



# Parent Handbook

(Revised December 2014)

## Mission

The mission of The New School of Lancaster is to facilitate the unfolding of each child's unique potential through an outstanding Montessori education that enables a child to meet future challenges, and that encourages a love of learning, independent thinking, social responsibility and individuality in a peaceful atmosphere of respect and acceptance among children and adults.

Approved April 28, 2003

## Table of Contents

Beliefs	3
Welcome	4
History	6
Montessori Philosophy and Practices	8
About Dr. Maria Montessori	8
The Montessori Philosophy	8
The Montessori Approach	9
The Child's Work	9
The Prepared Environment	9
Sensitive Periods	10
Spiral Curriculum	10
Practical Life	10
Sensorial Work	11
Language	11
On Learning Letters	12
Mathematics	12
Cultural Areas	13
The Arts	13
Physical Education	14
Family/School Collaboration	14
Policies and Procedures	16
Admissions & Placement	16
Tuition	19
Tuition Refund Policy	19
Health	20
Schedule	20
First Days of School	21
Special Events	21
Drop-off and Pick-up	22
Traffic Patterns at The New School	23
Clothing, Backpacks, Electronic Devices, Lunches, Snacks	25
Visiting the School	28
Communications	28
Board Meetings Open to Parents	29
School Closing & Delay Information	30
Extended Care Program	32
Medication Policy and Procedures	34
Sick Child Policy	35
Our Prepared Environment	37
Emergency Evacuation	37

## **Beliefs**

We believe that each child possesses unique characteristics that deserve to be respected, protected and nurtured.

We believe that each child has intellectual, emotional, social and physical needs that continually change as the child grows.

We believe that respect and care for self, others and the world around us is vital.

We believe that all children have an innate drive to learn.

We believe that all children learn from everything around them.

We believe that diversity strengthens and enriches our lives.

We believe that education is a dynamic partnership of children, parents, teachers and administrators.

We believe that learning is a meaningful and joyful activity.

We believe that these principles apply to all members of our community and to the entire human family.

Approved April 28, 2003

# WELCOME

Learning at the New School of Lancaster is education for life.

Inspired by the vision of Dr. Maria Montessori and driven by our commitment to the whole child, The New School of Lancaster has served children and their families since 1990. Our school seeks to provide a diverse community where children can pursue the interdisciplinary achievement of academic, physical and spiritual health.

Because we believe the process of learning is joyful and satisfying, our children are trusted to take responsibility for themselves, for their own time, for the completion of tasks and for their place in our community. We believe children should be offered respect and encouragement to explore, to question, and to repeat and perfect their skills. The carefully created and beautifully maintained environment promotes freedom of movement and a developing sense of order.

Just as our teachers serve as a link between the children and the Montessori environment, our parents serve as the link between the child and life at home. As members of the school community, parents, staff and children join to care for, support, and celebrate the school.

Welcome to The New School of Lancaster! We are happy to have you and your child as part of our school. The New School has always enjoyed the benefit of active and committed parents. Parental involvement is critical to the well being of the school. Here are some of the ways you can become active in the school.

- 1. Learn about The New School program.** Read this Parent Handbook to become familiar with the Montessori philosophy and our program and procedures. This will enable you to better understand your child's daily activities at school. Plan to attend the parent education meetings; talk with the faculty, administration, board members, and seasoned parents; and read about the Montessori philosophy by borrowing relevant books from the parent library. After your child is acclimated to the classroom, we will invite you to observe the class in action.
- 2. Offer Comments and Suggestions.** We welcome whatever comments and suggestions you have. If you have a problem of any kind, please talk to someone on the staff or the board. We can clear up misunderstandings if we know about them. We are always looking for ways for the school to better serve the needs of our students and their parents.
- 3. Support the School Financially.** We need financial support from parents. Through annual giving, we have been able to make dramatic improvements in the facilities and programs that your child enjoys daily. While we understand that not all parents will be able to help us financially, we greatly appreciate the assistance of those who can.

**4. Volunteer Your Time and Talent.** We depend heavily on parents for volunteer assistance. Parents serve on the Board of Trustees and school committees, help with projects at the school, assist in the classrooms and at special events, drive on field trips, etc. We need the help of parents to give your children the best possible environment for their early school years. Some specific suggestions for ways to help are:

**Help with:**

- Social Events
- Annual Fundraisers
- Special classroom events

5. **Donate** refreshments for school events.
6. **Host** school events.
7. **Write** articles/take photos for school publicity.
8. **Become** a member of a committee.

Thank you for contributing to The New School community.

### **Parent Volunteer Hours**

To encourage parent involvement and to create a sense of community among parents at The New School, each family is asked at the time of enrollment to commit to a set number of hours of volunteer work each academic year. We encourage you to "pay" your volunteer commitment with volunteer hours and at the same time build some ties with other New School parents. You record your hours in a book at the front desk. You will find volunteer opportunities through backpack notices, your child's teacher and in school publications. If time is not available for you to volunteer, you can waive the volunteer hours commitment by paying the volunteer hours waiver fee. You can check the volunteer hours or the volunteer fee box on the annual enrollment agreement.

# HISTORY OF THE NEW SCHOOL

In February 1990, six families and three teachers embarked on a great adventure. They saw a need in the community for a primary and elementary program that would meet the educational and emotional needs of children, and inspire parental trust in the program and staff. The New School of Lancaster opened in September 1990, in rented space located at Salem United Church of Christ on Marietta Avenue in Rohrerstown. The school enrolled 64 students in its first year, with two primary classes and one elementary class through second grade. The school also included an after-school program.

Over the next four years, The New School grew to include five primary classrooms at Salem United Church of Christ. We also expanded to include two early elementary classes at Mountville Church of the Brethren and a toddler class at St. Edwards Episcopal Church on Harrisburg Pike. In the spring of 1993, the Board of Directors, staff and parents engaged in a strategic planning process, in which we defined the school's mission and beliefs and created a five-year plan.

As the years progressed, we grew to include seven primary and two toddler classrooms.

In 1994, with much help from parents Rusty Keith and Caroline Hoffer, we made the connection with Dudek Realty Company to renovate the executive office building at the Hamilton Watch complex on Columbia Avenue. Thanks to a tremendous effort by the contractor, Meeder Development Company, and the sub-contractors, The New School opened in this new location in September 1995. Parents contributed financially and through volunteer activities. Staff, parents, board members and contractors worked to make the building ready for occupancy. We held a gala kick-off party at the school to celebrate the culmination of everyone's hard work and commitment to "a home of our own."

As we moved to the new building, we instituted a new organizational structure. Four coordinators--elementary, primary, extended care, and administrative--shared the responsibility of managing the school.

In 1995, our first year at the new site, we enrolled about 180 students in two toddler classes, six primary classes, and three elementary classes, plus afternoon enrichment and before- and after-school extended care. Teachers, staff and students settled in and enjoyed the new building and being together in the same location. In the fall of 1997, we added a third early elementary class and a middle school class. As the years progressed, we grew to include seven primary and two toddler classrooms.

Maintaining a collaborative model, the school is now managed by a Head of School supported by a team of dedicated administrators and teachers.

The New School's enrollment is between 250 and 300 students served by a staff of over 45 people.

The unprecedented growth of The New School has been possible because of the enthusiasm, dedication, trust, positive attitude, and hard work of the teachers, the administration, the staff, the parents, and the Board of Trustees. Their commitment enables our growing school to flourish.

