



New School Montessori

FAMILY HANDBOOK

Table of Contents

MISSION STATEMENT	4
SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION	5
Board of Trustees	5
Role of the Board	5
Role of the Head of School	5
INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE / NON-DISCRIMINATION	6
AMS ACCREDITED SCHOOL	8
PAIS ACCREDITED SCHOOL	8
ACADEMIC PROGRAM	9
The Infant / Toddler Program (6 weeks to 36 months)	9
The Primary Program (2 ½ years to 6 years)	9
Kindergarten Program (5 years to 6 years)	9
Elementary Program	10
Middle School Program	11
Summer Program	11
ADMISSION OF STUDENTS	12
Age Requirements / Class Organization	12
ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES	13
Student drop off and pick up	13
Safety Rules in Parking Area	13
Security	14
HEALTH POLICIES	14
Health forms	14
Emergency forms	14
Regular attendance	14
Absences	14
Medical Release	15
Head Lice	15
Behavior & Discipline	16
Defining Bullying	16
GENERAL POLICIES	18
Outdoor activities	18
Cell Phones, Hand-held games and other Electronic Devices	18
Lost and Found	18

SCHOOL OPERATIONS	19
Email/Text messaging.....	19
Communications, Concerns, Grievances, and Solutions	19
Readiness/Class Placement.....	20
School Cancellations Inclement Weather	20
Earthquake and Disaster Preparedness	21
Evacuation Location.....	21
Force Majeure	21
Teacher In-Service Days	21
Birthdays	21
Celebrating Outside of School	21
Holidays	22
Enrollment Contracts	22
Tuition Payment Obligation.....	22
PARENTS INFORMATION	23
Back-to-School Night	23
Conferences and Reports	23
Parent Education	23
Coffee & Conversation.....	23
In-School Volunteer Opportunities	23
Teacher Appreciation Luncheon	24
Maria’s Table.....	24

MISSION STATEMENT

MARIA MONTESSORI: THE WOMAN, THE EDUCATOR

The Montessori experience is the result of the observations and genius of Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952). Upon graduation as the first woman medical doctor in Italy, Dr. Montessori became interested in the education and training of young children.

Dr. Montessori's observations of children convinced her that each child carries within himself or herself the person he or she will become. Each child's potential is reached through a process of striving, aided by a growing sense of order and self-discipline. Every child must be free to develop at his or her own rate. Montessori designed materials and techniques that allowed her students to work in a way previously considered beyond their capacity. She quickly saw a new and valuable relationship develop within the classroom. No longer was the student dependent on the teacher.

The child was now free to use the environment and other children as tools in his or her learning.

In a Montessori classroom, the teacher, through the study and observation of children, prepares the environment to attract the child. As the child is drawn toward learning, the teacher is free to provide small lessons and observe each child. In turn, each child is free to choose enticing work and repeat it continuously, if desired, until he or she is satisfied. Thus fostered at an early age, concentration and self-discipline become the cornerstones upon which the child's confidence and competence as a learner are built. Montessori children grow by learning to observe, to think and to judge. Natural curiosity and tendencies toward learning become the roots from which the older child evolves and emerges as a socially confident and intellectually disciplined adolescent.

Dr. Montessori died in 1952. Today, after over 100 years of international application, the Montessori Method thrives in many countries. In the United States, more than 3,000 schools have been established since 1957. In addition to the national Montessori certification now available to ensure quality Montessori care and education, the National Independent Schools are preparing to include Montessori schools in their certification process.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION

Board of Trustees

New School Montessori is governed by an independent Board of Trustees. The Board has a variety of committees, some of which are standing committees and some of which are formed on an ad hoc basis to meet the needs of the strategic plan. Board members may serve two terms of three years.

Role of the Board

The Board is charged with ensuring the long-term, mission-based, sustainable success and viability of the School. As such, it is concerned with the needs of the School over several generations. Therefore, its focus is setting the strategic direction of the School. The Board does not manage the day-to-day or tactical operations of the School. The Board hires a Head of School and delegates to the Head day-to-day managerial responsibility for the entire enterprise, within the general parameters and principles that it has established.

Role of the Head of School

The Board delegates execution of the School's mission to the Head of School. The Head of School is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations and activities of the School and supporting the strategic plan. As such, s/he oversees all other staff (teachers and administrators) and volunteers, either indirectly or directly, to achieve the Board's established ends.

