks or treat bags you will be asked to take them back home; we appreciate that you do not place the staff in the uncomfortable position of requesting this.

Lower Elementary students incorporate a study of holidays from around the world in their cultural studies. Teachers on all levels often welcome guests with personal knowledge of international holidays to share their experiences with the children. Contact your child's teacher for more information.

Traditions

Various classroom, school-wide, and MSMV community celebrations & traditions take place during the year. The children look forward to these events, and we encourage parents to take advantage of this opportunity to understand your child's Montessori education from their perspective. The school will either send home instructions or publish them in the newsletter. Some of our traditions include:

Birthdays, Holidays, & Traditions (continued)

Parents Nights - Primary and Elementary classrooms have Parents Nights. These evenings are a wonderful opportunity for your child to spend with the significant adults in their lives, sharing their classroom experience and we encourage take advantage of this opportunity to understand your child's Montessori education from their perspective.

Adolescent parent night is required attendance of parents only. Its purpose is to help communicate necessary information regarding adolescent development and curricular expectations.

Crossing Over/Evening of Thanks - Crossing Over is an informal ceremony for students moving up to the next level (from All-Day Primary to Lower El, for example). As a n offering of thanks to the parents, every student in the school performs songs, dances and skits that they have developed and rehearsed. Much work goes into this event, and the event culminates with the singing of "Let There Be Peace on Earth", a Montessori anthem.

Show and Tell

In Primary, Show and Tell is not a Montessori concept. Therefore we ask that you refrain from encouraging or allowing children to bring items from home to show and tell in Children's House. Occasionally, the teachers may ask children to bring items of nature that the children find—rocks, leaves, etc. Teachers will communicate this message to the children verbally, or to you in a written note or newsletter article.

When children reach Lower Elementary, they are assigned Personality of the Week times.

During your child's assigned week only, your child may bring items related to hobbies and interests. Appropriate items include favorite books or books on topics of the child's interest, photo albums or non-toy souvenirs of special trips or events, items collected from nature, etc. THIS IS NOT A TIME TO BRING TOYS. At every level, toys are a distraction at school, and should always be left at home.

If your child wishes to share their pet with the class, please contact the teacher at the beginning of your child's Personality week to ask permission, and to set up the appropriate date and time. People bringing animals onto our campus must follow the rules set forth in our Animal Management plan, available in the office. The Animal Management plan includes information on requirements such as animal restraints, clean-up after animal visits, etc.

Student Community Service

The Montessori philosophy encourages students to be active participants in their community and the world. Students will often form committees to do fundraising for humanitarian purposes and families are encouraged to participate if they can. These may include bake sales, food drives, t-shirt sales, pizza sales, fun runs, or other special events. These student-generated fundraising events support humanitarian purposes and are separate from the school's organizational fundraising events (for which the funds go to support the school.)

The Adolescent and Upper Elementary students run a series of small businesses as part of their Practical Life curriculums. This program is not to be confused with school fundraising. Students use the funds generated from these businesses to take overnight, curriculum-based field studies as a class.

Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Policies

All MSMV employees shall be governed by the following guidelines for reporting abuse or neglect of children:

Any MSMV employee acting in his/her official or professional capacity, knows or suspects that a child less than eighteen years of age or a physically or mentally handicapped child under twenty-one years of age has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or condition of such a nature as to reasonably indicate abuse or neglect of such child, shall immediately report or cause reports to be made of such information to The Mahoning County Children Services, or a municipal or county peace officer in the county in which the child resides or in which the abuse or neglect is occurring or has occurred.

Anyone having reason to believe that a child less than eighteen years of age or a physically or mentally handicapped child under twenty-one years of age has suffered or faces the threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or condition of such a nature as to reasonably indicate abuse or neglect of such nature as to reasonably indicate abuse or neglect of such child may report or cause reports to be made of such information to The Mahoning County Children Services, or a municipal or county peace officer.

