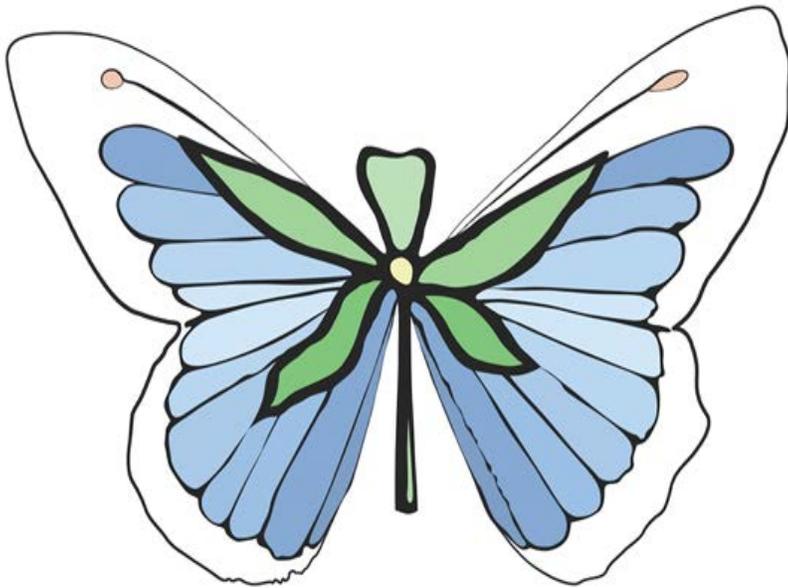


MONTESSORI EDUCATION CENTRE-CHARTER SCHOOL AND MONTESSORI CHILDREN'S CENTRE, PRIVATE SCHOOL



are devoted to nurturing the whole child's **growth** and guiding the **transformation** of each student while modeling a love of learning.

Main Campus Address:

2834 East Southern Avenue Mesa, AZ 85204
(480) 926-8375

North Campus Address:

815 North Gilbert Road Mesa, AZ 85203
(480) 964-1381

Facility Hours of Operation: 7:30-5:30

Inspection reports from Department of Health available upon request.

Facility regulated by:

Department of Health Services
150 N. 18th Ave., Suite 400 Phoenix, AZ 85007-3244
(602) 364-2536

Arizona Department of Education Website:
www.ade.az.gov

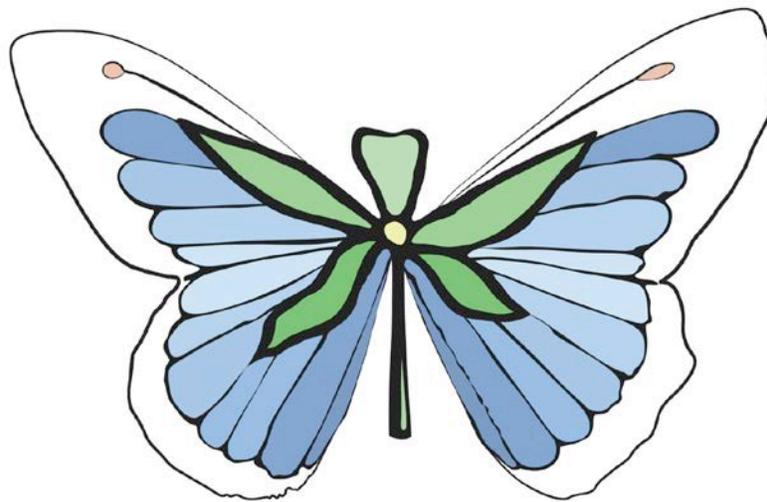
Teacher credentials, fingerprint clearance cards, and resumes can be viewed in the office of each campus.

Montessori Education Centre's governing documents, conflict of interest policy, financial statements and Form 990 tax return are available upon request.

Montessori Education Centre-Charter School and Montessori Children's Centre-Private School reserves the right to amend this Handbook as needed and will provide notice of such to parents. By acknowledging your receipt and review of the Handbook you are also agreeing to abide by any terms and conditions stated in these amendments.

Mission Statement for Montessori Education Center

Montessori Education Centre - Charter School (MEC) is a Montessori Primary and Elementary program serving children in the Mesa, Arizona area. MEC is committed to the development of the whole child. We provide our students a well-rounded, individualized educational experience that is grounded in Montessori Principles. We are committed to nurturing the love of learning and improving academic performance. We strive to empower our students to live their lives as contributors to society and as compassionate citizens who are committed stewards of the earth.



Head of School and Principal's Message

Welcome to Montessori Centre. We, as a staff, are delighted to have the privilege of working with you and your child(ren). This handbook will help you become acquainted with our school and will help you and your child have an enjoyable school year. Additionally, individual teachers will organize their classrooms to meet their instructional goals and will provide you with information at our "Open House" before school begins. We invite you to raise any questions regarding this handbook with your child's teacher or contact our campus office to set up a meeting with an administrator.

This publication is designed to answer the questions parents ask most frequently. It does not include all of the policies and procedures of Montessori Centre. For additional information on a particular topic, please speak to the school administrators. This Handbook supersedes all previous publications.

Montessori Centre consists of two entities: Montessori Education Centre Charter School (MEC) and Montessori Children's Centre (MCC). Montessori Education Centre is a public charter school that serves children from Kindergarten to Sixth Grade. We began our journey as a charter school in 1996. Montessori Children's Centre is the private, tuition-based school, which serves children 18 months to 4 years old. MCC was founded in 1986.

Teachers employed by the school have been trained through a MACTE (Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education) approved Montessori Training Center.

We encourage you to learn about what is going on at our school and to be involved. We invite you to come and observe your child in the classroom (after the first 6 weeks of school) and participate in our parent meetings, programs, and other school events. We know that you, as the parent, can assist us by helping your child to learn and grow in the Montessori environment.

Sincerely,

Tammy Whiting
Principal, Main Campus
twhiting@montessorictr.org

Rachel Lichtenberger, M.Ed.
Principal, North Campus
rlichtenberger@montessorictr.org

Table of Contents

Head of School’s Message.....3

Code of Ethics of the American Montessori Society.....5

Montessori Philosophy/Admissions.....6

General School Policies.....9

Responsibilities.....11

Tuition and Payment Schedules.....13

Health.....14

Safety and Police.....16

School Procedures.....17

For Both Campuses.....19

Foods Policy.....20

Classroom Information.....21

Appropriate Attire.....22

Guidelines for Student Behavior.....24

Grace and Courtesy.....31

Playground Rules.....32

Empower Center Standards.....34

Student/Parent Handbook Signature Page 2021-2022.....35

Student/Parent Handbook Signature Acknowledgement.....35

Code of Ethics of the American Montessori Society

PRINCIPLE I - Commitment to the Student

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

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

PRINCIPLE II - Commitment to the Public

The Montessori educator shares in the responsibility for the development of policy relating to the extension of educational opportunity for all and for interpreting educational programs and policies to the public. In fulfilling these goals, the educator:

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

PRINCIPLE III - Commitment to the Profession

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

In fulfilling these goals, the educator:

1. Shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the Montessori education profession
2. Shall represent his/her own professional qualification with clarity and true intent
3. Shall apply for, accept, offer, recommend, and assign professional positions and responsibilities on the basis of professional preparation and legal qualifications
4. Shall use honest and effective methods of administering his duties, use of time and conducting business as *American Montessori Society members, we pledge to conduct ourselves professionally and personally, in ways that will reflect our respect for each other and for the children we serve. We will do whatever is within our talents and capacity to protect the right of each child to have the freedom and opportunity to develop his full potential. AMS requires that all member schools and teacher education programs agree to comply with the AMS Code of Ethics. AMS relies solely on self-compliance of this Code.*

Adopted by the AMS Board of Directors October 1969. Expanded June 1975. Updated 2008

The Montessori Philosophy

Maria Montessori's philosophy of education is based on "the personality, a harmonious growth of all potentialities of the child, mental and physical, according to the laws of its being..." (Montessori, 1964).

Montessori states that children have natural tendencies toward learning, that stages of learning exist for which there should be corresponding educational environments and trained teachers who "prepare the environment." The child learns independently using the components of the environment; the teacher coaches and observes the child who chooses his/her activities. The teacher is the link between the child and the environment.

The learning environment cultivates individualization, freedom of choice, concentration, independence, problem solving abilities, social interaction, interdisciplinary breadth, and competency in basic skills.

Parent Education and Parent involvement

The parent of a Montessori student will have an opportunity to be involved in the Montessori program. Parents may learn about the program by...

1. Taking a tour to view the facility and receive an explanation of the program;
2. Attending meetings where the unique aspects of a particular classroom as well as the specifics of Montessori curriculum are presented;
3. Attending class level Show Me Nights where the children, as the host/hostess to their parents and siblings, present their favorite activities;
4. After the first 6 weeks of school (our normalizing period), observing the class, and discussing their observations with the Montessori professional; and
5. Receiving a regularly published newsletter on our website, which includes a calendar of events, information on developments at the school.

The Montessori Toddler Environment (Ages 18 months to 3 years)

The Toddler room is a very unique environment that offers the children a concrete schedule, environment and curriculum. The curriculum includes lessons in practical life such as care of self, care of the environment, and grace and courtesy (manners). Manipulatives such as puzzles are used to help develop concentration and eye/hand coordination. Language is developed by introducing the names of concrete items found in the child's environment. Children are offered the opportunity of helping with food preparation and creating various artworks as a means to develop language and fine motor skills.