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE / NON-DISCRIMINATION

New School Montessori encourages diversity. Our school encompasses children with different race, ethnic, and religious backgrounds as well as different personalities, talents, abilities, and learning styles. In valuing diversity, we embrace and celebrate all cultures, and we accept that there is often more than one correct answer or approach to issues and problems. New School Montessori admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Making Excellence Inclusive is a guiding principle for access, student success, and high-quality learning. NSM continues to strive to integrate diversity, equity, and educational quality into our mission and daily operations.

Through the practice of Inclusive Excellence, we address diversity, inclusion, and equity as critical to the well-being of our learning environment. Making excellence inclusive is an active process through which NSM achieves excellence in learning, teaching, facilitating full emotional development, institutional operations, and engagement in local and global communities.

A high-quality education should be the standard of excellence for all students. The action of making excellence inclusive requires that we uncover inequities in student success, identify effective educational practices, and build such practices organically for sustained institutional change.

NSM continues to develop a broad school community who are willing to engage in the necessary, and sometimes difficult, conversations and decision-making that can lead to transformational change for student learning and achievement.

“The needs of mankind are universal. Our means of meeting them create the richness and diversity of the planet. The Montessori child should come to relish the texture of that diversity.”

– Dr. Maria Montessori

Montessori education, in its essence, is a pedagogy of acceptance, appreciation of individuals, and understanding. We are incredibly fortunate to have the Montessori peace education curriculum to support our work. Dr. Maria Montessori was a true visionary who developed this curriculum (over 100 years ago) and was nominated for two Nobel Peace Prizes.

Our community’s work commitment to Inclusive Excellence is designed to deepen our Montessori practice and make us a

stronger, more vibrant, and inclusive community. Yet even with our unwavering adherence to Dr. Montessori's tenets, we know we must forward the work, taking a stand for equity and justice as models for our children and adolescents. We do this work so that our children have the foundation to move through the world with a deeper understanding of and care for humanity.

Our commitment is that every member of our community experiences a sense of belonging which allows them to engage fully, share their unique intelligence, and take thoughtful risks. The result is a stronger, more dynamic, and vibrant culture. Safety and belonging in our community will provide the foundation to build meaningful relationships, facilitate full emotional development and self-expression, and greater overall achievement. It is the duty of every member of our community to support the work of Inclusive Excellence as we guide our students in becoming responsible and engaged citizens of the world.

Diversity: Individual differences (e.g., personality, prior knowledge, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations)

Inclusion: The active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions

Equity: The creation of opportunities for historically underserved populations to have equal access to and participate in educational programs that are capable of closing the achievement gaps in student success and completion

AMS ACCREDITED SCHOOL

New School Montessori is an AMS (American Montessori Society) Accredited School. Being a Montessori school accredited by AMS ensures that New School Montessori upholds a high standard for the Montessori curriculum and staff members. These standards have been approved by the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA). To be accredited by AMS and NCPSA, our school completed a self-study process, a strategic action plan, and ongoing objective evaluation. We are deeply committed to the students, community, and profession. AMS is a vivacious community of schools, teachers, and families who are determined to make Montessori a strong and positive force in education. More information is available on www.amshq.org.

PAIS ACCREDITED SCHOOL

Since June 2021 NSM is a PAIS accredited school. PAIS stands for Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools. The PAIS accreditation process efficiently ensures compliance to vital standards, while also enabling a school to focus on a plan for its strategic future in such areas as student learning, diversity, equity and inclusion, social and emotional learning, and community engagement. Read more details here <https://www.paispa.org/>

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The Infant / Toddler Program (6 weeks to 36 months)

Our toddler community provides a carefully prepared environment to meet the distinct needs of this age group. The environment is divided into areas that include gross motor movement, fine motor development, practical life, art, sensorial, and language. The exercises of practical life include care of the environment (both indoor and outdoor), care of the self, and refinement of grace and courtesy. The entire environment is designed to allow the children to explore and to develop concentration and coordination. The teachers observe the children each day and monitor their overall development. The primary goal of the program is to create a nurturing and secure environment where young children can do what they do best – explore!

The Primary Program (2 ½ years to 6 years)

We offer a challenging and broad curriculum to our Primary children as we continue the values and principles established in the Toddler program. The children experience a structured environment with a clear routine each day. Within that environment, they have the freedom to choose their own activities and to work at their own pace. During the Montessori morning work time, the children receive lessons both individually and within small groups. The Montessori materials are set out attractively on shelves at the children's height so the children may select what they are drawn to during any given work session. The Montessori educator guides each child through the natural progression of materials giving lessons in the order that ensures appropriate development for the individual. The curriculum areas include language, math, sensorial, cultural, art, science, grace and courtesy, practical life, and peace education.