Such reports shall be made forthwith by telephone or in person forthwith, and shall be followed by a written report, if requested by the receiving agency or officer. The written report shall contain:

- a. The names and addresses of the child and his parents or person or persons having custody of such child, if known;
- b. The child's age and the nature and extent of the child's known or suspected injuries, abuse, or neglect, including any evidence of previous injuries, abuse, or neglect;
- c. Any other information which might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury, abuse, or neglect.
- d. Any person who is required to report cases of child abuse or neglect may take or cause to be taken color photographs of areas of trauma visible on a child and, if medically indicated, cause to be performed radiological examinations of the child.
- e. When the attendance of the physician is pursuant to the performance of services as a member of the staff of a hospital or similar institution, he shall notify the person in charge of the institution or his designated delegate who shall make the necessary reports.
- f. Any employee of MSMV participating in the making of such reports, or anyone participating in the judicial proceeding resulting from such reports, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed as a result of such actions.

CO-OP Information

Cooperative Overview

The Montessori School of the Mahoning Valley, Inc. is a cooperative organization of parents and teachers working together to provide a Montessori educational environment for children. The school is governed by a Board of Trustees, made up of parents, and by Parent Committees which activate the policies of the Board. When a family enrolls children at MSMV, the parents/guardians become Cooperative Members and are therefore expected to be involved in the functional operation of the school in order to model the important function of community membership to students and to keep tuition at the lowest possible rate.

Co-Op Member Responsibilities

A Cooperative Meeting is held in September each year. Business matters that must be handled by the whole cooperative, i.e. elections, constitutional amendments, etc. are executed at this meeting. Each member of the cooperative is required to attend. In the event a member is unable to attend the annual meeting, the member may appoint in writing any other member to vote on his/her behalf at the meeting.

Despite the superior education and care students receive at MSMV and the cost to families of that education, tuition alone is insufficient to fund all expenses aimed at such excellence. Thus additional support--in time and money-- is necessary to offer this quality of education. MSMV isn't afforded the opportunities of governmental or church-related subsidies.

As part of our cooperative, parents actively volunteer service and participate in every fundraiser each school year. Tasks may range from class projects to committee work to consultation services. Participation in fund-raising efforts (e.g. Annual Giving, Gala, etc.) and sharing of time, materials and/or talents help defray our expenses, enrich our resources, support our hard-working teachers, and help teach our children the three R's--Respect, Responsibility, and Resourcefulness--through your example.

You may be contacted for help by chairs of specific activities, staff, or Trustees, but you needn't wait for a contact. Initiate involvement by:

Reading your Volunteer Guidebook and choosing the co-op opportunities in which you would like to participate

Calling the Board President, committee chair, other provided contact person and letting them know how you are interested in helping

Signing up for volunteer service and fundraising participation at the Annual Co-op Meeting in September

Watching the Newsletter and the sign board at school for requests for assistance and promptly responding as directed.

More about cooperative participation is found in our volunteer guidebook.

Too often 80% of the work falls to 20% of the volunteers; don't assume "someone else will do it." Even if your work seems to go unnoticed, the staff knows that your time, talent, support, and example of service are vital to so much of what makes MSMV strong. **THANK YOU!**

Constitution and Bylaws
of
The Montessori School
of the
Mahoning Valley, Inc.

Adopted April 1984
Amended May 9, 1986
Amended April 24, 1991
Amended April 29, 2007
Amended September 11, 2014
Amended September 7, 2017

ARTICLE I. OFFICES

The office of the Montessori School of the Mahoning Valley, Inc. shall be located at 2008 Lynn Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44514.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSES

A The purposes of the non-profit corporation shall be:

1. To provide a high standard of education for children in order to enable each child to attain the highest potential of learning; and
2. To develop and provide a well-rounded curriculum, using the Montessori Method of teaching, which encourages in children the love of learning, stimulates their intellectual curiosity, and develops their self-confidence to work as individuals, as well as in groups; and

To encourage respect for moral values and a commitment to the practice for virtues such as courtesy, obedience, honesty and justice; to inculcate an abiding faith in the heritage of American freedom and a firm resolve to honor the patriotic obligations which must sustain the heritage, and to instill in these children an intelligent interest and deep concern for the rights and welfare of people of all races, creeds and

1. nationalities and for the environment and all life in it; and
2. To sponsor, develop, and conduct various adult education courses and forums, and to encourage academic excellence at all levels of learning in the community; and
3. To conduct other activities which will directly aid and supplement the work of this school, such as the training of teachers, the conducting of tours, the development of classroom equipment, the production of films, broadcasts, workshops, newspaper publicity and other related activities required to effect the foregoing purposes.

B. Equal Opportunity - The Cooperative will not deny a Montessori education to any child because of race, religion or national origin.