The Montessori Preschool Environment (ages 3-6+)

The Montessori Classroom is a "living room" for Children. Children choose their materials from open shelves with self-correcting material and work in distinct work areas. Over a period of time the children develop into a "normalized community" working with high concentration and few interruptions. The program includes the following components:

1. The **practical life** curriculum enhances the development of task organization and cognitive order through care of self, care of the environment, exercises of grace and courtesy and refinement of physical movement.
2. The **sensorial** curriculum enables the child to order, classify and describe sensory impressions in relation, length, temperature, mass, color, etc.

3. The Montessori **mathematics** curriculum, through the manipulative materials, allows the child to internalize the concepts of number, symbol, sequence, operations and memorization of basic facts.
4. The **language arts** curriculum includes oral language development, written expression, reading, the study of grammar, creative and children’s literature. Basic skills in writing and reading are developed through the use of sandpaper letters, alphabet cut-outs, and various presentations allowing children to effortlessly link sounds to letter symbols and express their thoughts through writing.
5. The **cultural** curriculum exposes the child to basics in geography, history, and life sciences. Music, art and movement education are part of the integrated cultural curriculum. The prepared environment unifies the psycho-social, physical, and academic functioning of the child.

The Montessori Elementary Environment (ages 6-9/9-12)

The elementary program offers a continuum, which builds on the (3 to 6+) preschool experience. The environment reflects a new stage of development and offers the following:

1. An integration of the arts, sciences, geography, history and language evokes the imagination and abstraction of the elementary child.
2. The presentation of knowledge as part of a large-scale narrative unfolds the origins of the earth, of life, of human communities (agricultural and urban), of empires, and of modern history always in the context of the wholeness of life.
3. The presentation of formal scientific language of zoology, botany, anthropology, geography, geology, etc. exposes the child to accurate, organized information, which respects the child’s intelligence and interests.
4. The use of timelines, picture charts, and other visual aids provide a linguistic and visual overview of the first principles of each discipline.
5. The mathematics curriculum is presented with concrete materials, which simultaneously reveal the arithmetic, geometric and algebraic correlations.
6. Montessori-trained adults integrate the teaching of all subjects, not as isolated disciplines, but as part of a whole intellectual tradition.
7. The emphasis on open-ended research and in-depth study uses primary and secondary sources (books) as well as other materials.
8. “Going out,” or field trips, entail the ongoing use of community resources beyond the four walls of the classroom.

Admissions

Enrollment and Withdrawal

A student will be enrolled upon completion and submission of the documentation required by state law. Required enrollment documentation includes, documented proof of Arizona Residency, and a certified copy of the student’s birth certificate or other reliable proof of the student’s identity and age as detailed below.

- Other reliable proof of the student’s identity and age can be used, such as:
 - Baptismal certificate
 - Application for a social security number
 - Original school registration records
 - Affidavit explaining the inability to provide a copy of the birth certificate
 - A letter from the authorized representative of an agency having custody of the student certifying that the student has been placed in the custody of the agency as prescribed by law

Montessori Education Centre Charter School (MEC) offers enrollment only when capacity permits, as permitted by A.R.S. §15-184. February is the Open Enrollment period for all new charter students. Applications

in excess of the available classroom capacity will be chosen through a lottery. Applications received after the Open Enrollment Period and after the lottery (if held) will be placed on a waiting list, according to the order received. Current MEC students and siblings, children of MEC employees and Board Members will receive priority enrollment. **Teacher requests by parents are not available. All of our teachers are capable of teaching children from all different backgrounds.** Upon first time enrollment, MEC will request prior school records within 5 days.

Montessori Children's Centre (MCC), a private school, offers enrollment when classroom space is available. Returning students and their siblings will receive priority placement. Montessori Children's Centre students are enrolled on a conditional basis. Parents or guardians may be asked to withdraw the student if MCC determines, at its sole discretion, that the program is not meeting the student's needs. **Any student presently enrolled in MCC or MEC will need to re-enroll each year they wish to attend our school. We do not automatically re-enroll our students.**

Withdrawal Procedures

To withdraw a **Montessori Education Centre, charter school student**, please notify the office of your student's withdrawal. **Montessori Children's Centre, the private school**, requires a 30-day written notice of withdrawal. Enrollment fee, class fee and deposit are non-refundable. Montessori Children's Centre reserves the right to terminate this enrollment contract and un-enroll students from MCC's programs with or without notice for any reason.

Equal Opportunity

Federal law protects students from discrimination in any educational program or activity on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, income level, disabling condition, and proficiency in the English language or athletic ability. Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 provide protections against discrimination on the basis of handicap/disability.

Student Placement

Montessori Education Centre has standards consistent with state guidelines for promotion from grade to grade. If the teacher assesses your child and feels that he/she will benefit by being retained in his/ her current grade, the parent will be involved in meetings with the teacher. However, state law A.R.S. §15-701(E) states: A teacher shall determine whether to promote or retain a pupil in a grade in a common school on the basis of the prescribed criteria. The governing board, if it reviews the decision of a teacher to promote or retain a pupil in a grade in a common school as provided in section 15-342, paragraph 11, shall base its decision on the prescribed criteria. For students with a disability who are on an Individualized Education plan (IEP), only the IEP Team can recommend retention of the student.

Bridge Year

Montessori sees the life of the child as a developmental continuum, each stage having its base in the preceding one and, in turn, preparing for the next. A child is given work that is developmentally appropriate for him or her. Children are respected as individuals and are not compared to each other, removing the idea that one may be ahead or behind another. Dr. Montessori understood that children grow and mature roughly along the same planes of development, but there are individual variances along this continuum. It is always our goal to place a child in the environment that can best serve his or her academic, emotional and social growth.

Through observation and assessments, it can be determined that a child is progressing on this developmental continuum at a pace that would require an extra year in the current classroom. We call this a “bridge year.” Much like a bridge, it will give your child the extra support necessary to make a successful transition to the next level. Please note that this does not mean your child will “repeat” the work and lessons he or she has already been given and mastered. It means he or she needs extra time to complete the curriculum necessary for the next level.

There is always a possibility that your child may make up ground as the current year progresses, and that an extra year in his or her current classroom may not be necessary. We will continue to monitor and assess each child and inform parents regarding progress throughout the year.

Summer Sessions

Summer school sessions are available at our Main campus. Information is available in the office and is emailed each spring for the following summer.

Classroom Size Availability

If there is not a space available for new students at a particular grade level, the student will be placed on a waiting list and their families notified as soon as an opening is available.

Before and After School Care

Billing will be based on time of arrival/departure, excluding school hours, at \$6 per hour. There is a 15-minute grace period to pick up your child when school ends (please refer to your contract for school hours). Afternoon extended care fees begin 1 minute after the 15-minute grace period for your assigned grade level pick up, retroactive to when school is dismissed. Extended care is billed and rounded up in 30-minute increments. ***Once the time is 5:31 P.M., you will be charged a fee of \$1 per minute per child, retroactive to 5:30 P.M. The fees will be charged automatically to your debit/credit card on file. If your card declines for any reason, a fee of \$25 will be billed to your account.***

MAIN morning extended care hours are 7:30 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. MAIN afternoon extended care hours for Toddler and Primary are 2:45 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., Lower and Upper Elementary are 3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

NORTH morning extended care hours are 7:30 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. NORTH afternoon extended care hours for Primary are 2:55 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., Lower Elementary 3:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., Upper Elementary 3:25 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

General School Policies

Attendance

Student attendance affects your child’s ability to be successful in school. MEC offers a hands-on program. Students are required by state law (ARS §15-802 & 15-803) to be in attendance every school day. Students who miss more than 10% of the school year (18 days) can be considered for retention.

Students who are late to school disrupt the educational environment. Three “tardies” are considered to be an absence. State law requires that you authorize your child's absence from school and notify us of the absence on that day or upon your child’s return to school. If your child is absent and we don't receive a call from you, we will contact you to confirm your child’s absence. We must have one or more telephone numbers to contact you during the school day. If no contact has been made by one day after your child’s return, the absence shall be considered unexcused. Please let us know if your child will be out of school for an extended period. If your child has unexcused absences for 10 consecutive school days, she/he will be

automatically withdrawn from the school, pursuant to state law.

When calling, please let our office staff know if your child has a communicable disease such as strep, pink eye, lice, pinworms, ringworm or whooping cough so that we can post a notice to all parents in your child's class and on the general parent posting board for the length of the infestation.

Also,

1. *If a student has **nine** absences by the end of the first semester, a letter will be sent notifying you that your child has already received half of the absences allowed in one school year.*
2. *A second letter will be sent after **fifteen** absences within the school year. This letter will state that a student may be considered "auditing" the class. This means that the student would not be promoted to the next grade level unless the student demonstrates appropriate academic knowledge to the teacher.*

Procedures for Children Arriving Late or Leaving Early

Children arriving late (after 8:40) must be signed in by an adult through the main office on the "Late Arrival" list. Children leaving early must also be signed out by an adult through the main office on the "Early Departure" list.

Release Policy

When picking a child up early from school, the office staff will collect the child and bring him/her to the office. Photo Identification will be required from the adult, prior to releasing the child to the adult's custody.