In May 2008 we purchased the building and embarked on a new stage of our adventure. As owners of this “home of our own” we hope to improve the building and grounds so that they can better enhance our students’ experiences as we continue to serve the needs of our New School community, and to give your children the best education possible.

**Founding Families and Teachers (1990)**

Rich Bidgood and Ann Steiner  
Elizabeth and Tom Crippen  
Diana and Thad Eshelman  
Melissa Leanza  
Pam and Kirk Liddell  
Mary Marzolf  
Kim and Ted Risser  
Dotty and Ken Weaber  
Mary Cae Williams

# MONTESSORI PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICES

## About Dr. Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori became the first female medical doctor in Italy at the turn of the century. She began by working with children who had been labeled defective. She observed them. When these children passed exams with normal children, she applied her approach to normal children in a Roman ghetto. Her results were so dramatic that her "methods" (a term she thoroughly rejected) spread rapidly all over the world. In America, the Alexander Graham Bells and the Woodrow Wilsons were among her supporters; in Switzerland, Jean Piaget headed the Montessori Society (and borrowed extensively from Maria Montessori's work); in India, Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and the Begum Aga Khan spread her work; when Mussolini asked her to turn Italy's state schools into Montessori schools, she fled the country; in Nazi Germany, her books were burned.

Dr. Montessori later held chairs in anthropology and psychology at the University of Rome. For her work in education for peace, she was twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. After her death, her work was revived in the United States and has continued to grow and flourish. It has also suffered considerable adulteration in some places, as the term "Montessori" is not protected. Her work covers in detail two "planes of development": The first plane (the period of the absorbent mind) is grouped roughly into ages 0 to 3 and 3 to 6+; the second plane is grouped into ages 6 to 9 and 9 to 12. Montessori outlined the work of the third plane (12 to 18), and some work is now underway with Montessori children ages 12 to 15, in an *erdkinder* setting. She also wrote briefly but eloquently about the fourth plane, ages 18 to 24, in The Function of the University.

The Montessori method uses universal fundamental principles of development in children and can be adapted to any group of children in any culture. It has become a continuing educational experiment with a background of shared experience for over 80 years on all continents of the world through the organization Maria Montessori founded in 1929, the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI).

## The Montessori Philosophy

Maria Montessori believed that self-motivation is the key to learning. Therefore, the Montessori teacher acts as a facilitator whose role is to stimulate interest in all facets of a child-centered learning environment. Montessori education recognizes the importance of all developmental areas, including social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs.

### **Characteristics of our Montessori Program** are:

An approach to education that recognizes individual learning ability, interest, style and pace

Promotion of self-esteem by encouraging independence and self-sufficiency

Encouragement of respect for one another and for the environment

Creation of a structured environment within which there is freedom of choice in learning

Use of a positive, gentle and consistent approach with your child

Creation of an environment rich in learning opportunities for your child's absorbent mind

Uniquely designed Montessori materials and teacher-made materials are used to meet your child's learning needs.

### **These Montessori materials** are:

**Manipulative**--Your child learns by doing.

**Concrete**--Your child can touch, feel, and move objects to learn their characteristics.

**Sequenced**--Your child begins learning with the simple and progresses to the complex. This assures success and enhances self-esteem.

## **The Montessori Approach**

### **The Child's Work**

Play is the young child's work. The object of his efforts is the creation of the adult he will become. The child shows clearly an inner need to learn to know himself and his world. He wants very much to develop his intelligence, to learn to control his motions precisely, to explore and order his impressions of the world, to become independent and responsible.

### **The Prepared Environment**

Each new human being, from conception to maturity, forms himself/herself, taking from the environment (the womb, the home, the school, the community) the materials for self-construction. We adults prepare and provide these environments to support the child's work, - fulfillment of his/her potential.

In a Montessori setting, the classroom is prepared to help children accomplish their goals in their own manner, whether we call it work or play. Gradually the children reveal qualities for which they are not usually given credit, such as intense concentration and surprising attention span; exactness and precise movement; a sense of order; maximum

effort by even very little ones; self-discipline and respect for others; kindness; and an obvious joy in "work".

Each classroom is a prepared environment designed to support the child's need for purposeful activity. It is a children's house: the furniture is easily moved, pictures are hung at child's eye level, and plants are easily watered by the children. The sink is not a toy, but a real, child-sized sink. There are many carefully designed materials to meet the child's natural interests. The atmosphere is positive, supportive, and non-competitive.

Part of the prepared environment is the Montessori teacher, who serves as a link between the children and the environment. Older children help with younger ones, just as they would in a big family, and in doing so reinforce what they have already learned and strengthen their own integrity and responsibility. The younger children in turn benefit because children do learn better from their peers. There is much spontaneous sharing among the children.

### **Sensitive Periods**

Sensitive periods are times of intense interest and activity around a particular area of development or learning. If the period is not fully used, development may never be fully realized. An example is the sensitive period for language acquisition, which is present at birth, continues through the first plane of development and then gradually wanes through the second. You know that if you and your child went now to a foreign country, your child would soon speak the new language, while you, long past the sensitive period, would struggle for many years and probably never achieve the exact accent. Montessori observed many sensitive periods in young children—for order, for movement, for each of the developing senses. Montessori classes are especially attractive to children because they appeal to sensitive periods.

### **Spiral Curriculum**

Montessori materials and activities lead the child gradually from concrete concepts to abstract understanding. The curriculum spirals on itself, picking up on direct and indirect preparations for each new step, widening and deepening the child's knowledge as it continues. The curriculum becomes increasingly integrated so that what most adults call "subjects" are rather facets of a larger design.

While children integrate their learning experience, adults tend to separate learning into "subjects". We have thus divided the program to guide you through it, and we emphasize that each experience involves many areas of knowledge and has many links.

### **Practical Life**

Practical life activities are basic, vital and continuous, though they take different forms at different ages. They appeal to the sensitive periods for order and control and perfection of movement. In the toddler class there are little steps to practice going up and down, clothes to practice putting on. Children help prepare fruit snacks, and a wondrous sight is a child,

not-quite-two, carefully taking time, putting a table cloth over a little table for snacks, then adding flowers for elegance.

In the primary class, much practical life has to do with adapting to the environment. Children learn to snap, button, tie bows, shine shoes, scrub tables, dust, polish and sweep. They cook food and sew buttons. They learn forms of good manners in our culture, such as shaking hands, closing doors quietly, and not interrupting.

These activities are designed in a sequence of steps, through which the child comes to realize order and logic in activity. Concentration (watch a little one wash a table!), care, exactness, social awareness, independence, cooperation, coordination and self-esteem are some of the qualities that grow through the practical life work.

In the elementary classes, practical life relates to the community outside the school. "Going Out" involves more than ordinary field trips, as the children plan, prepare, make arrangements, write letters, whatever is necessary to explore a museum, a factory, a farm, a library. The sensitive period for order seems to have vanished by 6 (you will notice this at home, too), but projects like planning celebrations and baking bread appeal to elementary students.

### **Sensorial Work**

The sensorial material appears in the primary and toddler class, where the children are passing through sensitive periods related to perception of form, texture, color, weight, sound, smell, taste, temperature: the ways in which we take in information about the world. The materials are not intended to give new impressions, but to order, classify, relate, explore and realize the sense impressions the child has already formed. Each piece of material isolates a single quality: for example, the pink tower shows only variations in volume—the color, the texture, and shape of each piece are the same; only the mass varies.