C. Prohibitions. The Cooperative is not organized for profit nor pecuniary gain, and no Trustee shall be entitled to or shall receive any compensation for attendance at meetings of the Board of Trustees or other services rendered to the Cooperative as a Trustee; provided, that the Board of Trustees may authorize the reimbursement to any Trustee of expenses necessarily incurred by him/her in the performance of his/her duties as a Trustee.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Members of Cooperative. The parent(s) or legal guardians of a child or children enrolled in the Cooperative shall be members of the Cooperative. Any other person desirous of becoming a Member of the Cooperative by reason of time, interest an effort shall make written application to the Board or Trustees. Upon approval of such application by a majority of the Board of Trustees, the person shall become a Member. The Executive Director and all staff of the Cooperative shall be Members of the Cooperative.

B Professional Affiliation. The Cooperative shall maintain membership in a professional Montessori society.

ARTICLE IV. TRUSTEES

A. General Powers. The business, power, and authority of the Cooperative shall be delegated to the Executive Director and controlled by the Board of Trustees, except where the law, the Articles of Incorporation or this Constitution and Bylaws require action to be authorized or taken by the Members of the Cooperative.

B. Number, Election, Classes, and Term of Office of Trustees.

The number of Trustees shall be nine (9).

The Trustees shall be divided into three (3) classes such that at the 1991 annual meeting one-third (1/3) thereof shall be elected to serve for three (3) years.

1. Thereafter, upon the expiration of the term of each class of Trustees, the new Trustees shall be elected to three-year terms at the September General Meeting and take office at the next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting.

2. Each Trustee shall be a Member of the Cooperative.

3. Trustees are limited to two consecutive three-year terms.

C. Resignation. A Trustee desiring to resign from the Board of Trustees shall tender written notice of the same to the Board of Trustees. A Trustee who is absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the Board of Trustees without just cause as determined by the Board of Trustees shall be deemed to have tendered a resignation.

D. Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held monthly the time and place of which shall be fixed by the Board.

E. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by the President or at the request of any two (2) Trustees upon three (3) days notice.

F. Quorum. Four Members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business in any meeting of the Board of Trustees.

G. Vacancies. If a vacancy occurs on the Board of Trustees, the vacancy shall be filled by the Board of Trustees until the next General Meeting, at which time the Members shall elect a replacement.

H. Duties. The Board of Trustees shall:

1. Determine educational policy based on the recommendations of the Executive Director.
2. Provide financial support for the total educational and business requirements of the school based on the advice and assistance of the Finance Committee and the Executive Director,
3. Employ the Executive Director, and instructors.
4. Acquire physical facilities for the educational program.
5. Review and pass judgment upon the requests made by the Executive Director.
6. Appoint a Nominating Committee to nominate the Officers of the Cooperative for election by the Board of Trustees.
7. Provide legal representation for the school Cooperative in any matters requiring such professional services.
8. Develop and/or pass judgment on policies concerning such matters as staff benefits and salary based on the recommendations of the Executive Director.
9. Develop and encourage good public relations between the Cooperative and the community at large.
10. Perform such other duties as may from time to time be required.

I. Policy. Since the Members of the Cooperative have vested interest in the important matters brought before the Board of Trustees, the Board Trustees shall bring such matters before the Members of the Cooperative for discussion and recommendation. To enhance communication with the Members of the Cooperative, the Board shall set aside time at its regular monthly meetings for Members of the Cooperative to address the Board in accordance with the rules and procedures established by Board.

J. Removal from Office. Any Trustee may be removed from the Board of Trustees with or without cause, at any regular meeting of the Board of Trustees or at a special meeting called for such purpose, proper notice having been given, by a two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Members of the Board of Trustees.

K. Limitations. No Trustee shall interfere with the day-to-day administration or operation of the Cooperative.

ARTICLE V. OFFICERS

A. Positions. The Officers of the

Cooperative shall be a President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer, each of whom shall be Member of the Executive Committee. Such other officers and assistant officers as may be deemed necessary may be elected or appointed by the Board of Trustees.

B. Duties of Officers. The duties and powers of the officers of the Cooperative shall be as follows:

President. The President shall be the principal executive officer of the Cooperative and, subject to the control of the Board of Trustees, shall aid and assist the Executive Director in all the business and affairs of the Cooperative and shall act as the liaison between the Board and the Executive Director. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Members of the Cooperative and of the Board of Trustees. The President shall approve or appointment chairmen of all the committees, except the

1. chairman of the Finance Committee. The President and the Vice President shall sign and execute all contracts in the name of the Cooperative.