Both Parents' Right to Pick Up

Under Arizona law, both parents have the right to pick up their child, unless a current court document on file with the school office dictates otherwise. In cases where custody/visitation affects the school, the school shall follow the most recent court order on file with the school.

Visitors

Parents are encouraged to visit your child's school. For safety reasons, all visitors are required to sign in through the school office and provide photo identification. Principal and teacher meetings are by appointment only. MEC Alumni and students from other schools are not allowed on campus during the school day without prior approval.

Emergency Information and Immunization Record Cards

The State of Arizona requires that we have a completed Emergency, Information and Immunization Record Card and updated demographic form for each student enrolled. This information will tell us how to contact you or another responsible adult if your child becomes ill, is injured or displays inappropriate behavior at school. On this form you must list all health problems, including allergies to food, medicine and insect stings. **Let us know immediately if your address, home phone, business phone or emergency phone numbers change during the school year.**

If we cannot reach you in an emergency, we will call the paramedics who may decide an ambulance should be called. The cost of these services is the parent's responsibility. During school hours, we will not release a student to a non-custodial adult who is not listed on the Emergency, Information and Immunization Record Card unless authorized by the parent.

Publicity

Occasionally a student's photograph/image is used for official school publicity. Publicity may include the school's website, newsletter or local newspaper. Parents may request that their student's photo not be included in these photos by checking the appropriate box on the Student Application.

Returned Check Policy

When a check is written to MEC or MCC, in the event the check is unpaid and returned, the amount charged shall be the amount of the returned check plus a \$25 fee, as allowed by law. Payment is accepted via credit card, cash or money order after there has been a returned check.

Student Records

Access to educational records is governed by federal law (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act). Divorced parents have equal rights relating to student records unless the school has been provided a court order to the contrary. If there is a custody concern, it is the responsibility of the parties involved to provide the most current legal documentation.

Access to Facility

The following individuals are allowed immediate, without restriction, delay or hesitation, access to our facility premises during hours of operation:

1. Parent or designated individual of enrolled child
2. Representative of Arizona Department of Health
3. Arizona Department of Child Safety
4. The local fire department or State Fire Marshal

Parent and Student Responsibilities

Parent Responsibilities

1. We ask you, as parents of students enrolled at our school, to read through and understand the school's procedures, education methods, and philosophy.
2. Parents are requested to see to it that their child(ren) arrive(s) on time to have the full benefit of the Montessori environment. Lessons given in the classroom form the basis of learning. When a child arrives late or fails to attend school consistently, they miss lessons that cannot be easily made up. Our program's success depends upon consistent attendance of all students. Group lessons are given during the first part of the school day and are not repeated. If children arrive late, they are missing out on valuable class time.
3. Parents provide lunch and transportation to and from school.
4. Parents that are visiting, volunteering, or observing at our campuses may **NOT** discipline any students at any time. If a situation occurs and you feel that a disciplinary action is necessary, please find a staff member immediately.

Parent Code of Conduct

MEC is committed to maintaining an environment free from discrimination and harassment. In keeping with this policy, MEC strictly prohibits unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind, including discrimination or harassment on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, income level, disabling condition and proficiency in the English language, athletic ability, age (as defined by the Age Discrimination Act, as amended), or any other characteristics protected by law. We strictly prohibit all forms of unlawful harassment towards all students, parents, families, staff and volunteers during any school sponsored function on or off campus. We prohibit

unlawful harassment in any form, including verbal, physical or visual harassment. Each student, parent, family member, staff and volunteer have the right to be treated courteously and respectfully. Concerns or questions about another's actions should be directed to that person only. If conflict resolution is not achieved, the Principal may need to become involved. Please see our Grievances/Suggestion protocol. Public arguing is not acceptable. If two or more adults disagree on a particular matter, a discussion should be carried on privately off campus. All participants in any school function deserve the same consideration and respect that we give our students, your children, whether the function is on or off campus. If there is a witness to an incident between any two parties in which behavior is inappropriate, both parties will be asked to leave the school function immediately. If either party does not comply, the police will be called to escort the party off the premises and further legal action will be taken to protect our students, families, and staff from any further incidents. For additional guidance with Parent conduct, please refer to the Grace and Courtesy guidelines on page 31.

Visitor Cell Phone Use on Campus

As a Montessori community, it is our responsibility to align all of our requests with our Montessori philosophy and to be guided by the phrase, *in the service of our children*. Our lives are full and very busy and can be hard to navigate, but the digital universe can wait while we connect with our children's environment in the present moment. Let MEC be a place where you can put aside your device and experience stillness for a moment. We want our children to see the adults in their life enjoying quiet moments without the need for distraction or entertainment or even doing business. **We ask that you turn off and put away your cell phone BEFORE you enter the parking lot.** We know that cell phone usage may be necessary. At Main campus, we ask that you use the small room to the right of the back door of the office. At North campus, we ask that you use the Ramada. Please know that faculty/staff are asked to put their cell phones away while with the students, unless they are using them to contact parents or take school-related pictures. Administration may occasionally use cell phones to conduct office business; nevertheless, we ask that they be discrete with their cell phone usage.

School Property

Please return any small objects to the school even if they seem insignificant to you. We have many sorting and counting exercises, which utilize these pieces. Montessori materials are very expensive and missing one small item can jeopardize the integrity of an entire set.

Student Responsibilities

All students are responsible for the following:

1. Respect the rights of others to study and learn. Students come to school for an education. No one has the right to interfere with the education of others.
2. Attend school daily unless ill or legally excused. Students have a responsibility to take advantage of every opportunity to learn.
3. Be on time for all classes. Students who enter a classroom after a class has begun are interfering with the rights of others to learn.
4. Complete all in-class work and homework assignments and meet deadlines. The responsibility for learning cannot be transferred from the student to the teacher. There can be no effective education when students are free to decide whether they will do the assigned work. Additional work may be sent home to help the students continue practicing a certain lesson that they have received.
5. Come to class with necessary materials. Being prepared for class will help the student transition smoothly into classwork without delay. The teacher will let you know what materials are necessary for class.
6. Respect all public property. Carefully use and return all materials and equipment to the correct place. Responsible use of materials and equipment will preserve them for future students.

7. Obey school rules. Rules are designed to allow a school to meet its obligation to educate students. Students have a responsibility to obey these rules so each student has the proper environment in which to learn.
8. It is important to cooperate with school staff in disciplinary cases. Every community depends upon the willingness of citizens to play a part in upholding the rules by which everyone has agreed to live. To cooperate with school staff members is an obligation of a good citizen.
9. Make certain that school documents and correspondence to parents reach home. Education requires a partnership between home and the school.
10. Comply with legal responsibilities. Students are to comply with policies and regulations, pursue the required course of study, and respond appropriately to the authority of the teachers and administrative staff.

Montessori Children's Centre Private Tuition and Payment Schedule

Enrollment in the Toddler/Preschool Program: Parents or Guardians agree that Student shall be enrolled in the Toddler/Preschool Program for the school year 2021-2022, which begins on Monday, August 2, 2021 and ends on Friday, May 20, 2022.

Early Withdrawal or MCC's Termination of the Enrollment Contract:

- Enrollment fee, class fee and deposit are non-refundable.
- Montessori Children's Centre requires a 30-day written notice of withdrawal.
- Montessori Children's Centre reserves the right to terminate this enrollment contract and disenroll students from MCC's programs with or without notice for any reason.

General Terms and Conditions:

- All fees are due on the 15th of each month. Any unpaid balance remaining on the 21st will be assessed a 10% late fee.
- Credit/Debit Card Agreement is required to be completed and kept on file in the office. Account balances will be processed on the 15th of each month.
- Returned checks or Declined credit/debit card charges, for any reason, will be assessed a \$25.00 fee.
- Failure to pay any fee when due will result in our refusal to further offer "for fee" programs to your family.
- Thru lunch option is **not discounted** for the annual and semi-annual option.
- Montessori Children's Centre reserves the right to adopt/amend rules and regulations as deemed necessary. The student and the parents or guardians shall comply fully with the rules and regulations as stated or amended in the student/parent handbook.
- All students will be accepted on a conditional basis. Parents/ guardians may be asked to withdraw student if Montessori Children's Centre determines, in its sole discretion, that the program is not meeting student's needs or that the student's presence is having an adverse effect on the program.

Tuition Payment Options

By initialing one of the options below, Parents or Guardians have chosen to pay the Annual Tuition according to the payment terms set forth as follows:

Monthly Payments: If Parents or Guardians choose the Monthly Payments Option, Parents or Guardians agree to permit MCC to automatically process the Monthly Tuition Rate, equal to the Annual Tuition divided

by NINE (Aug.-Apr.). There are no pro-rations.