Kindergarten Program (5 years to 6 years)

Kindergarten is a full-day program in which children are a part of the Primary program during our morning Montessori work period and a small, specialized Kindergarten group in the afternoon. The Kindergarten teacher creates lessons based on the knowledge, interest, and abilities of the Kindergarteners as individuals. The curriculum expands to include units of study, presentations, weather- pattern analysis, community conversation, specialized literacy lessons.

Elementary Program

The elementary program offers a continuum built on the Primary experience. The environment reflects a new stage of development and offers the following:

- Integration of the arts, sciences, geography, history, and language that evokes the native imagination and abstraction of the elementary child
- Presentation of knowledge as part of a large-scale narrative that unfolds the origins of the earth, life, human communities, and modern history, always in the context of the wholeness of life
- Presentation of the formal scientific language of zoology, botany, anthropology, geography, geology, etc., exposing the child to accurate, organized information and respecting the child's intelligence and interests
- The use of timelines, pictures charts, and other visual aids to provide a linguistic and visual overview of the first principles of each discipline
- A mathematics curriculum presented with concrete materials that simultaneously reveal arithmetic, geometric, and algebraic correlation
- Montessori-trained adults who are "enlightened generalists" (teachers who are able to integrate the teaching of all subjects, not as isolated disciplines, but as part of a whole intellectual tradition)
- Emphasis on open-ended research and in-depth study using primary and secondary sources as well as other materials
- Community building through regular class meetings where children help each other solve problems, individually and collectively
- Regular guidance and structure in resolving social conflict in a peaceful and effective manner

As in the Primary level, the Montessori materials are a means to an end. They are intended to evoke the imagination, to aid abstraction, to generate a worldview about the human task and purpose. The child works within a philosophical system asking questions about the origins of the universe, the nature of life, people and their differences, and so on. On a factual basis, interdisciplinary studies combine geological, biological, and anthropological science in the study of natural history and world ecology.

The program is made up of connective narratives that provide an inspiring overview as the organizing, integrating "Great Lessons." Great Lessons span the history of the universe from the big bang theory of the origin of the solar system, earth, and life forms to the emergence of human cultures and the rise of civilization. Aided by impressionistic charts and timelines, the child's study of detail in reference to the Great Lessons leads to awe and respect for the totality of knowledge.

Studies are integrated not only in terms of subject matter but in terms of moral learning as well, resulting in appreciation and respect for life, moral empathy, and a fundamental belief in progress, the contribution of the individual, the universality of the human condition, and the meaning of true justice.

Middle School Program

The Middle School Program provides an innovative educational program in which adolescents can excel academically, engage in meaningful work, acquire leadership skills, and learn to care for themselves, their peers, the environment, and their community.

Montessori philosophy views adolescence as a period of great transformation and extraordinary potential. The primary mission of the adolescent program is to serve the vital needs of adolescents through work that challenges both the mind and the body. This mission is carried out through a supportive teaching staff that creates a prepared learning environment that empowers adolescents to set and exceed their own goals and engage in real community experience and meaningful, noble work; all of these contribute to their sense of purpose and purpose worth.

The New School Montessori Middle School Program provides:

- individualized instruction within small classes
- logically integrated, challenging, and rich curriculum
- development of life and learning skills: self-direction, critical thinking, time-management, collaboration, and personal responsibility
- Development of community: respect, responsibility, democratic problem-solving and interdependence.
- development of critical thinking and creativity
- integration of technology
- a learning environment that helps adolescents to discover their capabilities through meaningful work and real-life problem solving

Summer Program

The summer months bring a change of weather, schedule, pace, and activities for children, aged 6 weeks through age 12. The Summer Program is a nature-based camp with different areas of focus each week. The hours offered during the summer program match those of the regular school year. The children spend more time enjoying outdoor activities as well as arts and crafts projects.

ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

The school has a non-discriminatory admissions policy for children who are between 6 weeks and 8th grade our school's enrollment process is as follows:

1. Contact admissions@newschool.net and arrange a tour and observe the Montessori classroom.
2. Complete an application for admission. A non-refundable application fee of \$50.00 is due with the application. This application and payment of the fee will reserve your place in our wait pool.
3. When a space is available, the Director of Enrollment will contact you to schedule your child's visit to the school.
4. At your child's visit to the school, you will receive an enrollment contract describing which program your child will be enrolled in and what tuition payment options are available. There is a Non-refundable tuition deposit that will be applied to your child's first month of school tuition.

Age Requirements / Class Organization

Infant/Toddler Class: Children 6 weeks to 18 months will be enrolled in the Infant Program. Children 18-36 months may be enrolled in the Toddler Program.

Primary Classrooms: Children must be at least 2 ½ years old. Children 3- 5 years (age in September) are enrolled in the Primary Program.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Student drop off and pick up

Cars enter the one-way driveway and exit following around the half-circle drive. Please pull up in front of the building along the curb line and assist your child, if necessary, and escort them safely to the sidewalk. At this time, you will be met by a staff member to assist your child indoors.

Specific arrival procedures for Toddler and Primary:

- The adult pulls the car to the curb along the playground and exits the vehicle with the child to greet a teacher. Infants should be brought into the doors at Manheim Township location.
- Elementary and MS students will walk to their dedicated entrance

Specific dismissal schedules and procedures:

- Infant/Toddler or Primary Half-day- 11:45 a.m.
- Full-day Primary students and Kindergarten (see specific classroom times)
- Elementary students (see specific classroom times)
- Middle School - 2:30 p.m.

Students will be released to meet you at your vehicle. At that time, you should exit your car and greet your primary or toddler child to assist them.

- It is important that all children be picked up on time. Whether your child attends a half or full-day, a regular schedule is essential. Please call if you are unable to pick-up on time so we can inform your child that you are on your way.

Safety Rules in Parking Area

If your child will be leaving school with any person other than the regular pick-up person, please let us know. If the person is not listed on your authorized drivers form, **we must have an email with the driver's name and your permission.** If the school staff does not know the individual picking up the child, they will be asked for photo identification. Please remind the pick-up person about departure times! (11:45 am for half-day and between 2:30-6:00 pm for full-day!).

Security

Front entry doors are locked at all times of the day. An intercom system is in place to monitor people entering and exiting the school. Please ring the intercom bell at the front door and wait for a staff member to assist you. Manheim Township campus has a dedicated RING doorbell for parents.

HEALTH POLICIES

Health forms

Are required for new students and students enrolled in our Primary program annually and 7th grade. Medical forms may be uploaded to Transparent Classroom or emailed to frontdesk@newschool.net

Emergency forms

Are required to be filled out before the first day of school and may be uploaded to Transparent Classroom or emailed to frontdesk@newschool.net

Regular attendance

Attendance is important for the continuity of the child's development, but parents should keep their children home for a rash, discharge from eyes, ears or nose, or any other signs of illness. **A child who has vomited, diarrhea, or run a fever in the last 24 hours should not come to school. Students should not return to school until 24 hours after a fever has resolved without fever-reducing medication**

Absences

Please notify the school via email to frontdesk@newschool.net when your child will be absent for any reason. To protect all children attending school, anyone with visible symptoms of what appears to be a contagious disease will be sent home. In the case of a chronic ailment, it is necessary to obtain a doctor's statement establishing the non-contagious nature of the ailment. Any other important information regarding the child's health - special need, allergies, etc. -- should also be submitted in writing to the office.

Some children may need to receive medication at school for acute, temporary, or chronic health problems. Our policy, including over-the-counter medication as well as prescription medication, is as follows. Before any medication may be administered to a pupil during school hours, the school office must receive a written request from the parent/guardian

giving permission for the administration of such medication accompanied by a written order of the prescribing physician including the dosage, the time at which or the special circumstances under which the medication shall be administered, the length of the period for which the medication is prescribed, and the possible side effects of the medication. The written request from the parent/guardian and the order from the physician shall be kept on file. For your convenience, [use this form](#) which consolidates the physician order and parental permission into one form.

Minor accidents at school are treated promptly by the staff. In cases of emergency, the school will try to reach a parent by telephone, then the child's physician, or if necessary, the child will be taken to the LGH Emergency Room. It is essential that our record of your address and telephone numbers, both home and business, be kept up-to-date. We ask each parent to fill out a Student Information and Emergency Contact Form in Transparent Classroom.