The President shall enforce the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Cooperative and perform all duties incident to her/his office and which are required to be performed. She/He shall be an ex-officio member of all committees unless otherwise provided herein. She/He shall further perform all duties incident to the office of the President of the Cooperative.

2. **Vice President.** During the absence of or incapacity of the President, the Vice President shall perform duties of the President and when so acting, he/she shall have all the powers and be subject to all the responsibilities of the office of the President and shall perform such duties and functions as the Board of Trustees may prescribe. He/She shall serve as the permanent chairman of the Finance Committee. He/She shall further perform all duties incident to the office of the Vice President of the Cooperative.

3. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall have the care and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds of the Cooperative and shall deposit in the name of the Cooperative in such bank or banks as the Board of Trustees may designate. The Treasurer and the Vice President shall sign and endorse all checks, drafts, notes and other orders for the payment of money and pay out and dispose of such under the direction of the president or the Board of Trustees. The Treasurer shall keep accurate books and accounts of all its business and transactions and shall, at reasonable hours, exhibit said books and accounts to any Trustee or Member upon reasonable notice. She/He shall render a report of the condition of the finances of the Cooperative at each regular meeting of the board of Trustees and at such other times as shall be required by the Board. She/He shall make a full financial report at the regular annual meeting of the Members. On or before the last regular meeting of the fiscal year, the Treasurer shall submit a budget for the next fiscal year of the Cooperative.

If required by the Board of Trustees, she/he shall give such bond as the Board of Trustees shall determine appropriate for the faithful performance of his duties. She/He shall further perform all duties incident to the office of Treasurer of the Cooperative.

The Treasurer may delegate to staff personnel the following functions only:

- i. care and custody of all funds;
- ii. posting and recording deposits and disbursements;
- iii. other clerical duties involved with the finances of the cooperative not previously enumerated.

4. Recording Secretary. The Recording Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees and of all meetings of the Board of Trustees and of all meetings of the Members. The Recording Secretary shall keep a book of record containing the names, alphabetically arranged, of all persons who are Members of the Cooperative showing their places of residence and when they became Members. The Recording Secretary shall further perform all duties incident to the office of the Recording Secretary of the Cooperative.

5. Corresponding Secretary. The Corresponding Secretary shall attend to all correspondence of officers and Trustees and shall present to the Board of Trustees at its meeting all correspondence received.

C. Vacancies. A vacancy in any office because of resignation, removal, disqualification, death or otherwise may be filled by the Board of Trustees for the unexpired portion of the term.

ARTICLE VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director shall be responsible for the educational program of the school. She/He shall act as the director of curriculum and head of the school, recommend the employment and/or dismissal of the teaching staff of the school, direct and facilitate teacher training, be the chief channel of communication between the Board of Trustees and the teaching staff, plan for the educational growth and development of the school, conduct interviews for new students, and be the education advisor to the Board of Trustees and appropriate committees. The Montessori Executive Director shall be a certified Montessori teacher or certified Montessori administrator and shall be responsible for the promotion of the knowledge of Montessori theory and educational practice in the school, in the Cooperative and to the general public.

The Executive Director shall serve as the chief business officer of the Cooperative and its programs; recommend for employment and/or dismissal all non-teaching personnel; act in an advisory capacity to the officers, Board of Trustees and appropriate committees regarding the business affairs of the Cooperative; recommend short-term and long-term budgets and financial plans; be responsible for the general scheduling of all non-educational matters of the Cooperative; function within the guidelines established by the Board of Trustees; and keep the Board of Trustees informed of all business matters pertinent to the Cooperative.

ARTICLE VII. TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

All persons employed by the Cooperative as teachers or Montessori instructors shall be certified Montessori teachers or be in the process of obtaining such certification.

ARTICLE VIII. COOPERATIVE DUTIES

A parent member of the Cooperative shall be on duty in the school each day the school is in session.

ARTICLE IX. FINANCIAL

A. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Cooperative shall begin on the first day of July and end on the thirtieth day of June in each year.

B. Other. All checks, drafts, or orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the Cooperative shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, person or persons, to whom the Board or Trustees by resolution shall have delegated to power, but under such conditions and restrictions as in said resolution may be imposed.