The sensorial materials serve as keys to other areas of learning. The sound exercises lead into music and composition. Texture is utilized in learning the shapes and sounds of the alphabet. Discrimination of forms extends into geometry, botany, geography, and so on. The language of the material is usually given after the child has explored it: long, longer, longest, red, blue, violet, triangle, trapezoid, corolla, calyx, Japan, Ghana, B flat, F sharp--the words crystallize the concept for the child.

### **Language**

Language is woven into all parts of the program. Language is very exciting for toddlers. Isolated photographs of common objects, and real objects, are used for learning names. Abstract words are attached to experiences: "Would you like a sweet taste, or a sour taste?" Stories, songs, conversation, simple explanations and questions add to their understanding.

In the primary class, enrichment of vocabulary continues through the use of classification

cards, sensorial materials, and games. Fine distinctions between words (broom/brush, string/thread) and long words (tyrannosaurus rex) delight the children. Stories, poems, plays and ordinary conversation are important in the environment, but no one is ever pressed to perform. The aim is to increase children's knowledge, organization of thought, and confidence and ability to use and express their minds.

With the sandpaper letters, children learn sensorially the forms and phonetic sounds of the alphabet. The children make words with a special movable alphabet; they write words in this way for a long time before they realize that the words can also be read. After this, various materials and activities lead the children through print to cursive, through phonetic and non-phonetic patterns, analyzing parts of speech and forms of sentences, and finally into "total reading". Not all of this work may be accomplished in the primary class. Our aim is to encourage and delight the children with the magic of language, not to pressure them.

In the elementary class, language work continues, including word study, history of language, analysis of sentences, construction and style, spelling and vocabulary. The children write and illustrate stories, poems and research reports, sometimes quite long; and often research is presented orally to groups of classmates. Total reading includes a critical approach--the ability to question what has been read and to compare different points of view. Materials are presented in all areas of the curriculum to aid in the development of reading at all levels.

Spanish is offered daily as part of the elementary program and weekly in the primary program.

### **On Learning Letters**

We teach your child letters through the sounds they make using:

lower case (not capitals)

handwriting in print

naming by the sound ("mmmm", not "em")

If your child already knows letters by name, we explain that each letter has both a name and a sound: "ess" is the name of the letter and "sss" is the sound. Knowing the sounds is a better aid to reading acquisition than learning the names of the letters.

### **Mathematics**

Montessori proposed that all humans are born with a "mathematical mind". In the primary class the children are given mathematical concepts in the form of objects. The objects can be felt and moved about so that the hand is always involved in the learning process. The children are introduced to counting and arithmetical processes with numbers into the thousands and concrete materials that allow them to actually see the difference between ten

and a thousand. In the Montessori environment, mathematics is an integration of arithmetic, algebra and geometry into a system in which each illuminates the other. The structure of the program follows the interests and abilities of the child's mind.

In the elementary class, the work continues, building on materials and concepts already presented and adding new concepts such as algebraic computation, base systems, square and cube roots. The materials are intended to lead the child into more and more abstract work, until finally the materials are spontaneously discarded.

By middle school, most students are studying at the Algebra I level. However, the program is flexible and adaptable, to meet individual students' needs.

### **Cultural Areas**

History, geography, botany, zoology, physical sciences, economics, art and music history and other general subjects are at first presented to the children through sensorial materials and stories. In botany, for example, the children analyze a real plant into basic parts: corolla, calyx, stem, leaf, and root. With pictures and puzzles, each part is then broken into more parts: types of leaves, venation of leaves, margins of leaves. In the elementary class this knowledge of parts is used to understand systems of plant classification. But also there has been a study of the needs of plants and the contribution of plants to life on earth, so that botany is integrated with geology, chemistry, nutrition, geography, and so on.

Montessori used the term "cosmic education" to describe an integrated approach to understanding the contribution of all facets of creation to an ecological whole. The elementary students are given in various ways the cosmic story of the beginnings of the universe, the formation of the stars, planets, the sun and earth. They learn the story of the origins of people and of all aspects of the universe as far as we understand it. History is viewed as continuous contributions, rather than a series of dates and wars. Time lines, charts and research materials concerning human needs and the advancement of civilization help the child in independent study. The child develops a respect for life, and a sense of responsibility to the world.

### **The Arts**

Creative work is woven into the life of all the classes. The emphasis is not on "self-expression" but on "self-realization". We enrich the environments with fine painting, good music, visiting artists and special programs so that the arts become an integral part of the prepared environment. We assume that to create is essentially to realize from what is known and understood, a new idea or a new form: that is, an outward expression of interior development. The child's own creative energy is used everywhere in the program as he discovers and teaches himself. Painting, music, composing and writing stories all begin in the primary class. In an environment that is ordered, beautiful and rich in possibilities, the child acquires something to paint about, dance about, and compose about.

Elementary students undertake larger projects as part of their Fine Arts curriculum. This includes working with our Art Specialist, who provides sophisticated exposure to art history and a variety of media (paint, clay, paper, textiles, and color).

### **Physical Education**

Primary children participate in activities that encourage coordination and control of movement such as walking in line to music and the silence game. They exercise every day outdoors or in the all-purpose room.

Organized sports activities for elementary students include outdoor and indoor gym games, teamwork and individual skill development. As the children grow older, we integrate their need for physical education with our practical life goal of community integration. They may participate in programs outside the school or are introduced to activities such as karate and dance. Our own physical education teachers develop programs to make use of on-site space and materials. Walking trips throughout our community integrate physical movement with sidewalk etiquette to enhance our students' appreciation for the many resources available to them.

## **Family/School Collaboration**

All of us--families and school staff--want to give the children the best the world has to offer. We want for them the best of prepared environments--those that are beautiful and peaceful and empowering. One of the blessings of Montessori is that mistakes are regarded as attempts: when we falter in the real world, we need not despair. The Montessori way helps to lighten the stress we all sometimes feel, and allows the children to grow securely according to their own natures.

### **Reading**

We suggest that you read at least one book by Maria Montessori. The Secret of Childhood and The Absorbent Mind are good places to begin. To Educate the Human Potential and From Childhood to Adolescence give an impression of Montessori work at the elementary level. The Discovery of the Child (skip the inaugural address) gives an impression of some of the materials and activities of the Montessori primary class. Montessori Today and Montessori: A Modern Approach, both written by Paula Polk Lillard are also recommended.

These books are available upon request. Ask about them at the school or look in our parent library.

### **Parent Meetings**

We want to support your efforts as parents by providing as much information as we can

about the school, the classes and the Montessori approach. Many basic Montessori ideas--freedom of movement, liberty and limits, order, and the ability to function independently, for example, are constructive approaches at home.

We offer many opportunities for parents to learn about the Montessori method. Please check the school calendar and plan to attend these presentations. Your presence is vital to our work together. Grandparents, baby-sitters, au pairs, nannies--all the people involved in your child's life--are welcome to join these sessions. This Montessori information is useful, as is the sharing among parents of their own experiences and ideas. There are many ways you can contribute to the growth and health of our school community.

### **Homework**

At the primary level, the Montessori process does not include assigned homework. The children often create homework for themselves. Montessori materials are inappropriate for home use--their presentation and use is part of an intricate scheme.

There is so much that can be done at home with children, the notion of homework as schoolwork is truly insignificant. Practical life activities are essentially a matter of involving children in the everyday processes of life: cooking, cleaning, caring for pets, gardening, and so on. Reading to your child every day and language sharing--giving names of plants and shells, tools, and whatever interests you--are other important gifts.