Toddler Half Day \$650.00
8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Toddler Full Day \$800.00
8:30 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Primary Half Day \$525.00
8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Primary Full Day \$675.00
8:30 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

One-Time Annual Payment: If Parents or Guardians choose the One-Time Annual Payment Option, MCC will discount the Annual Tuition by 10% as follows:

Toddler Half Day \$5265 + \$650 = \$5915
Toddler Full Day \$6480 + \$800 = \$7280

Primary Half Day \$4252.50 + \$525 = \$4777.50
Primary Full Day \$5467.50 + \$675 = \$6142.50

Payment due in full by Monday, July 20, 2020

Semi-Annual Payment: If Parents or Guardians choose the Semi-Annual Payment Option, MCC will discount the Semi-Annual Tuition by 5% as follows:

Toddler Half Day (Fall) \$2778.75 + \$650 = \$3428.75
Toddler Half Day (Spring) \$2778.75

Primary Half Day (Fall) \$2244.38 + \$525 = \$2769.38
Primary Half Day (Spring) \$2244.38

Toddler Full Day (Fall) \$3420 + \$800 = \$4220.00
Toddler Full Day (Spring) \$3420.00

Primary Full Day (Fall) \$2885.63 + \$675 = \$3560.63
Primary Full Day (Spring) \$2885.63

Fall payment due in full by Monday, July 20, 2020
Spring payment due in full by Tuesday, January 15, 2021.

Health

Health Policy

1. If your child is ill, please call the school. We are required by the Arizona Department of Health to keep a log of illnesses that occur in our student population.
2. Parents, please Immediately report all communicable diseases or suspected diseases to the office.
3. We will notify you if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease by email.
4. Per Arizona State Department of Health, please keep your child home when he/she is coughing, sneezing, has a runny nose, a sore throat, fever, or an upset stomach.
5. **Maricopa County Department of Health states that students who have previously been vaccinated with the varicella (chicken pox) vaccine that have red spots that look like chickenpox are contagious and must stay at home until all spots have scabbed over.**
6. **If your child becomes ill while at school, we will contact you to pick up him/her.** You will need to pick up your child within one half hour of our phone call. **Your child must be fever free** (under 100.4 degrees-per CDC guidelines), **without medication**, no longer vomiting, diarrhea free, and rash free (or not contagious) **for 24 hours before returning to school.**
7. All children that come to school will be considered fit to play outside – weather permitting. **If your child is not well enough to play outside, then he/she is not well enough to attend school. Unless your child has a pre-existing condition that would affect their health by being outside.**

Medication Policy

When it is necessary for a student to take medication during school hours, parents will need to provide the following:

1. Whether a prescription drug or an over-the-counter drug, the medication must be received in its original packaging. The pharmaceutical label must be on the container of any prescription drug. We cannot administer medication that is out of date.
2. The parent must complete and submit a Medication Request Form, which is available in the office.
3. For students on campus, medication will be kept in the office. The exceptions are an EpiPen and inhaler; students may carry inhalers with them, an EpiPen will be stored in the child's classroom.
4. A designated office staff member administers any necessary medication, with exceptions made for such things as field trips or off-site activities. We cannot distribute any medication without a signed Medication Form. All medications are kept in a locked cabinet in the school office.

In case of an emergency: the following can be administered by employees without parental authorization as per ARS §15-344: Epinephrine auto-injections, inhalers, naloxone hydrochloride, or any other opioid antagonist drug approved by the FDA.

Sun Protection

To increase sun safety awareness, we are encouraging the following sun protection measures:

1. Students should come to school wearing sunscreen. Sunscreen, with your child's name on it, may be left in the classroom with the teacher.
2. Hats are acceptable and are to be worn outside only.

Immunizations

Arizona law requires documentary proof of immunity against certain childhood diseases for students entering Arizona schools for the first time. With some exceptions, students subject to this requirement who lack documentary proof may enroll and have 15 days to provide proof of required immunizations. Exemption forms are available in the office for parents who choose to not immunize.

Universal Precautions

Montessori Centre has instituted universal precautions, recommended by the Centers for Disease Control. To safeguard students and staff, employees are instructed to regard all bodily fluids as potentially infectious, to avoid direct contact if possible, to wear gloves if necessary, to wash hands thoroughly and to report injuries to the office. Students are instructed not to touch blood or body fluids and to seek adults for assistance.

Liability Insurance

Montessori Centre has general facility liability insurance as well as motor vehicle coverage through the Philadelphia Insurance Company in an amount equal to or surpassing the state minimum requirements. This insurance documentation is available for review in the facility office.

Arizona Dept. of Child Safety

Interviews by AZ Dept. of Child Safety workers investigating abuse or neglect may be conducted at school. The parent of a student who is the subject of the investigation or a sibling of the subject need not be given notice of such interviews. School officials may be present at the interview only if necessary, to the investigation.

Physical Education

All students are expected to participate in physical education activities. If your child is to be excused from PE, a note from home or Doctor is required. Athletic shoes are required to be worn on the student's assigned PE day.

Safety and Police

Student Liability

Students who cut, deface, or otherwise damage any school property may be suspended or expelled from school. Parents will be held financially liable for damage done to school property by their children.

Search and Seizure

Students possess the right to privacy of person, as well as to freedom from unreasonable search and seizure of property as guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution. However, these individual rights are balanced by the school's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all students and staff.

Search of Cubbies and Desks

The School is the owner and has control of student cubbies and desks. School officials may inspect desks and/or cubbies for cleanliness and order at any time without notice and without consent.

Lockers and desks shall be searched without notice and without consent whenever reasonable suspicion exists that a law or school rule has been violated or that the health, safety, or welfare of students or staff may be in danger.

Search of a Student's Person

A search of a student's person, bag, or purse shall be undertaken only if there are reasonable grounds for a teacher or a school administrator to suspect that the student possesses a dangerous, prohibited, or illegal substance or object. Items that may interfere with school purposes and/or present a threat to people or property can also trigger a search. This also includes reasonable cause to search for missing or stolen items. A search of a student's person shall be conducted by an adult of the same sex in the presence of another official, acting as a witness. A written report containing the date, time, identity of the student, witnesses, and circumstances justifying any search shall be prepared and a copy given to the parents.

No Smoking or Vaping on School Property

This includes any and all cigarettes, vaping pens or electric cigarettes, cigars, pipes and chewing tobacco.

Weapons

Montessori Centre's policy requires that the Principal recommend the long term suspension or expulsion of any student using, displaying, knowingly carrying or possessing any deadly weapon on district property or at district functions.

Safety Drills/Lockdowns

MEC has procedures in place to handle emergency and crisis situations. In the event of a civil emergency, MEC will work closely with the City of Mesa police and fire departments in order to keep everyone safe.

Law Enforcement Interview

In cases where law enforcement officers interview students, the school administrator shall make reasonable efforts to notify the student's parent of the interview unless the law enforcement officer refuses to allow notification. A school official shall be present during the interview, unless directed otherwise. If a student is arrested or taken into temporary custody on campus during the school day, the school no longer has jurisdiction over the student. The school shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent when an arrest is made or a student is taken into temporary custody, unless the authority refuses to allow notification.

No Drugs or Paraphernalia on School Property

The possession, use, distribution, sale and/or manufacturing of alcohol or illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia is prohibited on or near school property. Students are prohibited from using alcohol or illegal drugs prior to attending school or a school-sponsored event.

Reporting Child Abuse (ARS §13-3620)

According to state law, school employees must immediately report suspected cases of physical injury, abuse, child abuse, sexual abuse, sexual conduct with a minor, sexual assault, molestation, sexual exploitation of a minor, incest, child prostitution or neglect that appears to have been inflicted on the minor by other than accidental means to Arizona Dept. of Child Safety or local law enforcement agencies. MEC will cooperate with police in prosecuting anyone that is suspected of sexual abuse. MEC provides annual training for all employees on identifying and reporting abuse. Every allegation will be documented in detail. All staff has been trained on policies and procedures regarding any reports of abuse. Persons required to report reasonable suspected abuse are protected by state law from civil or criminal liability. If parents or students need assistance in relation to abuse, the Child Crisis Center East Valley (480) 969-2308 can help.

ASBESTOS Notification

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires all public and private elementary and secondary schools to inspect for asbestos in school buildings and to submit a report (management plans) to the State of Arizona. Parent/employee notification must be made on a yearly basis. The management plan (MP) for MEC is located at each campus office.

School Procedures

Main Campus Car Line

Car line is the scheduled time and place for drop off and pick up of students. There are two areas for car line: depending on the class your child is in. Drive to your car line area and stay in the line with your child in the car. Proceed forward until a teacher helps your child into or out of the car. **Please be aware of cars behind you; move up as soon as there is room to do so. There can be no backup of cars on Southern Avenue, this causes a traffic hazard.**

DO NOT MAKE A LEFT TURN OUT OF THE DRIVEWAY DURING CAR LINE.

In the morning, car line times for all classes are 8:15 to 8:30 am. Half day Preschool/Kindergarten students utilize Robin Lane car line from 11:30 to 11:45 am. The afternoon car line times are either 2:45 - 3:00 pm or 3:00 - 3:15 pm. Car line pickup location in the afternoon is the same as in the morning (Except Class 1D):

Toddler:	Class 1C (Ms. Cecile)	No Car line
Car line 1:	Class 1A (Ms. Jenna)	12:00-12:15; 2:45 - 3:00
(Robin Ln)	Class 1B (Ms. Sally)	12:00-12:15; 2:45 - 3:00
	Class 4A (Ms. Heather)	3:00- 3:15
	Class 4B (Ms. Bothaina)	3:00 - 3:15

Class 4C (Ms. Laurie) 3:00 - 3:15
Class 2A (Ms. Nadine) 3:00 - 3:15

Car line 2: Class 1D (Ms. Honore) 12:00-12:15; 2:45 - 3:00
(Southern) Class 2B (Gary/Ms. Carly) 2:50- 3:00
Class 3A (Ms. Patti) 3:00 - 3:10
Class 3B (Ms. Lesley) 3:10 - 3:20

Note that there is no parking in certain areas of the school grounds during car line times. If you arrive at times other than car line times, park in a designated area, come in through the Office, and sign your child in or out. **YOUR CHILD MUST BE SIGNED IN AND OUT IF YOU ARE NOT PICKING THEM UP DURING THE DESIGNATED CAR LINE TIME.** Car line is a service Montessori Centre provides by choice as a convenience for parents to pick up or drop off their children. Our goal is to make car line efficient and safe for your children.