ARTICLE X. COMMITTEES

A. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall possess and may exercise during the intervals between the meetings of the Board of Trustees all of the powers of the Trustees in management of the business affairs and property of the Cooperative. Transaction of business by the Executive Committee requires three (3) affirmative votes and actions taken shall be reported to the Board of Trustees at its next regular meeting.

B. Standing Committees. The President of the Cooperative shall appoint individuals from the Board of Trustees and members of the Cooperative to serve on the following standing committees:

1. Building and Equipment Committee.

The Building and Equipment Committees shall consist of a Chair and such other members as the President shall appoint. The Board of Trustees shall establish a maintenance checklist and schedule which it shall update periodically. The Building and Equipment Committee shall use this checklist regularly and its Chair shall report at each monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees. Also, this committee shall coordinate and supervise the maintenance, repair, improvement and general condition of the physical plant. It shall also assume responsibility for the building and repair of the education equipment of the Cooperative and perform such other duties as the President or the Board of Trustees shall direct. The Chair shall present an oral report at the annual meeting. If necessary, a written report may be substituted.

2. Fund Raising and Scholarship Committee.

The Fund Raising and scholarship Committee shall consist of a Chair and such other Members as the President shall appoint. This Committee shall assist the Board of Trustees in the developing and promoting of ideas and programs to increase enrollment, retaining enrolled children, raise funds, obtain scholarship funds and perform such other related duties as the President and the Board of Trustees shall direct. The Chair shall present and oral report at the annual meeting. If necessary, a written report may be substituted.

Finance Committee. The Finance Committee shall consist of a Chair and such other Members as the President shall appoint.

The Vice President shall be the Chair of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer shall be a Member of the Finance Committee. This Committee shall prepare an annual budget, recommend a program to acquire sufficient income to meet the budget, recommend changes in any tuitions or other fees and perform such other duties as the President or Board of Trustees shall direct. The Chair shall present an oral report at the annual meeting. If necessary, a written report may be substituted.

C. Miscellaneous. The Board of Trustees shall have the power to designate other committees as it may from time to time feel appropriate.

ARTICLE XI. MEETINGS

A. Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Cooperative shall be scheduled by the Board of Trustees.

B. Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the Members of the Cooperative shall be held at a time and place s designated by the board of Trustees during the month of September. At the annual meeting, the Members shall elect persons to the Board of trustees as set forth in this Constitution and Bylaws

C. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Members of the Cooperative for any purpose or purposes may be called by the board of Trustees and shall be called by the President at the request of Twenty-five Percent (25%) of the Members of the Cooperative. At such special meetings, only such business as is specified in the notice of meeting shall be considered.

D. Notice of Meeting. Notice of the annual meeting or of any special meeting of the Members of the Cooperative, stating the time, place, and purposes thereof, shall be posted at the school in a place set aside for notices for at least thirty (30) days prior to the stated time of the meeting and shall be published in any school newsletter as often as is possible prior to such stated time.

ARTICLE XII. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Conduct of all meetings of the Members of the Cooperative and of the Board of Trustees shall be by Robert's Rules of Order Revised, except where it is in conflict with this Constitution and Bylaws or with special rules adopted by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE XIII. ELECTION PROCEDURE

A. Board of Trustees. A member may become a candidate for election to the Board of Trustees by filing a notice of candidacy with the Recording Secretary of the Board at least fifteen days prior to the election, or by nomination from the floor at the annual meeting of the cooperative.

Ballots shall be prepared containing the names of all candidates. Floor nominees shall be treated as write-in candidates.

Ballots which contain votes for more than the number of seats to be filled on the Board of Trustees shall not be counted.

B. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall be elected by the Board of Trustees at its next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting following the annual meeting of the cooperative.

ARTICLE XIV. VOTING: PROXIES

Each Member of the Cooperative shall be entitled to one vote on each matter properly submitted to the cooperative for the action. Any member may appoint in writing any other Member to vote on his/her behalf at the meeting. Except as herein provided, a Member may not be represented by a proxy at any meeting.

ARTICLE XV. ACTION WITHOUT A MEETING

Any action which may be authorized or taken at a meeting of the Members of the Cooperative may be authorized or taken without a meeting with the affirmative vote or approval of, and in a writing or writings signed by, three-fourth (3/4) of the Members who would be entitled to notice of a meeting for such purpose, which writing or writings shall be filed with or entered upon the records of the Cooperative.