Elementary students will begin to experience homework. Our goals are to make the connection between home and school stronger, to give parents a chance to see their children's work at home, and to begin to develop in the children greater responsibility and good work habits. By middle school, students will be doing homework on a nightly basis.

## **Traditions**

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays celebrate the life of a child as a special person. They are also an opportunity to give an impression of how we measure time. For the birthday of a primary class child, we ask his/her parents to put together a set of pictures, one for each year of the child's life. In a special ritual, the child carries the globe of the earth around a candle that represents the sun; each time he circles the sun, he is a year older. Parents provide a special healthy snack. We encourage parents to give books to the library to commemorate birthdays and other events.

### **Celebrations Outside of School**

If you are planning a birthday party or other special event for your child and you plan to invite New School children, please arrange to have the children brought to the party from their homes and not from school. We request this to prevent hurt feelings when some children are not included. Please mail party invitations—do not use school backpacks or have your child distribute them at school.

# **POLICIES &** **PROCEDURES**

## **Admissions & Placement**

### **Admissions**

If you have friends interested in placing a child in The New School of Lancaster, please have them contact the office for an application form and to arrange a visit.

Toddlers must be 20 months old at the opening of school in September. We accept children in our primary program who are between the ages of two years, eight months and six years. Children from other schools are sometimes accepted as transfer students to our elementary and middle school programs if the learning style of the child is compatible with our Montessori community. The school does not seek out any particular type of child, and in fact, looks for the advantage of variety.

Students are accepted into The New School after consideration of several factors:

- \* readiness of the child
- \* existing composition of the class with regard to age, gender and general balance
- \* ability of The New School to meet and serve the needs of the student

Interested parents should contact the school office for literature and an application. A visit to the school by parents is the best way to begin the admissions process. You will tour the school, observe our classrooms and students, get more information about a Montessori education, and have the chance to ask questions.

### **The Process:**

To have a child considered for admission the following steps are recommended:

1. Parent visit: Attend an open house and/or schedule an initial tour of the school
2. Application: Complete and submit an application including any supporting documents and the \$50 non-refundable application fee.
3. Individual Appointment: Schedule a full-day visit and interview for your child, bring recent report cards and any other information that can help us determine the best placement for your child (early elementary/upper elementary / middle school applicants only).
4. Notification: Upon acceptance, you will receive an acceptance letter and enrollment forms. If your child has been put on a wait list, we will notify you once space becomes available.

5. Enrollment Acceptance letters are accompanied by an Enrollment Agreement. You must return a completed enrollment form to the school office with the \$100 non-refundable enrollment fee by the due date in order to secure a place for your child.

The New School of Lancaster admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies or other school-administered programs.

The New School of Lancaster is a full member of the American Montessori Society and licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, State Board of Private Academic Schools. The Extended Care Program is licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Public Welfare.

**For RETURNING STUDENTS:** Re-enrollment forms for The New School must be completed and returned along with the non-refundable enrollment fee. At the end of the enrollment period for returning students, the school begins the process of offering enrollment contracts to new students.

**For NEW SIBLINGS:** If you have younger children who will be entering The New School, give official notice to the office. The procedure requires completed application and enrollment forms and fees. Siblings are given priority for admission to the school.

### **Placement of Children in Primary Classes**

Siblings and clusters of friends are not usually placed together. Close relationships develop from the gifts and talents gained from new relationships. Building community requires individuals to extend themselves beyond their immediate circle of comfortable relationships.

When your child is about to move into a different learning community (toddler to primary, primary to elementary), we strongly recommend that you observe the new level so that you have an idea of the transitions your child will be making. You can best prepare your child for these transitions by attending parent orientation sessions provided at the beginning of each school year. If you have strong feelings about the needs of your child and his/her placement in a particular classroom, please articulate your concerns in writing and send it to the Head of School. Your request will be one of many factors considered in your child's placement.

To help prepare your child for a transition, you may want to discuss what will be the same in the next level, and what will be different. Children will also be invited to visit at the next level to observe and to participate.

Because the composition of a learning community is selected very carefully, because social adjustment takes time, and because for teachers to develop deep knowledge of each child takes time, children are not transferred from one classroom to another during the three-year period unless a child is unable to flourish. We ask parents and children to make a three-year commitment to the learning community, and within that three-year period, to take the opportunity to get acquainted with other parents and children.

### **Classroom Placements**

Children are clustered in small learning communities for a three-year period. These small communities provide a number of advantages not found in traditional school systems. Children work with others who are older and younger than they are. The older students serve as role models and tutors for the younger students. In the process, the older students gain confidence and self esteem. The younger ones gain a clear vision of what is expected of them, and gain the motivation to progress to doing what the "big kids" do. They have the benefit of working with and learning from their peers **and** their teachers. The small community is an effective preparation for life in the family, and in the work world. Being able to communicate and work with a wide variety of people is an essential life skill.

Each small learning community develops its own personality. The placement of children in these communities as they move from one level to another is a very important task. Each community needs a blend of learning and personality styles so that it truly reflects larger communities. Grouping children by their intellectual abilities would defeat the greater goal of establishing a sense of community in the classroom.

The New School is not a teacher-centered educational system. It is child-centered. When students are moving from one program into another, their assets and strengths are reviewed, and then students are placed in a learning community that needs their gifts. Placement is determined by matching the skills and needs of the individual with the skills and needs of the learning community. The teacher is one part of the learning community.

### **Choose Program Carefully**

We limit our class size, so flexibility to enroll a primary child for a different number of days a week will not exist once our enrollment is full. We urge you to choose carefully the program that you wish for your child. Until our enrollment is full, a child who is already enrolled in the morning may add afternoon sessions.

# Tuition

Tuition payments are made according to your selected payment option on your enrollment contract. Tuition billing will be issued at mid-month and will be due the first day of the next month.

## **Payment Options Due**

One payment	July 1
Two payments	July 1, January 1
Nine payments	July 1 by check, and the first of each month from August through March by direct debit

To remit payment, either mail your check to **The New School of Lancaster, 935 Columbia Avenue, Lancaster, PA 17603**, or bring the check or cash directly to the office. Credit cards may be accepted for tuition payments.

Please contact the office if you do not receive a monthly billing, or if you have any questions.

## **Late Payment Charges**

Interest may be added to any overdue amount. If payment is not received in a timely manner, the payment plan option may be reassessed and the school may require that the full tuition for the remainder of the school year be prepaid. A child with unpaid tuition may lose the privilege of using extended care services.

## **TUITION REFUND POLICY**

In the case of the withdrawal of a student, the following are the conditions under which the school will refund or cancel any tuition paid in advance or due under this enrollment agreement in accordance with regulations of the State Board of Academic Schools of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

- a) In each of the following cases, the parent must notify the school in writing of the withdrawal of the child either by certified mail or by hand delivery to the business director. The postmark or date of hand delivery on such notice shall be considered the date of withdrawal.
- (b) If the child is withdrawn on or before August 1, the school will refund or cancel in full any tuition paid or due for the first and second terms, except for the \$100 non-refundable enrollment deposit.
- (c) If the child is withdrawn between August 1 and September 1, the school will refund or cancel 75% of tuition paid or due for the first term, and 100% of tuition paid or due for the second term, except for the \$100 non-refundable enrollment deposit.
- (d) If the child is withdrawn on or before December 15, the school will refund or cancel in full any tuition paid or due for the second term, except for the \$100 non-refundable enrollment deposit.

