

# Montessori Academy Edison Lakes Family Handbook and Directory



## **MONTESSORI ACADEMY** EDISON LAKES

530 East Day Road, Mishawaka, IN 46545

Phone: (574) 256-5313

Fax: (574) 256-5493

[www.tma-el.org](http://www.tma-el.org)

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

The names and addresses contained herein are the proprietary and confidential information of Montessori Academy and are being provided solely for noncommercial use by the parents and faculty of the school. Use of this document or of the information contained herein to solicit business or espouse a cause and any reproductions of this document or of the information contained herein without the prior written consent of the Board of Trustees of the Montessori Academy at Edison Lakes is expressly prohibited.

© 2017 The Montessori Academy at Edison Lakes

THE MONTESSORI ACADEMY AT EDISON LAKES, INC. is a not-for-profit,  
non-sectarian Indiana Corporation.



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Statement of Mission	5
Statement of Core Values	5
Statement of Philosophy	5
Accreditation	5
History of the School	6
Portrait of a Graduate	7
 <i>SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</i>	
Admission Policy Statement	9
Application	9
Arrival and Dismissal	9
Late Arrival and Tardiness	9
Attendance	10
Absences	10
Cell Phone and Other Personal Electronic Use	10
Communication and Problem Resolution	11
Principles	11
Communications	11
How to Communicate With	12
Recommended Steps for Resolution	12
Issues Resolution Committee	12
Computer and Internet Use Policy	13
General	13
Internet	13
Legal Use	13
Ethical Use	13
Cooperative Use	13
Unacceptable Uses	13
Sanctions	14
Limitation on Montessori Academy's Liability	15
Discipline Policy	15
Conduct Standards and Campus Restrictions	16
Enrollment Policy	17
Class Placement	17
Toddler and Early Childhood	17
Elementary and Junior High	17
Individual and Special Needs Enrollment	17
Multi-Age Grouping	18
Guest Pass Procedure	18
Health and Safety	18
Accidents and/or Emergencies	18
Communicable Diseases	18
Head Lice	18
Forms	19
Illness	20
Medication	20
Late Pick-Up	20
Recess	21

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

Fire Safety Plan	20
Storm Drills	20
Lockdown/Safety Drills	20
Student Records	21
Tuition Payments	21
Tuition Discounts	22
Scholarships	22
Weather Related School Closing Information	22
Withdrawal Policy	23

### *SCHOOL ORGANIZATION*

Board of Trustees	24
Board Mission Statement	24
Annual Report	24
School Advancement	24
Annual Giving	24
Windfall Auction	25
Endowment	25
Volunteerism and Participation	25
Parent Network	25
School Administration	26
The Montessori Teacher Academy	26
The South Bend Center for the Homeless Classroom	26

### *EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION*

Educational Divisions	27
Toddler and Early Childhood	27
Elementary	27
Junior High	28
Educational Division Supplements	28
Co-Curricular Classes	28
Communication: Parent and Teacher	29
Conferences: Parent and Teacher	29
Educational Support Systems	29
Orientation	30
Teacher/Parent Partnership	30
Montessori Academy Library	30
Routine Procedures	31
Clothing	31
Field Trips and Enrichment	31
Holiday Traditions	31
Homework	32
Observation	32
School Lunch Program	32
Staff In-Service Days	33

WHO TO ASK	34
------------	----

STAFF COMMUNICATION INFORMATION	36
---------------------------------	----

## **STATEMENT OF MISSION**

The Montessori Academy at Edison Lakes is true to the teachings of Dr. Maria Montessori. We create an environment that cultivates the child's intellect, instills responsibility, fosters respect, and inspires care for the community.

## **CORE VALUES**

- Academic Excellence
- Diversity
- Integrity
- Independence
- Leadership
- Gracious Community

## **STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

### ***Montessori—An Education For Life!!***

Montessori Academy acknowledges the impact of critical learning periods on developing social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and moral competencies. The influence of a Montessori education respects the uniqueness of each person and preserves and nurtures an innate capacity to reach full potential as contributing world citizens. The essence of Dr. Montessori's method is to allow for the development of natural human characteristics and to help children as they adapt to their culture. The curriculum is grounded in the universal laws of human development that include movement, language, order, work, self-discipline, exploration, abstract thinking, imagination and creativity. A major goal of the Montessori program is to help children think for themselves and to be actively involved in the educational process. This is accomplished through activities directed by Montessori-certified professionals working in concert with students and their families. Our curriculum provides for concept development and skill acquisitions in prepared classrooms with a focus on learning-by-doing. Our methods enable students to develop respect for individual differences as they engage in purposeful, collaborative learning. Our students use inner discipline, concentration, and task completion for lifelong critical thinking and discovery.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Montessori Academy is dually accredited by the American Montessori Society and the Independent School Association of the Central States (ISACS). Montessori Academy adheres to the American Montessori Society's Code of Ethics and ISACS guidelines for independent schools.