ARTICLE XVI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A Trustee or Officer of the Cooperative shall not be disqualified by her/his office from dealing or contracting with the Cooperative either as a vendor, purchaser, or otherwise, nor shall any transaction or contract of the Cooperative be void or voidable by reason of the fact that any trustee or officer or any firm of which any Trustee or officer is a member, or any corporation of which any Trustee or officer is a shareholder, officer or director is in any way interested in such transaction or contract, provided the nature of such interest (though not necessarily the extent or details thereof) shall be disclosed or shall be known to the Trustees, and further provided that such transaction or contract is or shall be authorized, ratified or approved by a vote of the majority of a quorum of the Board of Trustees without counting in such majority or quorum any Trustee or officer so interested or a member of a firm so interested or shareholder, officer or director of a corporation so interested, not shall any Trustee or Officer be liable to account to the corporation for any profits realized by or from or through any such transaction or contract authorized, ratified or approved as herein provided by reason of the fact that the Trustee or Officer, or any firm of which she/he is a member or any corporation of which she/he is a shareholder, officer or director, was interested in such transaction or contract. Nothing herein contained shall create liability in the events above described or prevent the authorization or approval of such contracts in any other manner permitted by law.

ARTICLE XVII. DISTRIBUTION OF ASSETS UPON DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of the Cooperative, whether voluntary, involuntary or otherwise, or by operation of law, the assets shall be paid, distributed or delivered to an organization as described in and as would qualify under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, and its supplements and amendments. Assets of the Cooperative do not include equipment loaned to the Cooperative for its use by the Montessori Executive Director and Instructor as listed on a "Statement of Loaned Equipment" certified, as submitted, and from time to time amended, as all inclusive by the Chair of the Finance Committee.

XVIII. AMENDMENTS

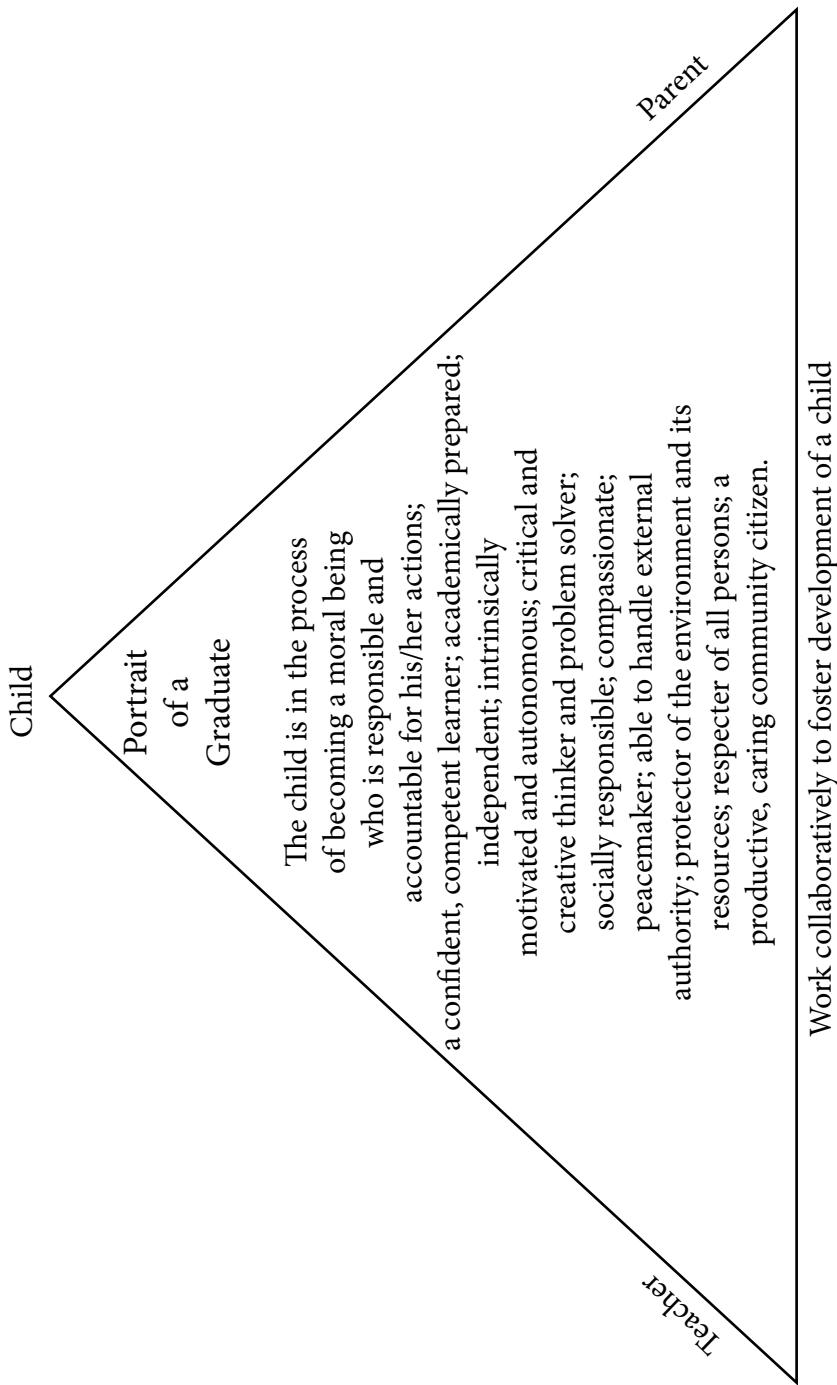
This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Cooperative by the affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the Members of the Cooperative.