- (e) If the child is withdrawn between December 15 and January 15, the school will refund or cancel 75% of tuition paid or due for the second term, except for the \$100 non-refundable enrollment deposit.
- (f) If the child is withdrawn during a school term, there will be no refund or cancellation of any tuition paid or due for that term. The first term runs from the first day of school in August or September through January 15th. The second term runs from January 16th through the last day of school in June.
- (g) Under the two-payment plan, the July 1 payment will be considered attributable to the first term and the January 1 payment to the second term
- (h) Exceptions, if any, to this policy may be granted by the Board of Trustees for extraordinary causes.

Revised 7/15/2009

## Health

### **Health Assessment Form & Immunizations**

Every child must, by our licensing law, have a current health assessment on file with the school. In addition to the health assessment, children must be up-to-date with their immunizations. Children can be excluded from school if completed forms and immunization records are not up-to-date.

Please respect the learning and growing that takes place in the classroom every day and schedule doctor and dental appointments outside classroom hours whenever possible.

## Schedule

The programs and hours of the school are as follows:

<u>Program</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Drop-off</u>	<u>Pick-up</u>
Toddler	8:45-11:15	8:40-8:50	11:15-11:25
Morning Primary	8:40-11:30	8:30-8:40	11:30-11:40
Full-day Primary	8:40-2:50	8:30-8:40	2:50-3:00
Elementary	8:30-3:00	8:20-8:30	3:00-3:10
Extended Care - AM	7:00-8:30	7:00 or later	
Extended Care - PM	11:30- 6:00		6:00 or earlier *

\* Late fee charged for each minute after 6:00.

# **First Days of School**

## **Toddler Phase-in**

The toddler program phase-in takes several weeks and requires the parent to attend on a regular basis.

## **Primary Orientation**

This is the day for **new-to-the-level** primary students to come to the school.

## **Primary Phase-in**

This is usually the first three days of school. Primary children attend one assigned day during the phase-in.

## **Elementary and 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Phase-in**

Day 1: **All classes:**

Returning students: AM

New-to-the-level students: PM

Additional phase-in days as specified in summer mailing.

These phase-in schedules are designed to meet the developmental needs of the growing child.

**During the summer we will send you information about the exact schedule for the first days of school.**

## **Special Events**

Our three-day primary program is open to younger children whose parents prefer not to have their children in school every day. Because we have integrated classrooms with mixed ages and mixed programs, we may schedule some special events on days when a three-day child is not in school. It is natural and appropriate that a child attending five days a week will engage in more activities than a child attending for only three days.

## **Drop-off and Pick-up**

### **New Primary Carline Policy**

**At dismissal, staff will no longer be permitted to buckle children into their safety seats.**

Our new procedure will be as follows:

- When directed, pull up to the curb. **Stay in your car while at the curbside.**
- A staff member will bring your child/ren to the car and put them in and close the door.
- When directed, the curbside cars will pull past the stop sign holder. The first car will stop at a bold white line on the driveway.
- Parents can then get out of their cars to secure children in their safety seats and then exit the driveway to the right.
- The stop sign holder will direct the next group of cars to pull up for securing safety seats when the previous group has cleared.

Note: Staff who are directing the flow of traffic will be mindful of people who are just driving through and facilitate when it is safe.

**IMPORTANT-----FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS OF STAFF MEMBERS  
WHO ARE CHARGED WITH SAFETY DURING THIS PROCESS.**

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Drop off and pick up your children at the curbside entrance to the school. The teachers, assistants, and safety patrol will be there to help the children into and out of cars and into their classrooms, as needed.

**Promptness is important.** It is very important that the children be brought to school **on time** and be picked up **promptly** after school. A child who is late loses an essential part of the curriculum and disrupts the class. When you pick up a child late, the teacher must use time that belongs to classroom preparation or break. Please be considerate by being on time.

Drop-off and pick-up times are listed on page 20. Except for children who ride the bus, any child who is dropped off earlier than drop-off time or picked up later than pick-up time will be placed in extended care and parents will be billed.

#### **Pick-up by Others**

For the safety of the children and to reduce miscommunications and confusion, parents must send a note to the teacher if **ANYONE** other than the parent or designated caregiver is picking up the child. This means when your child is going to a friend's house, or when a relative or friend is picking up your child, you must send written notice. You must communicate changes in afternoon transportation for elementary students in the same manner. Please make all changes before 2:30 p.m., except in the case of an emergency.

# Traffic Patterns at The New School

**RESERVED PARKING:** ALL parking places on the **INSIDE** (left side) **OF CIRCLE** are reserved for **ONLY** toddler parents from **8:40-9:00 AM** and **11:00-11:20 AM**.

**DO NOT PARK** in these places at this time unless you are a toddler parent.

**PARKING:** Parking at the school is limited. If you elect to park during carline times, please be aware that you may not be able to move your car until carline is over.

**CARLINE:** We encourage everyone (except toddlers) to use the drop-off and pick-up service. Even 3- and 4-year-olds can be responsible to walk from the curb into the school when guided by our thoughtful and attentive assistant teachers or safety patrol students. This is part of Montessori education for life. It fosters appropriate independence and a sense of community among the children of different ages and the adults who are guiding them. If you have any questions, please feel free to call us.

**To assist us in the traffic flow at drop-off and pick-up, follow this procedure:**

1. Please drive slowly and carefully at all times. This is for the safety of your child as well as his/her classmates. **The entire traffic circle is one-way—counter-clockwise!**
2. **Always pay attention to and follow the directions of the New School staff on traffic duty. Please turn off your cell phones and have your children ready with coats and shoes on.**
3. Do not park or drive on the grass.
4. Always approach our Race Avenue driveway **only** from the north--the Wheatland Avenue side. **When making this left-hand turn, use your turn signal and pull as close to the yellow line as possible so non-New School traffic can pass on the right.**
5. **There are two lanes of traffic on the Southside of the circle.** Generally the **left lane (inside lane)** will be open for through traffic until curbside activity starts, and the **right lane (outside lane)** will be the lane for waiting.\*

We have a **visual (a green flag)** to better control the flow of traffic on the **inside lane!** If the flag is up you must keep the lane open and drive around. When the green flag is down you may stop in the inside lane and wait for drop-off or dismissal instructions. Please abide by this procedure and it will make traffic flow more easily.

To summarize:

**Flag Up..... Keep moving in the inside lane**

**Flag Down... You can now wait in the inside lane**

## **Morning Pattern**

Until 8:30—left lane is open for elementary parents to drive through and drop off at the curb.

Until 8:30—right lane is for primary parents who are waiting for drop-off to begin

**DO NOT** pull up to the curb until 8:30 when assistants are present to receive primary children.

8:30 – 8:40—both lanes open to primary parents to drop-off

## **Midday Pattern**

Until 11:30—right lane is for primary parents waiting for pick-up

Until 11:30—left lane is for toddler parents driving through and parking for pick-up

After 11:30—both lanes open to primary parents to pick-up

**Afternoon Pattern**

Until 2:45—Right lane is for **primary parents only** waiting for pick-up

—Left lane open for through traffic

\*When the flag goes down—left lane is for **elementary parents only** waiting for pick-up

6. When directed by a staff member, first car in line must pull all the way up to the crosswalk so we can load/unload four cars at the same time. Pull up close to the car in front of you, put your car in park and take your foot off the brake. After all cars at the curb have been loaded or unloaded, a staff member will direct all cars to leave. **NEVER pull away from the curb until a staff member directs you to move. ALWAYS stay in your lane. NEVER pass a car that is in front of you.**

7. **NEVER** leave cars unattended in drop-off and pick-up area. Always park your car in a designated parking space on the right side (outside) of the circle if you are coming into the school.