Due to the great number of cars moving through car line in a short amount of time, we reserve the right to deny car line privileges to parents who abuse car line protocol.

North Campus Car Line

Car line is the scheduled time and place for drop off and pick up of students. Drive to the car line area and stay in the line with your child in the car. Proceed forward until a teacher helps your child into or out of the car. **Please be aware of cars behind you; move up as soon as there is room to do so. There can be no backup of cars on Gilbert Road, this causes a traffic hazard. DO NOT MAKE A LEFT TURN OUT OF THE DRIVEWAY DURING CAR LINE.** In the morning, car line times for all classes are 8:15 to 8:30 a.m. In the afternoon, car line times are Primary 2:40 - 2:50 p.m., Lower Elementary 2:55 - 3:05 pm and Upper Elementary 3:10 – 3:20 p.m.

Primary Car line will enter through the South driveway entrance from Gilbert Rd. Pull around the “horseshoe” and exit out the North side. As you pull into the driveway stay to the right, pull forward and watch for directions given by the car line teachers. Children will only be able to exit out of the first three cars. **If your primary students have older siblings, they will also be dropped off with your primary student in the front of the school in the morning only.** Please do not allow your child to leave your vehicle until your car has pulled forward into one of the first three positions. The middle lane is a through lane for parents who are not parking.

Lower and Upper Elementary car line will be behind the school on Ashbrook St. Please enter car line from Adobe, turn north onto Gentry. Gentry is the street just East of Ashbrook. The road makes a U shape, just follow it around to Ashbrook. 1st-3rd years car line is from 2:55-3:05. 4th-6th years car line time is from 3:10-3:20. **If your student has younger siblings, they are to go get them from siblings club and go to car line.** Note that there is no parking in certain areas of the school grounds during car line times. If you arrive at times other than car line times, park in a designated area, come in through the Office, and sign your child in or out. **YOUR CHILD MUST BE SIGNED IN AND OUT IF YOU ARE NOT PICKING THEM UP DURING THE DESIGNATED CAR LINE TIME.** Car line is a service Montessori Centre provides by choice as a convenience for parents to pick up or drop off their children. Our goal is to make car line efficient and safe for your children. Due to the great number of cars moving through car line in a short amount of time, we do reserve the right to deny car line privileges to parents who abuse car line protocol.

For Both Campuses

Walking Home or Bike Riding

Children walking or riding their bikes to/from school must have written permission. Bicycles, roller blades, skateboards and scooters may not be ridden on campus before, during, or after school. The School is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage of personal possessions.

Release Notes

Children will be released to authorized persons only. If another person is to pick up your child, please send a note with your child or call the office staff. Please acquaint anyone who is new to this process with the arrival and dismissal procedures. In an emergency, please telephone the school to arrange an alternate plan.

Pesticide Policy

MEC posts a public notice of all pesticides used on the premises 72 hours prior to application. This notice is posted at the entrance of the facility and on the parent board in clear, unobstructed view. The pesticide used is Bifenthrin I.T. Concentration of pesticide used is .06% applied at a rate/dosage of 1 gal per 1,000 sq. ft. around the perimeter of the campus when school is not in session. Pesticide labels and material safety data sheets are on file in the office of the main campus.

Birthday Invitations

We request that birthday invitations be sent through the US Postal Service versus handing them out at school. We do not give out personal information regarding students unless permission is given by the parent. Please give invitations to the office, stamped, with the invitee's name written on it and the office will address the envelopes and mail them for you. If the whole class is invited, the teacher may hand them out.

Cell Phones and Other Electronics

If a student brings a cell phone or smart watch to school, they must check the cell phone or smart watch in with the office staff or classroom teacher when they arrive. If you need to contact your child, please call the office at any time. As always, we strive to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all of our children.

Electronic games are not permitted on campus. I-PODs, MP3s, etc. are not permitted outside of the classroom. They are permitted in the classroom ONLY with teacher approval and signed parental approval. Any electronics brought to school are the sole responsibility of the student. The school is not responsible for items damaged, lost, or stolen.

Extra-Curricular Tax Credit

The state of Arizona allows you to take advantage of the School Tax Credit by donating up to \$400 (if married, filing jointly) or up to \$200 (if filing an individual return). The non-refundable donation amount is a dollar-for-dollar reduction in your Arizona State Taxes. We will use these funds as you designate, to support extra-curricular programs such as, greatest need, art, music, drama, field trips, after school enrichment, summer program, extended kindergarten and end of the year trip.

Food Policy

Lunch

Each student is responsible for providing their lunch each day. Lunches should be packed in a lunch box rather than a paper bag, and utilize plastic containers rather than Ziploc bags in order to cut down on waste. Lunches also will need to include ice packs for Grades 1 to 6. Refrigerators are provided for 3 to 6 classrooms only.

Acceptable Foods Policy

In our efforts to teach children respect for themselves, and to understand the importance of proper nutrition and the role it plays in their development and learning, we have adopted a school wide procedure for appropriate foods for snacks and lunch. We hope to provide a positive lunch experience for the children, and the teachers will be talking with the students about proper nutrition.

NO GUM IS ALLOWED ON CAMPUS

Birthday Celebration Snack

Suggestions: muffins, bags of popcorn, granola bars, fruit juice bars, yogurt bars, fresh fruit, and trail mix. You may arrange with the teacher to bring a special treat not listed.

Suggestions for Lunch

Suggestions for foods to go with a main course such as a sandwich include: fruit/vegetables with dip, raisins, nuts, crackers, popcorn, yogurt, granola bars (low sugar), 100% fruit roll ups, 100% fruit juice, pretzels, string cheese, and goldfish crackers.

Please do not send frozen or raw food or uncooked ramen packages, which need to be cooked for more than 1 minute. We discourage prepackaged lunches such as Lunchables; however, we understand on occasion they cannot be avoided. If your child brings one of these, *please remove the dessert and soda*.

*The following types of foods are not acceptable and will be sent home in your child's lunchbox: ***soda pop, *desserts, or *candy.**

Microwaves

Microwaves are available to **1st – 6th grade students ONLY** in order to warm food for a maximum of one minute when necessary.

Classroom Information

Open House

Open House is an opportunity for you to meet your child's teachers, and familiarize yourself with the school, and learn more about the Montessori classroom. Open House is held the Friday before the start of the school year.

Parent Observations

We feel it is important for parents to observe their child in the classroom. This will acquaint you with the daily class routine. Observations can be scheduled by contacting the front office at least one day in advance. Observation times can be scheduled only after a child has normalized to the classroom which is at least 6 weeks from date of admission.

Homework Policy

Generally, homework assignments for elementary grades should not exceed 30 minutes. More homework than this may be assigned to children who need to make up assignments or have failed to complete their work during class time. Homework reinforces concepts taught in the classroom. In addition, it helps to establish good organizational and study skills.

Assessment

MEC administers the Arizona Measurement of Educational Readiness to Inform Teaching (AzM2) at required grade levels (3rd—6th). Test scores are only one indicator of student performance. In addition to ability or achievement, test scores are influenced by the child's motivation. Teachers also give periodic assessments to help determine a child's understanding of the curriculum objectives. The results are used to improve the school curriculum and instruction. We feel that student work samples contain evidence of skills taught and mastered throughout the year and are an excellent representation of what your child knows.

Parent Education or Show Me Nights

During the school year, each classroom will offer opportunities for parents to visit and experience the Montessori Method. This can include discussions on classroom set-up, Montessori philosophy, Montessori material use by students, Montessori work prepared by students and special presentations from students.

Progress Reports

Formal progress reports are sent home two times per year, once in December and once in May.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences are held twice yearly on scheduled days. At this time parents and teachers discuss students, their progress in school and any special needs. Additional conferences may be requested at any time during the year. Please notify the teacher in writing if you would like to schedule a conference regarding a specific concern.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned to increase the child's awareness of the world. Permission slips will be sent home for parents to sign and return. The permission slip will be posted in the office, along with a list of students on the field trip. All drivers will provide a copy of a valid driver's license, insurance, and fingerprint clearance card. School vehicles are equipped with valid insurance cards, a first aid kit, and emergency cards for each student. Parents will sign permission slips allowing their child to participate, or make separate arrangements if the child is

not allowed to attend. Teachers will notify parents in advance if their child will not be attending a field trip due to non-compliant behavior in the classroom. A criminal background check is required on outside transportation services utilized by MEC.

Field Trip Rules for MEC:

- All MEC rules in the Student Handbook and classroom are adhered to during all field trips;
- Students will show respect for authority and the environment of the field trip;
- While students are in a car, they will remain quiet and polite;
- Students will walk at all times; and will remain in designated walk areas during field trip;
- Students will remain with the chaperone they are assigned to;
- Students will raise their hands if they have a question;
- Students will bring their own water bottle and wear appropriate clothing for field trip;
- Students will hold their own money. Chaperones may not give children money if they forget;
- No electronics are allowed on any field trips unless teacher-authorized;
- A child may not be invited to attend a field trip if they have not shown competency in the areas of respect, independence, manners, responsibility and managing emotions.