Medical Release

Each parent(s), when filling out the student enrollment agreement, signed a medical release. This release gives us the authority to have the child treated in an extreme emergency. We will only use the medical release to obtain treatment for the child if contact with parents, guardian, or other numbers listed on the application form cannot be reached. Please maintain accurate contact numbers in Transparent Classroom.

Head Lice

While not a communicable disease, the discovery of head lice does necessitate an intervention response and careful management by both families and staff.

- A child who is initially discovered to have lice and/or nits (unhatched egg casings) will be sent home immediately to receive treatment.
- After receiving treatment, the child is invited to return to school. Before rejoining classmates, the student's scalp must be inspected by a staff member to ensure that no evidence of living insects is present.
- We recognize that evidence of lice may still be present even after successful treatment. However, New School Montessori reserves the right to send a student home if there is reason to believe that additional treatment is needed.

Families need to be aware that lice have become increasingly resistant to treatment; vigilant checking of your child's hair and scalp for two or more weeks after treatment is essential.

Families are required to inform the school upon finding evidence of lice in the family—even if a non-enrolled sibling is determined to have lice. We will protect the confidentiality of your child and family.

Behavior & Discipline

All discipline is positive and focused on natural behavioral redirection. The students are introduced to consistent ground rules. These rules are to maintain order for the safety and respect of others in both the indoor and outdoor environments.

Here is how we apply the ground rules:

- If a child does not follow a ground rule he/she is reminded by the teacher of the rule in a positive, non-threatening way. For example, “We *walk* inside our school” rather than “Don’t run!”
- If the child continues not to follow the rule after a reminder, they will be redirected by the teacher to an appropriate activity to help focus his/her energy in a purposeful manner.
- If the child continues unacceptable behavior after a reminder and redirection, they will be invited to be with the teacher within the environment, for a period of time.
- If the child’s behavior endangers other children’s safety, the child will be removed from the environment,

Defining Bullying

Classic bullying behavior occurs when one person is exposed, repeatedly, and over time, to the negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, with a noted power differential. The target of the behavior is chosen, specifically due to the real or perceived power imbalance in the relationship rather than due to ordinary social conflict.

Bullying behavior is misbehavior and can be manifested in many forms, both passively and overtly. Examples of passive bullying behavior are: telling lies, spreading false rumors, covert threatening, etc. Examples of overt bullying behavior are: hitting, saying hurtful things, deliberately excluding, teasing, etc. It is important to note that while these passive and overt behaviors are also very common, and developmentally appropriate, misbehaviors that elementary children exhibit as they learn to navigate social dynamics. The identifying component in the bully/victim relationship is rooted in the power imbalance.

It is important to narrow the definition of bullying because of the power differential component involved in the behavior. Specific steps, requiring direct intervention, are used to address the power differential effectively when true bullying behavior occurs. These steps are different than steps used to address normal misbehavior or social conflicts. If too broad a definition for bullying is used, then there is a danger of over or under reacting to true bullying behavior and overreacting to normal misbehavior. Under reacting can create an environment of permissiveness, and overreacting can create an environment of repression; both of which lead to increased misbehavior and social conflict.

Sample Plan for Bullying Behavior

1. Increased supervision by adults
2. Meeting with parents of both children, outlining classroom plan and support needed from home.
3. Separation of students (direct or indirect)
4. Individualized support plan for child exhibiting victim behavior that includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. accessing immediate adult support
 - b. development of communication and assertiveness skills
 - c. establishment of a buddy system
 - d. adult support in conflict resolution
 - e. class meetings
5. Individualized support plan for child exhibiting bullying behavior
 - a. establishment of clear expectations for behavior and logical consequences
 - b. development of communication skills in resolving conflict and receiving peer messages
 - c. development of needed social skills for making connections
 - d. support and redirection to positive power and social responsibility
 - e. class meetings

Sources:

1. <http://www.education.com/reference/article/definitions-characteristics-bullying/>
2. http://www.pbis.org/pbis_resource_detail_page.aspx?PBIS_ResourceID=785
3. <http://www.stopbullying.gov/respond/support-kids-involved/index.html>
4. <http://www.positivediscipline.org/resources/Documents/PDSbrchr-8-06.pdf>

GENERAL POLICIES

Outdoor activities

Outdoor activities are a major aspect of our Montessori program. We plan for outside play each day, and the length of time we will remain outside is weather permitting. Please dress your child for seasonal temperatures. Due to unpredictable weather, we request that your child dress in layers on cool mornings in case the day gets warmer he/she can take off a layer (sweaters, long-sleeved shirts, long pants over tights, etc.) Sneakers are vital to your child's participation in outdoor activities and PE. Snow boots, hats, and mittens are essential during the cold months and wet/muddy seasons.