8. **DO NOT USE** pick-up and drop-off times to converse with teachers. Your questions are important to us, so please leave a message with the office and your child’s teacher will contact you. Please arrive on time, but not early, for both drop-off and pick-up (see list below). Our staff will escort your child to and from the building.

9. **Toddler parents:** Please park your car and escort your child to and from the school. All the parking spaces on the **inside (left side) of the circle** are reserved for you from 8:40-9:00 and 11:00-11:20. Other parents should refrain from parking in these spots.

10. If no parking spaces are available in our parking area, please go to the church lot on the west side of Race Avenue.

11. Parking at the curb on Race Avenue is limited to 2 hours.

12. If you are waiting in the line before it begins to move, turn off your engine – it is the green thing to do.

**Elementary morning drop-off**

8:20-8:30 (class begins promptly at 8:30)

**Primary morning drop-off**

8:30-8:40 (class begins promptly at 8:40)

**Toddler morning drop-off**

8:40-8:50 (park and walk your child to classroom)

**Toddler morning pick-up**

11:15 (park and walk in to get your child,  
wait in hall behind blue line)

**Primary morning pick-up**

11:30 (follow traffic guidelines)

**Primary afternoon pick-up**

2:50 (follow traffic guidelines)

**Elementary afternoon pick-up**

3:00 (follow traffic guidelines)

# Clothing, Backpacks, Lunches, Snacks

## Appropriate School Attire

Clothes that are simple and functional allow the child to move and work comfortably without distraction. Natural fibers "breathe" better. When choosing clothes for your young child, look for front openings and simple fastenings such as large, loose buttons or easy zippers. Try out fasteners before you buy to be sure they are not too stiff. Children take pride in being able to dress and do toilet activities without help.

Young children are perfecting the way they move and walk, and can do that best in simple, flexible shoes (not, for example, cowboy boots or party shoes). Over boots a size larger than the shoe are easier for the children to take off and put on by themselves. Consider the styling of snow pants for ease of putting on and taking off "all by myself." All children should come to school in clothing that is comfortable and conducive to indoor work and outdoor play.

## Marking and Labeling

Please mark **ALL CLOTHING, BACKPACKS and LUNCH BOXES** with nametags or marker pen. Mittens, hats and boots are especially easy to mix up, and we find a surprisingly large collection of unmarked, unclaimed sweaters, lunch boxes and coats.

There is a lost and found area in the hall or lobby. Please check it frequently. Items left longer than two months may be given away.

## Extra Clothes/Changes

For primary and toddler students, please send a full set of extra clothes (shirt, pants, underwear and socks) which can be left at school in case a change is needed. Please mark extra clothing with your child's name.

## Backpack or Tote Bag

Please send a backpack or tote bag to school with your child daily. **Clearly label** these items with your child's name. The label may be on the inside of the backpack. Labeling simplifies the process of safely sending papers home. **Please check backpacks each day;** often they contain important messages. Every Wednesday/Thursday the Weekly Update will be sent home in backpacks or sent electronically--one per family sent with the younger child.

## Electronic Devices Policy

All electronic devices that come to school must be kept in children's backpacks at all times during the school day, and during extended care, except in the case where teachers have devised an alternative plan that facilitates their students' daily work. This includes children waiting for buses or sitting in carline. The New School does not take

responsibility for loss or damage to electronic devices that are brought to school. Because students' backpacks are not kept in secure places and are available to anyone who is walking in hallways where they are hung, this is the only viable position for the school to take.

### **Toys/Treasures**

We fill each classroom environment with beautiful equipment and belongings for everyone to use. We support and encourage a spirit of community and sharing. We ask that no toys, jewelry, candy or gum be brought to school, since they do not enhance the possibility of group sharing and community use. Such items may distract unsettled children from tasks that are helpful to their development.

*Exception:* **For the first few days**, a favorite toy or blanket at school may help a new child. Please speak with your child's teacher about this.

Primary students are invited to bring natural objects or items from other cultures to share with the class. Elementary students begin to experiment with mixing their own things into the environment as a part of the ever-widening range of freedom and responsibility. Consult the teacher if you are uncertain about a particular item.

### **Daily Outside Time**

The children have outside time daily unless it is raining or very cold. Please make sure that your child has suitable outside attire--a light jacket for fall and spring, and a warm coat or jacket, hat, mittens (no gloves for primary students) and snow pants (if needed) for winter. **Please label everything!** Children do not always recognize their own clothes.

**All the children** go outside **every day**, except when it is pouring or at the teacher's discretion. We cannot leave children inside unattended. Therefore, we cannot honor requests that a child stay indoors during outside time. If your child cannot go outside, he/she should remain at home that day. The only exception to this policy is a child with a chronic medical condition that makes it necessary for the child to remain indoors. When this is the case, please send an explanation to the teacher.

### **Nutritious Lunches**

Students who stay all day must bring their lunch every day. Elementary and primary students have an opportunity to order lunches online from an outside provider Wholesome Tummies.

To encourage healthy eating habits and reduce the peer pressure to bring junk food to school, please limit the treats in your child's lunch to one modest item--perhaps one large cookie or two small ones. Please **NO CANDY!** Avoid large, sweetened drinks. They fill the children up without giving them any lasting nutritional benefit. We encourage healthy, nutritious foods that have little or no sugar, and do not contain dyes or additives.

Packing lunches is a daily challenge. Planning with your child can ease morning stress

and the temptation to include less nutritious items. Lunch time is a fun, social experience- a time for children to become more conscious of good habits of healthy eating. Please use reusable containers in packing lunches whenever possible, and avoid unrecyclable trash; i.e., plastic bags and drink boxes.

### **Snack Time**

Snack time is an important social time for the children.

The children in toddler, primary and early elementary classes take turns providing snack for their classmates. This gives each child the chance to be host or hostess and line leader for a day, as well as to do something special for his/her classmates. Each month, we send home a snack schedule noting your child's assigned snack day. In early elementary classes the snack person also does the calendar and chooses a morning greeting.

Upper elementary and 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes handle snacks in a different way. Your child's teacher will explain the process to you at parents' night.

To encourage healthy eating habits and because many children have adverse reactions to sugar and/or various food colorings, please send nourishing snacks. Here are some suggestions: **apples, pears, orange slices, grapes, raisins, unusual fruit that would provide a learning experience for the children, rice cakes with cream cheese, small muffins, celery or carrot sticks (with or without dip), pretzels, graham crackers, crackers with cheese.**

If a child's birthday falls on a school day, we will assign snack to that child on that day. If a child does not attend school on his/her birthday, we will assign snack on the closest school day. Also, if a child's birthday falls during the summer, we will celebrate the "half-birthday" or assign a celebration day near the end of the year with a snack brought by the child. Birthday snacks may be more "special," but please do not send extremely sugary frosted cakes or cupcakes. Commercial cupcakes and candy are not acceptable for school. Muffins, fruit, bar cookies or regular cookies are fine.

# Visiting the School

## Visitor Passes

Everyone visiting the school will be asked to sign in and wear a visitor pass during their visit.