Chaperones and Class Volunteers

All parent drivers are required to provide a copy of their personal insurance declaration page, a valid driver's license, a Volunteer Application and Volunteer Fingerprint Clearance Card. The Fingerprint process can take up to **six** weeks to finalize. This state clearance is good for one year from date of clearance. Classroom Volunteers do not need proof of insurance or driver's license. Teachers will choose the parents who will be asked to be chaperones based on the needs of their class.

Appropriate Attire

Dress Standards

The student's dress and personal grooming are the responsibility of the student and parents. Students are expected to come to school clean, neat, and appropriately attired and groomed. Students whose personal attire or grooming distracts the attention of themselves, other students, or teachers from class work will be required to make necessary alterations. Our intention is to create a safe, orderly learning environment in which students can concentrate on their educational endeavors with minimal distractions. Parental support is vital to achieving this goal. Teachers and administrators will determine what attire or lack of grooming is causing a distraction. When an adjustment needs to be made parents will be contacted.

Specific Guidelines

- Any garment or accessory with obscene, offensive, intimidating language, drug, tobacco, firearms, alcohol or political references should not be worn;
- Students may not wear midriff shirts leaving the abdomen is bare. All undergarments should not be visible. This includes bra straps and boxer shorts;
- Shorts, skirts, dresses must be long enough so as not to show undergarments or any part of the buttock.
- Tank tops are acceptable; if supportive undergarments are required, they should be worn.
- As children change and mature, appropriate changes should be made in grooming and attire.

Pants

Pants must be of an appropriate size for the person wearing them and rest at the natural waistline with or without a belt. Baggy/saggy pants that display undergarments are not permitted. The width (too loose or too

tight) and length of the pant should not hinder walking or other movement. Please avoid tight jeans for young children, tight jeans hinder a child's ability to move easily. The Montessori Curriculum requires movement by children all day long.

Footwear

Preschool children must wear footwear at all times. Footwear should allow students to walk or run in a safe manner. Students must wear sports shoes to participate in P.E. classes. Also, "Heely" shoes are allowed at any time on campus. **We also recognize that flip flops can be inexpensive and convenient. However, they can also be dangerous for young children when running and playing on the playground. Do not send your child to school with high-top sneakers (unless they zip up the back of the ankle) or shoes with any heel or high wedge shoes.**

Piercings

Only piercing of ears are acceptable on campus. No body piercings or tattoos are acceptable on campus.

Jewelry

Jewelry promoting drugs, alcohol, or violence will not be allowed on campus. We strongly suggest that jewelry (especially for younger children) is to be left at home as it is easily lost, broken and might create a distraction in the classroom.

Primary/Toddler

Primary and toddler students must have an extra set of clothing in case of "accidents" or spills. Clothing should be brought in a marked Ziploc bag labeled with the student's name. Each item of clothing that you bring in needs to be labeled with your child's name.

School is a place for exploring and learning. Please send your child to school in recreational clothing that allows for full participation in our hands-on program. When a dress or skirt is worn, please have child wear shorts over undergarments. Please avoid tight jeans for young children, tight jeans hinder a child's ability to move easily.

Much of the child's work is done on the floor, in outdoor environment and in the peace garden where they do get messy.

Clothing should be simple enough for your child to get into and out of easily, with little or no help. We discourage belts, a belt can hinder your child's ability to use the bathroom quickly and can lead to accidents.

Dress Standards Violations

Students who violate the dress standards may be asked to do any of the following, depending upon the specific circumstances:

1. Turn inappropriate clothing inside out.
2. Change into clothing provided by the school.
3. Have other clothing brought to school.
4. Remove the accessory.

Repeated violations of the dress standards will result in disciplinary action, including suspension from school.

Guidelines for Student Behavior

Overview

The word discipline comes from the Latin word *discipling*, which means “instruction given, teaching, learning, knowledge.” Our job as educators and parents is to teach our children the difference between right and wrong, to guide them in understanding how their choices impact their outcomes and to model for them self-discipline in our own lives.

Discipline in the Montessori environment is not something that is done to the child; nor is it a technique for controlling behavior. Our concern is with the development of the internal locus of control, which enables an individual to choose appropriate behavior because it is right for him or herself and right for the community. Inner discipline is something that evolves. It is not something that is automatically present within the child and it cannot be taught. The role of the teacher, then, is to be a model and a guide while supporting the child as he/she develops to the point where he/she is able to choose to accept and to follow the Grace and Courtesy guidelines of the community.

“It is clear therefore that the discipline which reveals itself in the Montessori class is something which comes more from within than without. But this self-discipline has not come into existence in a day, or a week, or even a month. It is the result of a long inner growth, an achievement won through months of training.” (The Absorbent Mind).

Expectations are kept simple. Take care of all people, living things and material things in our environment. It could be narrowed even further to this one simple rule, “be respectful of everyone and everything.” A great amount of time and energy is focused on teaching lessons that demonstrate socially acceptable behavior. It is imperative that we teach children everyday skills necessary for getting along with others. These special skills are taught with Grace and Courtesy lessons.

Grace and Courtesy lessons are presented through demonstration and then practiced through role-playing, and modeled by teachers and older students. They are the foundation of the classroom, as they set a tone of respect and kindness. Another important consideration is that children have the same range and depth of emotions as adults, but they don’t have the maturity or experience to put these feelings in perspective. The goal of Grace and Courtesy lessons is to validate these feelings and give children the tools to successfully express and manage them.

Montessori, however, is only one component in the child’s life. A child’s home environment and parents’ love are the most critical factors in her/his development. To be consistent with the process used in the classroom the parenting style at home should emphasize respect for the child’s feelings, choices within acceptable limits, encouragement, conflict resolution, and natural and logical consequences for behavior. Parents will find within our school community, a family friendly environment that is ready to offer support. When schools and families develop a partnership there is greater opportunity for consistency and continuity.

It is our promise that we will do the work necessary to lay a foundation for a positive and trusting relationship with parents. We recognize parents as partners. We want to create environment within which we all remain focused on the service to the child. We want conversations with parents, even if difficult, to build connections between the essential members of the child’s village and, in doing, help to provide more responsive, respectful and effective service to the child. We ask that parents and teachers show Grace and Courtesy while engaging in dialogue. Even if the child never observes the conversations, they will benefit from mindful relationship building

and intentional conflict response that we provide when we model in our practice the ways we hope they'll approach problems on their own.

The goal of the Montessori classroom is, first and foremost, the development of skills necessary for a productive and fulfilling life. The best academic curriculum is of no use if the child does not develop inner discipline, integrity, and respect for others and oneself. The young person who faces the world tomorrow armed with self-confidence and self-discipline is far more likely to achieve success and happiness. They will be prepared to meet any challenge and will hopefully bring to the world the peace and joy they experienced in the Montessori environment.

To protect the rights of all our children, it is important that parents and students understand the consequences of their actions. Montessori Education Centre has set guidelines to promote consistency in behavior and at our school.

Involving Teacher

- Redirection
- Informal talk
- Conference with student
- Conference with student, teacher and administration
- A visit to another classroom
- Restriction of privileges
- Remainder-of-day release to parent
- Conference with parent, student, teacher
- In-School Suspension (if available)
- Short off-campus suspension (10 days or less)

Involving Administrator

- Implementation of a Grace and Courtesy Contract (Behavior)
- In-School Suspension
- Parent, teacher, administrative Conference (with or without the student presence)
- Remainder-of-day release to parent
- Short off-campus suspension (10 days or less)
- Long off-campus suspension
- Restitution (if applicable)
- Expulsion

Special Education Students

When a special education student engages in misconduct that could result in suspension or expulsion, MEC shall follow the Arizona State Board of Education's rule governing suspension and expulsion of special education students. Pursuant to the Rule, if the misconduct is not a manifestation of the student's disability, standard district discipline procedures apply.

Computer and Internet Use

MEC provides computers and Internet access to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and staff. It is a privilege, not a right, for students in 1st -6th grades to use the school computers, networks and Internet services. Parents and students are required to comply with this policy and the rules set forth by MEC.

Students who violate the policy and/or rules may have their computer privileges revoked and may also be subject to disciplinary action. All MEC computers remain under the control, custody and supervision of the school. The school monitors all computer and Internet activity physically and electronically on a daily basis. Students and parents will be informed of MEC's Acceptable Use Policy and will need to sign an agreement policy on an annual basis prior to use of the school's computers. This agreement will be found in their Open House packets.

Arizona Statute ARS § 15-210

A person who knowingly insults or abuses a teacher on school grounds or while a teacher is performing his/her duties is guilty of a misdemeanor and is punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment.

Actions Usually Involving the Teacher:

Informal Talk

A teacher or administrator will talk with the student, describing the inappropriate behavior and informing the student of acceptable behavior. The parent may be notified.

Discipline Conference with Student

A conference is held with the student, the teacher, and/or the administrator to discuss the inappropriate behavior and discuss/develop a plan for changing the student's behavior. The parent may be notified.