Please label ALL CLOTHING: jackets, shirts, pants, socks, underwear, hats, mittens, scarves, and boots). Once the clothing item has left the child's cubby, it is difficult for the staff to know who the items belong to!

Cell Phones, Hand-held games and other Electronic Devices

Students are not permitted to use cell phones or hand-held electronic games during the school day or while in FLEX unless a specific exception is made for learning purposes. Students may use school phones with adult permission only.

Lost and Found

Missing items may be retrieved from the Lost and Found, located in the hallway next to the administrative offices. At periodic times during the school year, all remaining lost and found items are displayed; those items that are not claimed will be donated.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS

Email/Text messaging

Email/text messaging is often the fastest way to communicate a simple message. In the event of an unexpected weather closing or an emergency during the school day we will use email and text messages to communicate with parents.

Additionally, NSM will send a weekly newsletter typically arriving Sunday morning.

Communications, Concerns, Grievances, and Solutions

In the interest of open and timely communication, the following procedure has been created to be used in the event that concerns or grievances should arise within the school community. For answers to your questions and solutions for your concerns, please refer to the following chart for direction:

For Matters Related To	First Contact
Your child's progress, classroom activities, schedules, procedures, parent conferences, observation of your child	Classroom teacher
Montessori Education, Curriculum	Classroom teacher or Robyn Stearne, Head of School
Carpool, busing, school schedules, classroom observation	Sheila Harrison
Student/Billing accounts	Nilmini Appadurai
Financial Aid	Day Waters
School calendar, directory, student records, Transparent Classroom	Carina Zingl
Grants, Public Relations and Communications	Robyn Stearne
Early Birds/Sparrows/Flex	Johanna Young
Facilities	Day Waters

If more help is needed, resolution should follow these steps:

- *If you have questions regarding your child, ask the teacher. Please leave a message or email your child’s teacher at school. Teachers are your first resource to answer your questions and resolve your concerns.*
- *If the communication with the teacher does not resolve the issue, please address your question to the Head of School.*
- *If you have questions or concerns regarding a member of the faculty or staff, please contact the Head of School.*
- *Other concerns may be addressed in writing to the Board President.*

We strive to provide a healthy, safe school experience for all students. When areas of concern are addressed quickly, collaboratively, and with care, we will be able to support your student and your family in developing appropriate solutions.

Readiness/Class Placement

Determination of a child’s “readiness” for moving-up will be made by their classroom teacher, based upon her observations of the child throughout the school year. A child will “move-up” only after it has been deemed by the teacher to be developmentally appropriate. In every classroom, we strive to create a diversified, collaborative community of learners. For this to occur, many factors must be considered in the placement of students who are moving from one level to the next, Toddler to Primary, Primary to Elementary and Elementary to Middle School. Included among them are the following:

- Individual student learning styles, temperament, maturity, independence, and ability to make work choices and complete work
- Classroom profiles (number of returning students, number of special needs)
- Friends and siblings already in the classrooms (or in the group of transitioning students)

Classroom placement is determined by a committee made up of the Head of School, Director of Enrollment, as well teachers and the School Psychologist. Placement decisions are made with input from the sending and receiving teachers, as well as from the student’s parents. ***All parent concerns and requests must be sent to the Director of Enrollment in writing, at the time of contract renewal, for consideration in this process.*** While all such requests will be considered, the School cannot guarantee that they will be honored, due to the complexity of the placement process.

School Cancellations Inclement Weather

Parents will be notified via email or text if the school will be closed or there is a change in school hours. Parental discretion should be employed when deciding if it is safe to drive to school.

Earthquake and Disaster Preparedness

New School Montessori is prepared for any disaster, and the staff is prepared to make prompt and responsible decisions in an emergency situation.

Evacuation Location

If evacuation due to natural disaster is necessary, we will reunite parents and students at the **Lancaster First Assembly of God at 1025 Columbia Ave.**

Force Majeure

The School's duties and obligations to students may be suspended immediately and without notice if the School is closed because of a force majeure event including, but not limited to, fire, acts of God, weather, war, governmental action, terrorism, threat of infectious disease, epidemic, pandemic, or any other event beyond the School's control. If such an event occurs, the School's duties and obligations to students may be suspended or postponed until such time as the School determines, in its sole discretion that it may safely reopen. In the event that the School cannot reopen due to an event under this clause, the School is under no obligation to refund any portion of the tuition paid. Further, the School has discretion to modify its curriculum, schedules, length of school year, means of learning, teaching methods, and use of distance learning, and any such changes do not excuse payment obligations under the Contract, including future payment obligations.