**Regular visitors** to the school are asked to wear photo identification badges provided by the school.

## Classroom Observations

Any parent who is interested in seeing the classroom or extended care in action may schedule an observation time. We schedule observation times to limit the number of outside adults in a classroom at one time and to minimize the disruption to the routine. Visiting parents should sit quietly in the visitor's chair and have as little interaction with the children as possible. Your own child is unlikely to behave normally because of your presence. However, you will be able to get a sense of what your child probably does when you are not there by observing the other children in the classroom.

It is the parent's right to drop in at the school at any time, announced or unannounced, to peek into the classroom and get a feel for what is happening. We think you will see happy, purposeful activity and natural, social interactions.

## Parent Volunteers

Some ways to get involved with your child's class are to volunteer to drive on a field trip, to help with special events in the classroom or to help to clean the classroom. We publish volunteer opportunities in the Weekly Update and through other notices. Ask your child's teacher or other school staff for ideas. Parent volunteers are always welcome!

## Communications

### Calling the School

Please feel free to call the school at 397-7655 with questions, concerns or messages about your child. The office is staffed every school day from 7:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. If your call is not answered, please let the phone ring until you get our voice mail and then leave a message.

### Telephone Conversations

Teachers want to be in close contact with you, but talking to parents during class time takes the teacher's attention away from the children. Please leave a note, or a telephone message, and the teacher will get back to you promptly. The school office is open from 7:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. on school days.

If your child needs to reach you during the day, he or she may call you from the office or the classroom with teacher permission. If you need to leave a message for your child, call

the office. We do not call children from class to the telephone except in emergencies. Please keep cell phones at home. They can be distracting and are not needed by your children during the school day.

### **Bulletin Boards**

Please check with the office if you have something you would like to post.

### **Newsletters**

The Weekly Update is sent out weekly either electronically or via your child's backpack and includes calendar events, updates on fund-raising and classroom activities and field trips and volunteer opportunities.

Each classroom teacher will send a class newsletter or email that are specific to that room's news.

### **Conferences**

We schedule parent/teacher conferences in the fall and spring. These conferences provide the opportunity for parents and teachers to look at each child's development and progress. You will receive notice when conference time is approaching. Call the school to reserve time with your child's teacher.

### **Concerns**

If you have a question, concern or suggestion about your child's relationship to the classroom, the teacher, or other children, please talk to the teacher directly and promptly. If you still have a question or concern, call the Head of School.

Questions or suggestions relating to the Montessori community in general may be directed to any member of the staff. We strive for a community with open communication.

### **Changes**

If there has been some significant change in your child's home life, please let your child's teacher know right away, so that we can be responsive to special needs. We promise to respect the confidentiality of these communications.

### **Referrals: Special Needs**

If you are seeking special services for your child, we would like to confer with you throughout the process.

## **Board Meetings Open to Parents**

The Board of Trustees of the school feels strongly that it is the school's responsibility to keep the parents informed of what is happening at the school. Board meetings, which generally occur at the school on the third Monday of the month, are open to the public.

## School Closing & Delay Information

Decisions about school delays, closings and early dismissals are made for the safety of the majority. Conditions may vary from one area to another. Whenever possible these decisions will be made no later than 6:30 a.m.

The New School's announcement will be posted on these television stations, radio stations, and web sites. The school's recorded telephone message will also give you the information.

**Please keep checking the media listed below until you leave for school; changing conditions could turn a delay into a closing.**

<u>Television Stations</u>	<u>Radio Stations</u>	<u>Web Sites</u>
		Facebook
		<a href="http://www.newschool.net">www.newschool.net</a>
WGAL-TV 8	WHP 580 AM	<a href="http://www.wgal.com">www.wgal.com</a>
FOX-43	WSBA 910 AM	<a href="http://www.newsradio910.com">www.newsradio910.com</a>
WHP TV 21	BOB 94.9 FM	<a href="http://www.cbs21.com">www.cbs21.com</a>
CW-TV 15	KISS 99.3 FM	<a href="http://www.cw15.com">www.cw15.com</a>
WITF-TV	The River 97.3 FM	<a href="http://www.961wsox.com">www.961wsox.com</a>
	WARM 103 FM	<a href="http://www.whp580.com">www.whp580.com</a>
	WITF 89.5 (Harrisburg)	<a href="http://www.river973.com">www.river973.com</a>
	WITF 99.7 (Lancaster)	<a href="http://www.bobradio.com">www.bobradio.com</a>
	WSOX 96.1 FM	<a href="http://www.993kissfm.com">www.993kissfm.com</a>
		<a href="http://www.warm103.com">www.warm103.com</a>
		<a href="http://www.witf.org">www.witf.org</a>

### **DELAYED SCHOOL OPENING**

Public school districts must make a delay decision very early because of dispatching school buses. The New School will make this decision no later than 6:30 a.m. The different types of delays are listed below:

#### **ONE HOUR DELAY**—no morning extended care

<u>Starting Time</u>	<u>Program</u>
CANCELLED	Extended Care
9:20 a.m.	Elementary
9:30 a.m.	Primary
9:45 a.m.	Toddler

- All programs dismiss at their regular times.
- If conditions in your area are too hazardous, please keep your child home.

## **TWO HOUR DELAY**

<b><u>Starting Time</u></b>	<b><u>Program</u></b>
9:00 a.m.	Extended Care (previously scheduled children only; <b>no drop-ins</b> )
10:20 a.m.	Elementary
10:30 a.m.	Primary
10:45 a.m.	Toddler

- All programs dismiss at their regular times.
- If conditions in your area are too hazardous, please keep your child at home.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

- If afternoon conditions are deteriorating, check the media listed above.
- An early dismissal means **Extended Care will close at 4:30 p.m. (You must pick up your child no later than 4:30 p.m.)**
- School districts that announce early dismissal will pick up New School students according to **THEIR** early dismissal policy.
- Parents must call The New School if they do not want their child to ride the bus.

### **SCHOOL CLOSING**

- **In closing the school, The New School considers many factors including the closing of major school districts in our area. However, the ultimate decision to close is made by The New School.**
- You should not assume that The New School is closed because other schools are closed.
- Whenever possible, the decision to close The New School will be made no later than 6:30 a.m. and will be listed on the media noted earlier.
- If morning weather conditions are threatening, continue to check the media until you leave for school.

When a school closing is announced, all programs including Extended Care and the Business Office are closed.

## Extended Care Program

**Extended Care Program--Before and After School** is a Dept. of Public Welfare regulated program which is inspected and reauthorized annually.

1. For primary (3 years and older) and elementary students  
(We can accommodate toddler in extended care after they pass their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.)
2. The **primary program** is for children who:
  - a. nap in the afternoon
  - b. stay for lunch only (11:30 am – 12:30 pm)
  - c. stay for primary extended care  
(11:30 am– 3:00 pm)
  - d. stay after school but are not in the Full-day Program. (11:30 am – 6:00 pm)
  - e. arrive at school between 7:00 am and 8:30 am
3. The **elementary program** is for children who:
  - a. arrive at school between 7:00 am– 8:30 am
  - b. stay after school (3:00 pm – 6:00 pm)

### **CONTRACT SERVICE**

There are two kinds of contracts—Monthly and Yearly. Rates are set for these programs annually.

Parents contract for blocks of time as follows:

Before School Block (7:00 - 8:30)

Before School Block (7:30 - 8:30)

Lunch Only Block (11:30 -12:30)

Mid-day Block (11:30 - 3:00)

Afternoon Block One (3:00 - 4:30)

Afternoon Block Two (3:00 - 6:00)

Customized Contracts, and monthly payment plans are also available. You can pick these up at the front office if you need one. There are primary and elementary contracts to fill in prior to enrolling your child.