Conference with Parent

The parent is asked to attend a conference with the student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel to develop a plan for changing the student's inappropriate behavior.

Alternative Classroom

Classroom teachers may use a technique similar to in-school suspension by assigning the student to a location isolated from his/her classmates. This is usually another classroom. This allows the child to observe appropriate behavior.

Restriction of Privileges

Inappropriate behavior may result in a restriction of a student's privilege to participate in playground or specific special activities. The parent may be notified.

Remainder of Day Release to Parent

If a student is displaying behavior that is disruptive or dangerous either to themselves or to others, the student will be released to the custody of the parent for the duration of the school day.

Off-Campus Suspension

The school administrator or teacher may suspend a student for 10 school days or less. The student will be informed of the alleged violation of school rules and be given an opportunity to respond. There is no right to appeal a short suspension. When the student's behavior causes a danger to self or to others, an out-of-school suspension may be immediate. In addition to a short suspension, a long suspension may be imposed. Only the Principal may impose suspensions exceeding 10 school days. The student and parent are informed of the school's due process.

Actions Usually Involving the School Administrator:

Restitution (Liability)

Under Arizona law, parents may be liable for damage to school property performed by their children.

Expulsion

Expulsion means the permanent withdrawal of the privilege of attending MEC, unless the Board of Directors reinstates that privilege. Only the Principal can expel a student. Expulsion does not become effective until due process procedures have been completed.

Harassment/Bullying

Harassment or bullying of students is prohibited on campuses and during school-related functions. Harassment and bullying are understood to mean: a persistent, intentional behavior acted out by one or more students against another, carried out repeatedly and over time, which causes stress for the latter student, and a feeling that s/he is academically, emotionally, or physically unsafe.

If a student believes that they have been harassed or bullied, the student should report it to their teacher. Teachers and staff will inform the Principal immediately. Students who engage in harassment or bullying will be subject to disciplinary action.

Grievances/Suggestions

Parent grievances/suggestions are of concern to Montessori Education Centre regardless of whether the problems or ideas are large or small. In order to provide for prompt and efficient evaluation of and response to grievances/suggestions, Montessori Education Centre has established a formal Grievances/Suggestion Procedure for all parents. There will be no discrimination against or toward anyone for his/her part in presenting grievances/suggestions. Under this policy, a grievance is defined as any event, condition, rule, or practice which the parent believes violates his/her child's civil rights or treats his/her child unfairly.

Grievance/Suggestion Protocol

- Identify your **grievance** and address the matter with the person/persons directly involved.
- If the matter is not resolved please set up a meeting with administration.
- It is the practice of the MEC administration to have meetings with everyone involved.
- If, after meeting with the administration, the situation remains unsettled, the matter may be referred to the Head of School
- If, after meeting with the Head of School, the situation remains unsettled, the matter may be referred to the Board of Directors.
- Following these grievance procedures does not prohibit you from pursuing any other action through government regulatory agencies.

Courageous Conversations

We practice courageous conversations at MEC. The purpose of Courageous Conversations is to create a safe space for meaningful dialogue about issues regarding your child. Our desired end is to understand each other's perspective and work together to best serve the child. We know that this is not always a one step, quick-fix, but rather a complicated process requiring vulnerability, humility and commitment.

Guidelines for a successful conversation:

- You are on the same team with your child’s teacher, working together in partnership for the good of your child. Be prepared to collaborate. You can expect your child’s teacher to keep your matter private; to address it promptly and to be professional.
 - Raise your concern as early as possible; don’t delay. However, if you are feeling emotional, you might wait until you feel calm enough to talk.
 - Raise your concern directly and privately with the teacher. If needed, administration will get involved *only* after you have had a conversation with the teacher first.
 - Decide if it’s best to have a phone conversation or to set a formal meeting time. Email or text can be misinterpreted in so many ways. A phone call or meeting is easier to navigate. If you are truly upset about something, we would rather you seek us out and schedule a meeting.
 - Please refrain from having the conversation in front of other staff, parents or other children. Please be mindful that the front office is a public space and issues and concerns should not be discussed in this space. The office staff will help you get in contact with the person most appropriate to address your concerns.
 - Please refrain from getting other parents involved in your concerns. This is not beneficial to a collaborative, trusting partnership.
 - If appropriate, your child may be a part of the conversation.
 - Be respectful, kind and open to new perspectives.
 - Be clear about what you want to discuss. Focus on the things that genuinely affect your child.
 - Ask for clarification. Once you have all the information you can assess the situation in a more thorough manner and ask follow up questions.
-
- Think about what you want for your child; what would be an acceptable outcome? Is it in alignment with the Montessori philosophy?
 - Keep the conversation about your child. Please do not generalize or ask questions about other children. Teachers have to adhere to strict privacy laws and often cannot answer questions about other children. Please trust that teachers will address concerns with the other students involved with their parents directly.
 - Bring ideas and notes to the conversation. Be prepared to ask questions and to listen.
 - Choose words that promote partnership. “Can we talk about how Sue can build some friendships” shows you are working in partnership. “Why isn’t Sue making friends?” may sound like an accusation.
 - Finish the conversation with an action plan. This gives you an opportunity to check in again at the later date to evaluate progress.
 - Finally, congratulate yourself. It can be tough and emotional work advocating for your child, but it’s one of the most important things you can do.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment by staff or by students is prohibited on campuses and during school-related functions. Unwarranted written, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may, in certain circumstances, constitute sexual harassment.

If a student believes that they, or another student, have been the subject of sexual harassment, they should report the behavior to their teacher. Teachers and staff will inform the Principal, of their campus, immediately if a student makes a report to them of harassment that is of a sexual nature. This includes occurrences that are on

or off campus, whether it was a student, staff member, or other adult. Every allegation will be documented in detail. Students who engage in any form of sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action.

All staff and teachers have been trained on policies and procedures regarding any reports of sexual harassment.

Employee Screening Procedures

Employees must complete an application that requests background information that includes whether the individual has ever been convicted of any crime, including sex-related or child abuse-related offenses. Any temporary workers, contracted services providers, or transportation companies hired must provide proof of background checks and certificate of insurance naming the school as additional insured with limits no less than \$1,000,000. All perspective employees are required to undergo Class I fingerprinting, TB testing, criminal background check, E-Verify and sex offender registry check prior to employment.

School Board

If you would like to get in contact with the Montessori Education Centre Board of Directors, you may request a current list of the Members of the Board in the office and write a letter or send an email to the members at MEC@MontessoriCtr.Org. The email will then be forwarded on to the Board Members. This Board is the Governing body of the Montessori Education Centre – Charter School. The Board Members serve on the Board as volunteers thus we strive to maintain their privacy, however, they understand that their role is to respond as the Governing body of the Montessori Education Centre – Charter School.

Short Suspension

A short suspension is ten school days or less and includes field trips. The teacher, with the approval of the school administrator and/or the Principal, has the authority to suspend a student for ten days or less and from an impending field trip. There is no right to appeal a short suspension. The teacher will conduct an informal hearing with the student and other appropriate persons. The teacher will verbally inform the student of the alleged behavior considered a violation of the rules and the basis of the allegation (s). The student will be given the opportunity to respond. After the hearing is completed and the teacher decides a short suspension is appropriate, the teacher will impose the suspension with the approval of the school administrator. They will then notify the student and the student's parent. A student will not be excluded from campus until the parent is notified.

Due Process

Montessori Education Centre-Charter School ONLY

Relative to student discipline, due process means that school staff must follow certain notice and hearing procedures before a student can be suspended or expelled. In some situations, there are also procedures that students may follow if they do not agree with the school's actions. Hopefully, students will never be in a situation where due process procedures are needed.

If a student is faced with a possible suspension or expulsion, the appropriate due process procedure will be implemented.

Student Pick up Policy

When a student is suspended from school, the student must be picked up, within one half hour from notification of parent or guardian.

Once the student has been released into parental custody the student is not allowed on school property or to any school function until further notification from the Teacher or Principal.

The school administrator, teacher and/or the Principal may immediately suspend a student when the student's

presence creates a danger to themselves, any other student or school personnel.

Long Suspension

A long suspension is 11 school days or more. The Principal has the authority to impose a long suspension. The Principal will conduct an informal hearing with the student and other appropriate persons. The Principal will verbally inform the student of the alleged behavior considered a violation of the rules and the basis of the allegation(s). The student will be given the opportunity to respond. After the hearing is completed and the Principal decides a long suspension is appropriate, the Principal will impose the suspension. They will then notify the student and the student's parent that the student will be suspended for 11 days or more. Once the parents are contacted, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss the situation in an informal setting.

If the Principal imposes a long suspension, the parent may request a formal hearing. A written request for a formal hearing must be made to the Principal within two school days after notification that the long suspension has been imposed. If a formal hearing is requested, the parent and student shall be given written notice of the date, time and place for the hearing at least two school days prior to the hearing. The hearing will be held with the student's teacher, one board member and the Principal. The decision from the formal hearing may be appealed by sending a written notice of appeal to the Board within 24 hours after receiving the formal hearing's decision.

Expulsion

Expulsion means the permanent withdrawal of the privilege of attending Montessori Education Centre, unless the Board of Directors reinstates that privilege. Only the Principal can recommend a student be expelled to the Board of Directors. Expulsion shall take effect only after a formal hearing is held and the Board of Directors approves or denies the Principal's request. Written notice shall be sent to the student and parent that the administration has recommended that the student be expelled. The student and parent shall be given notice of their right to a hearing and notice of date, time, and place for the hearing at least two school days prior to the hearing.