ARTICLE XIX. RESERVED AUTHORITY

All powers and duties not otherwise delegated by this Constitution and Bylaws are hereby reserved to the general membership of the Cooperative.

ARTICLE XX. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Constitution and Bylaws is effective as of April 1984, as amended September 7, 2017



Teacher:

Classroom Architect, Builder, and Guardian: Continually creates a classroom environment to meet the changing needs of the children (cognitive, physical, emotional, and social). Establishes and enforces classroom rules, routines, and procedures. Identifies volunteer opportunities and coordinates volunteer efforts to meet classroom needs.

Instructional Designer, Facilitator, and Assessor: Passionate about meeting the child's needs using Montessori philosophy and methodology. Provides individual children with appropriate, challenging work. Shares information with parents regarding academic and developmental progress.

Classroom Role Model: Promotes development of independence, responsibility, and accountability of the child by modeling and reinforcing desired behaviors. Provides boundaries and choices; uses logical consequences in discipline.

Classroom Authority: Works with child in a manner consistent with Montessori philosophy; respects the child and provides freedom within limits.

Facilitator of Problem-Solving: Promotes development of the child's problem-solving skills. Asks questions to help the child solve his/her own problems rather than solving problems for him/her. Allows child to experience consequences of his/her actions.
Collaborative Problem-Solver: Partners with parent in problem solving to improve the educational experience for the child.

Parent

Lifetime Role Model: Promotes development of independence, responsibility, and accountability of the child by modeling and reinforcing desired behaviors. Provides boundaries and choices; uses logical consequences in discipline.

Respecter of Montessori Professional: Seeks to understand how things are done in a Montessori classroom. Actions reinforce the Montessori approach and support the fundamental Montessori tenet of the teacher's authority in the classroom.

Collaborative Problem-Solver: Partners with teacher in problem solving to improve the educational experience for the child.

Instructional Supporter: Passionate about learning about the Montessori method. Reads newsletter and other suggested reading; attends parent/teacher conferences and workshops. Asks the classroom teacher, "What can I do to support my child?" Follows through on agreed-upon steps.

Facilitator of Problem-Solving: Promotes development of the child's problem-solving skills. Asks questions to help the child solve his/her own problems rather than solving problems for him/her. Allows child to experience consequences of his/her actions.

Volunteer: Volunteers time, energy, and resources to identified school/classroom needs. Checks with the newsletter, Volunteer Guidebook, the staff, and committee chairs for available opportunities. Asks teachers, "How can I help?" Parent follows the lead of the classroom teacher and respects his/her guidelines and processes.



THE MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF THE MAHONING VALLEY IS A
NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, OPERATING AS A CHARTERED,
NON-PROFIT SCHOOL AS APPROVED BY THE OHIO
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

“...education is a natural process carried
out by the human individual, and is
acquired not by listening to words, but by
experiences in the environment.”

~Dr. Maria Montessori