### **DROP-IN (non-contract) SERVICE**

Drop-in extended care requires no contract and no long-term commitment. It does require notification as far in advance as possible. You must call the front desk to check for space availability and to register your child. If you schedule drop-in and you no longer need it, a 12-hour cancellation notice is required.

**Anyone with a past due balance will not be allowed to use daycare services until the bill is paid in full.**

### **Meals**

Parents are responsible for supplying a packed lunch for their child, including beverage and eating utensils. In the extended care after-school program, the school will provide a snack. There is also a short rest time after lunch and recess before afternoon work. Please send in a towel/ blanket with name labeled on it and it will be sent home to be laundered.

### **Rest Time for Extended Care Nappers**

A rest time is scheduled daily from 1:00 until 2:30 for children who nap during extended care. Each child must bring a towel. The towel must be labeled and will be sent home to be

laundered. Children who nap may bring special sleep friends such as a small stuffed sleep animal, pillow or a small blanket and a bag to keep them in.

### **Diapers**

Diapers and wipes for children who are not toilet-trained must be supplied by their parents. A supply of diapers and wipes, labeled with the child's name, may be kept in the extended care room.

### **Sun Block**

If your child stays at a time when the playground is very sunny please send in sunblock with child's name on it and a permission slip for staff to help children apply it as needed.

### **Late Pick-up Charges**

When a child is picked up later than his/her scheduled departure time, the additional time will be billed as a late fee. If notice is given by calling the school office before the child's scheduled pick-up time, and there is adequate space, this late fee will be waived and the additional time will be billed at the drop-in rate.

**Any child who is dropped off early at the school, or picked up late at dismissal time will be placed in extended care and parents will be charged accordingly. WHEN A CHILD IS PICKED UP LATER THAN 6:00 P.M., A LATE CHARGE WILL BE APPLIED.**

## Medication Policy and Procedures

Do NOT send any medication, whether prescription or non-prescription, to school with your child. Parents should bring the medication to the school office and give it to a staff member for safekeeping.

We will administer prescription or non-prescription medication to a child only when we have the following: (1) the written order of a physician that indicates that the medication is for that specific child, **and** (2) written parental authorization.

A **Medication Administration and Log Form** must be completed by the parent and staff person before the medication can be administered.

All medicines must have proper labeling.

**For prescription medicines, the medicine container must have the original label and carry the following basic information:**

- \*The name of the child who will be getting the medication
- \*The name of the child's doctor
- \*The name of the medicine
- \*The issue date of the medicine
- \*The dosage
- \*How often to administer the dosage
- \*The method of administration
- \*Storage requirements

**For non-prescription medicines, the medicine container must have the following:**

- \*The name of the child who will be getting the medicine
- \*The name of the child's doctor
- \*Directions for safe use
- \*The expiration date of the medicine
- \*A list of active ingredients
- \*The name and address of the manufacturer

**Remember, only use medicines that come in their original containers.**

Written records of the administration of prescribed medication to children will be kept and will include the time and date of each administration, the name of the staff member administering the medication and the name of the child.

All medicine will be stored in child-resistant safety containers, labeled with the child's name, the name of the drug and the directions for its administration. Any unused medication will be disposed of or returned to the parent(s). *(Note: All prescribed medications must, by law, be dispensed in child resistant packaging unless purchaser specifically requests otherwise. Those who work with children should monitor compliance at the pharmacy so that all medications are safely packaged.)*

# Sick Child Policy

## **Sickness**

Please call the school if your child is sick or will not be at school.

While regular attendance is important, keep your child home if any of these symptoms occur **during the previous day, or night or in the morning:**

**fever**

**vomiting**

**diarrhea**

**fresh cold symptoms**

**a rash**

**runny eyes**

**aching ears**

**any symptom of contagious illness**

If your child develops such symptoms at school, we will call you.

Please let us know if your child has a contagious illness so that other parents can be informed. Your child's identity will be held in confidence.

## **Accidents**

Staff members are trained and equipped to respond to accidents and medical emergencies with first aid and CPR. In case of minor accidents on the school grounds, a staff member will treat your child and notify you at dismissal time. In the case of something more serious, parents will be called immediately and appropriate measures will be taken after consultation with you.

You have signed a form giving permission to obtain emergency medical care for your child. Generally we will contact the parent to transport the child. In an emergency, your child will be taken to the closest hospital by a staff member. In the case of a more serious emergency, 911 services will be contacted and transport your child to the nearest hospital. The child's health form goes along. Time may be saved by meeting you at the hospital.

## **Safety**

Young children are in what we call a sensitive period for movement, and are perfecting the way they move and respond through movement. We work to model a clear and safe movement. We ask the children not to run in the halls ever, and not to step past the sidewalk area during drop-off and pick-up.

## **Sleep**

Children who have had a refreshing night's sleep get more out of daytime hours. Primary children need about 12 hours of regularly scheduled sleep each night, plus whatever nap

time they need. Young children's sensitive period for order includes order in time, and a regular bedtime makes them feel more secure. One approach is to set an "in bed" time, but allow your child to turn off the light when ready.

### **Television**

Television is a health issue. Childhood is, developmentally, a time for movement, activity, acting on the environment and interacting with others. We encourage you to limit television to not more than a half-hour a day for young children. Television offers excellent nature shows and geography specials.

**A STORY:** A child spent a summer in a mountain cabin with only a radio. His mother asked him at the end of the summer, "Which do you like better, radio or television?" He answered quickly, "Radio, definitely. The pictures are much better!"

## **Our Prepared Environment**

The prepared environment is a Montessori concept. It has to do with making and keeping the environment as beautiful, functional, enriching and accessible as possible. Sharing the responsibility of maintaining and improving our building, materials and grounds is a part of our school's philosophical commitment. It is our hope and expectation that all families will join in this community effort.

### **Outdoor Clean-up**

You can sign-up to do the work you enjoy most or are most skillful at. It might include raking leaves, weeding, planting, taking care of flower beds, making tablecloths or refinishing Montessori materials.

### **Parents' Library**

Our parent library contains interesting and informative information about Montessori education and child development. We invite you to use these wonderful resources.

### **Smoking**

The New School of Lancaster is smoke-free, both indoors and outdoors.

### **Building Available for Rental**

If you need a place for a birthday party, meeting or class, The New School building is available. Call the school for details.

## **Emergency Evacuation**

### **GO HOME PROCEDURE**

If the building is compromised, we have asked to use Lancaster Regional Medical Center, 250 College Avenue, as an evacuation site. Students and staff will be accommodated there until students can be sent home or picked up. Additional evacuation sites may be Buchanan Elementary School, 340 South West End Avenue; The First Assembly of God Church, 1025 Columbia Avenue; Degel Israel Synagogue, 1120 Columbia Avenue.

In case of an emergency:

Please **do listen to your radio and/or television**, for information and instructions for transporting students during or after an emergency.

Please **do not telephone the school**. We may need the telephone lines for emergency communications.

Please **do not drive to the school**. Streets must be kept open for emergency vehicles.

### **Please follow these guidelines.**

The school reserves the right to amend and add to these guidelines as needed.

## **THE NEW SCHOOL OF LANCASTER**

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This Parent Handbook is published by the New School of Lancaster for its students, parents, staff and friends. The New School of Lancaster admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies or other school-administered programs.

The New School of Lancaster is affiliated with the American Montessori Society and licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, State Board of Private Academic Schools. The Extended Care Program is licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Public Welfare.