A student will not be excluded from campus until the parent is notified. The Board of Directors shall hear the evidence and make the final decision. The hearing shall be closed to protect the privacy of the student unless the parent requests that it be open to the public. The Board is the ultimate authority and is not bound to accept the Principal's recommendation. The final decision may be appealed by written notice of appeal to the Board within 24 hours after receipt of their decision.

Once the student has been released into parental custody the student is not allowed on school property or to any school function until further notification from the Board of Directors.

Grace and Courtesy

GRACE: Characterized by effortless beauty, kindness and warmth

COURTESY: Similar to politeness but of a more voluntary, generous nature, actively meaning to be helpful

Montessori philosophy uses the phrase “Grace and Courtesy” to reflect the way in which we endeavor to engage in all of our interactions: with ourselves, with others, and with the environment in which we live. Grace and courtesy are not taught so much as modeled, and practiced, at every level of our work and play.

Imagine if every adult behaved in kind and courteous ways in our community, and all of our children absorbed that into themselves and then took it out into all of their relationships.... Grace and Courtesy is a tremendous vision, and one we work towards every day in our own hearts and behaviors. Thank you for being a part of this vision.

Below are some guidelines to help foster grace and courtesy in ourselves and to model for our children.

- Please follow direct lines of communication; that is, speak to the person who can directly address your concerns, provide the information you seek, or offer the support you need;
- Clear, prompt, and open communication is essential. Our faculty and staff are available to discuss issues with you; however, the highest priority of our faculty and staff during school hours is the children. Please do not hesitate to contact the office for information and guidance and to schedule conferences with teachers or administration;
- Be mindful of the fact that our administrators do not have private business offices; hence, they must conduct school and district business in a small and highly trafficked area. Please walk and speak softly in the office;
- Greet people, child or adult, in a warm and friendly manner. While on campus, please refrain from using a cell phone (this need starts the moment you begin to turn your vehicle into the MEC drive);
- Walk and speak softly in all areas where children are working and concentrating;
- Please greet each other (child-parent, teacher-parent, teacher-child) when dropping off or picking up children in carline;
- Please do not use a cell phone while in carline. We have a lot of cars in a short amount of space and time to get through carline, and we need everyone to be focused and engaged in the process in order to guarantee the safety of our children;
- Use a respectful tone of voice when speaking to others;
- Suggest positive actions or resolutions;
- Listen attentively and with an open mind;
- Show appreciation and gratitude;
- Empathize with others;
- Support our environment by reducing, reusing, recycling;
- Clean up area after activity, event, or project.

Playground Rules for Main Campus and North Campus

1. Respect of others and teachers are necessary to participate on the playground.
2. Everyone must wear shoes at all times while outside the classroom.
3. You may only walk on the patios or concrete areas.
4. Keep your body to yourself. No Karate or pretend “air moves”.
5. Fighting, threatening others with physical contact, or wrestling are not permitted.
6. Please leave all toys at home.
7. All language must be uplifting and constructive. Profanity or trash talking is not allowed.
8. It is the student’s responsibility to stay out of the muddy areas.
9. Only staff members are allowed into the shed or storage cabinets to get equipment.
10. Rocks need to remain on the ground.
11. Respect others’ belongings.
12. Any school materials or equipment must be used carefully and returned to its proper place.
13. Fruit trees are not climbing trees. Students may not pull off leaves or pull on the branches.
14. Stay off the fence. This includes no climbing or jumping unless they have received permission from a staff member to retrieve a ball.
15. Students may only play in designated areas (not in any of the garden areas).

I. Swing use:

- Students may sit or lie down only on the swings.
- If a student starts swinging too high, he/she will be warned to slow down or he/she will be asked to get off the swing.
- Only one child is allowed to banana swing. Primary may not banana swing.
- Only elementary may jump out of swings. Primary may not jump.
- No twisting the chains or throwing the chains over the top bar or side supports. It wears off the protective coating and causes the chains to rust.
- No flips of any kind.
- Only one person on the swing at a time.
- No kicking off shoes while swinging.
- No running under swings (under doggies).
- No **staff** standing and pushing 1-6 grade students.
- Once the children leave the swing, someone else may use it.

II. Slide Use:

- Students may sit or lie down while sliding down only.
- Students may not run up the slides.
- No sand on the slide.
- Horizontal ladders are to be used for hanging. They are not to be walked across or sat on.

III. Sandbox:

- Students may not use water from the drinking fountains or bathrooms for sand digging.
- The students may dig as far down as the sand meets the dirt, but no further. We do not want the sand mixing with the dirt for safety reasons.
- When students dig a hole they must fill it back in before they leave.
- Students may not throw sand outside of the sand area.

IV. Use of Balls:

- A. All “ball” games are to be used on the field only.
- B. This includes kickball, football, catch, basketball, hacky sac and Frisbees.
- C. “Soft” baseballs for catch can be used on the field.
- D. Students may bring their own playground equipment to school. However,
 1. Students are fully responsible for their own property.
 2. They will need to share with everyone or they will be asked to leave it in the classroom.

V. Jump Ropes:

- You may use the jump ropes for jumping only.
- In group jumping, all children will be allowed to participate.
- Jump ropes may not be used for tying up people or swinging from the trees

VI. Foursquare Rules:

- Server bounces ball, then hits it underhand to any square.
- The ball must bounce only once in the square and then that player hits it to another square.
- The ball must bounce before being hit to the next square.
- The ball must be struck with an open hand.
- Waiting player’s line up 3 feet from the game.
- Stepping on or over the line is a foul, causing the player to be out (except when stepping out of your own square).
- Players rotate towards square A, Only the person who is “out” leaves the game. New players enter at Square D
- Square A is always the server.
- If the ball hits on a line, it is an out for the hitter.
- If the ball is made to bounce over an opponent’s head, it is an out for the hitter.

PLAYGROUND RULES FOR MAIN CAMPUS

- Everyone must wear shoes at all times while outside the classroom.
 - a. There are TWO exceptions to this rule:
 - i. The 4th-6th graders may take off their shoes from 12:30-1:00 when they are playing on the grass.
 - ii. Elementary students may remove their shoes when they are climbing. (The removal of shoes actually promotes safety in these two instances.)
- Only four children are allowed on the yellow rings at one time. No boosting or standing on buckets. They may only sit on top if there is no one waiting for a turn to use the equipment.
- Students may not walk across or stand on the Parallel Bars. There may be two students at a time on the bars for no more than 5 minutes each if there are other children waiting.
- All “ball” games are to be used on the field only. This includes kickball, football, catch, scooters, basketball, four square, hacky sac and Frisbees. “Soft” baseballs for catch can be used on the field
- Students may bring a glove however, students are fully responsible for their own property.
- The ONE exception to this rule is on irrigation days. We will provide pre-arranged activities, such as volleyball and other organized ball games.

- Students may NOT be on the canal road or fencing at ANYTIME. Staff members are the only ones allowed to retrieve items that have gone over the fence.

PLAYGROUND RULES FOR NORTH CAMPUS

- **Trees**
 - 2 children at a time may climb each tree. Children may be asked to allow others a turn if they have been in the tree longer than 5 minutes.
 - Children may climb no higher than the white painted lines/marks.
- **Tires**
 - Tires can be on the concrete, grass and dirt areas only, away from the fence, gates, trees, and playground equipment.
 - Tires can be rolled back and forth to each other on concrete, grass and dirt, but cannot be rolled down the hills.
 - You can climb into the tires only when they are lying flat on the ground and not moving

Empower Center Standards

Statements as defined by Department of Health:

1. Our facility includes at least 60 minutes of physical activities throughout the day that are “sun safe”, which include free play opportunities;
2. Our facility has a written policy on sun safety practices;
3. We encourage families to limit kid’s screen time to three hours or less per week (TV, computer, video games);
4. We encourage students to avoid more than 60 minutes of sedentary activity at a time (except for sleeping);
5. Our facility offers water to all students many times throughout the day;
6. We offer 1% or fat free milk to students during snack time;
7. We serve only 100% fruit juice with no added sugars and limit it to no more than 2 times per week;
8. Our facility serves meals family style including staff members participating, sitting and interacting, with children at meal time. Our facility does not use food as a reward;
9. Our facility implements oral healthcare education into our curriculum as age appropriate;
10. Our staff members receive annual training relating to age-appropriate physical activities, nutrition, oral healthcare and tobacco education;
11. If families are eligible, they participate in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program;
12. We are a smoke-free campus and we encourage our families and their homes to also become smoke-free;
13. Four times a year, families will receive education and referrals regarding tobacco prevention cessation and second-hand smoke.

Student/Parent Handbook Signature Page 2021-2022

Dear Parents and Students:

This Handbook includes important and helpful information about school operations, procedures and policies. Please read and discuss the contents with your child. To ensure you have reviewed this handbook with your child, we ask that you sign and return the Acknowledgement Form to your child's teacher by Friday, August 6, 2021.

Please use this Handbook as a quick reference. If you have questions about the handbook, please call our office.

Student/Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

I have read and discussed the 2021-2022 Student/Parent Handbook with my child.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Child's Name

Date

Please include your email address for future updates, newsletter mailings and other information.

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____