Teacher In-Service Days

In order to ensure that the school faculty remain abreast of current developments in the field of education, the school administration provides them with "In-Service Days," as designated on the school calendar, during which they participate in a variety of professional development activities. The School will be closed on these days.

Birthdays

Our birthday celebration is very special and unique to Montessori. Please ask your classroom teacher prior to the celebration.

Celebrating Outside of School

If you are planning a birthday party or other special events for your child and you plan to invite Montessori school children, please arrange to have the children brought to the party from their *own* homes and not from school. We request this in order to prevent hurt feelings when some children are left behind because they were not included. Also, please mail party invitations - do not use the school envelope or have your child distribute them at school. Children should not return to school after such events.

Holidays

We celebrate holidays in special ways. Our holiday celebrations usually include the history of the holiday and any cultural information as well as a special snack.

Enrollment Contracts

In order for the School to effectively prepare for each new school year, the School must have an accurate indication of the number of students who will be enrolled. Qualified teachers must be hired, classrooms configured, and the facility prepared in order for the School to be ready for students in September.

Accordingly, the School begins its enrollment procedure during the month of January. Re-enrolling students and their siblings have priority. After March 1st, the school will accept qualified enrollment contracts from other applicants.

Applications are accepted and enrollment decisions are made by the School without regard to race, color, ethnic origin, ancestry, disability, limited English proficiency, or religion.

Tuition Payment Obligation

An enrollment contract constitutes a legally binding agreement between parties, and the parent's obligation to pay the tuition in accordance with the terms of the contract is absolute. There are three Payment Plans offered in the enrollment contract. A \$50 administrative fee will be charged for changes in the payment plan after initial enrollment. In the event that the parents of a student fail to honor their tuition payment obligation in a timely manner, the student may (at the sole discretion of the School) be suspended from the School during the period while the non-payment continues. The School may also refuse re-enrollment and/or to release transcripts of the student's records. A late fee will be assessed in the amount of \$50 plus interest on all unpaid sums at the rate of 1.5% per month. Late fees are assessed on the tenth day of every month.

PARENTS INFORMATION

Back-to-School Night

Back-to-School Night is held during the first few weeks of school; the goal of Back-to-School Night is for parents and guardians to meet their children's teachers, learn about plans for the year ahead.

Conferences and Reports

Twice a year, in the fall and spring, there are scheduled conference days so that classroom and specialist teachers can meet with parents and guardians to discuss their children's progress. There is no school for students on Conference Days. First and Second Semester Report Cards are published at the end of the two semesters (late January and late June). All reports contain narrative summaries of students' areas of growth and areas for development. Assessments reflect students' levels of growth and mastery and are based on performance standards faculty members consider relevant. A great deal of informal reporting occurs during the school year by phone, personal notes, and in-person conversations. Open communication between home and school is welcomed and encouraged!

Parent Education

New School Montessori offers multiple parent education opportunities for parents each year. Parents will be notified about Parent Education meetings via weekly newsletter. We also have an extensive library for other educational options and information. Please inquire about borrowing any parenting books from the school office.

Coffee & Conversation

The administration will host coffee meetings as a chance to build community and provide some information to the parents about different aspects of Montessori education. [The format of these meetings is to be determined.](#)

In-School Volunteer Opportunities

We look forward to offering these opportunities in 2022.

Parents are welcome to be involved in school activities or to contribute support with school events. All sign-up activities are voluntary. [We look forward to the return of field trips in 2022.](#)

Field Trip Helpers: Parents accompany students and teachers on field trips.

Sharing Expertise: It is encouraged for parents to share information or talents regarding their professions, musical abilities, gardening, travel experiences, and cultural backgrounds in the classroom. Please make arrangements in advance with the teachers.

Teacher Appreciation Luncheon

NSFA sponsored luncheon. This is a greatly appreciated break for the staff and a wonderful way to show our support for their terrific work throughout the year.

Maria's Table

The school holds this annual fundraiser in late winter or early spring. It is a beloved event for parents and teachers where items are auctioned while socializing with other parents and community supporter.