## **HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL**

Montessori Academy, in affiliation with the American Montessori Society, began operations under the name Little Flower Montessori in the fall of 1969. The purpose of the school was to offer an outstanding Montessori classroom experience to as many children as possible, while maintaining itself on a self-sufficient, tuition-supported basis. In March of 1970, the school was formalized into a not-for-profit corporation with governing responsibility resting on a Board of Trustees. The school's enrollment increased substantially, necessitating several relocations over the next several years. In 1978 the school became the second in the United States—out of hundreds of affiliated schools—to achieve the high rank of accreditation status with the American Montessori Society.

A gift of property at 15767 Day Road in Mishawaka was made to the school by Mr. and Mrs. Don Cressy. In 1980 the new Early Childhood building on Day Road was dedicated by the Reverend Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C., President of the University of Notre Dame. In the fall of 1982, an Elementary Division opened in downtown South Bend. In 1985, after three years of operation in two different locations, the school purchased its own building at 624 North Notre Dame Avenue, South Bend. In 1987 Mr. and Mrs. Don Cressy donated the property adjacent to the Early Childhood building on Day Road so that it could be used for a permanent elementary facility. A fundraising campaign was organized and ground was broken in October of 1988 for the new elementary facility. In the fall of 1988, a Junior High Division was opened at the Notre Dame Avenue site, making toddlers through age fourteen the population served by the school. On August 1, 1989, the school became officially known as “The Montessori Academy at Edison Lakes.” The newly constructed Elementary/Junior High facility was dedicated as the second building on the Montessori campus, and in the fall of 1989, the school year began with all programs consolidated on Day Road in the Edison Lakes complex. In 1990, the Main building (Elementary/Junior High) received a distinguished design award from the Indiana Society of Architects.

In 1989, The Montessori Academy and Indiana University at South Bend collaborated to develop the Montessori Teacher Academy, which offers Montessori Early Childhood teacher training and certification. The Montessori Academy was reaccredited in 1990 by The American Montessori Society at its annual meeting in Washington. In October of the same year, the Accreditation Council for Childhood Education Specialist Schools (ACCESS) recommended the Montessori Teacher Academy for accreditation. The Accreditation Council granted accreditation status to the Montessori Teacher Academy in April 1991 for Childhood Education Specialist Schools. The Teacher Academy held its inaugural session in June 1991. In 1992 the Montessori Teacher Academy was reaccredited by the international organization known as Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE, formerly known as ACCESS).

Montessori Academy celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1994. In commemoration of this event, the Cressy Foundation, the South Bend Center for the Homeless and Montessori Academy formed a partnership to operate an Early Childhood classroom at the Center for the Homeless in South Bend, Indiana.

In April of 1995, two classrooms and a lower level were added to the Early Childhood building, allowing for a total of six classrooms and a Music room. A Computer Lab was then installed in the former Music room in the Elementary/Junior High building. The 1997-1998 school year was a year of continued growth at Montessori Academy. Montessori Academy was annexed into the

city of Mishawaka during the summer of 1997. Ground was broken for a major expansion to the Elementary/Junior High building. A wing containing a full-sized gymnasium/auditorium, Junior High classroom and presentation room, and Art Room was opened in May of 1998. In September 1999, Montessori Academy's website went online. In honor of Montessori Academy's 30th Anniversary, the First Annual Fall Frolic was held in October 1999. All proceeds from the Fall Frolic Race benefit the Montessori Classroom at the Center for the Homeless. In 2000, our classroom at the Center for the Homeless moved into its newly created and Montessori-customized space when the Center for the Homeless completed construction of its expansion.

In 1996, Montessori Academy was accredited for the first time by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS) and reaccredited by the American Montessori Society (AMS). In the 2003-2004 school year, Montessori Academy again received AMS and ISACS dual accreditation. Montessori Academy was then the only dually accredited Montessori school in Indiana. In 2010, Montessori Academy was reaccredited by AMS and ISACS.

### **PORTRAIT OF OUR GRADUATES**

- Confident, independent, and intrinsically motivated
- Respectful, responsible, and socially collaborative
- Critical, creative, and abstract thinkers
- Academic achievers who manage time and work efficiently
- Compassionate leaders who are prepared for future success

*They have a passion for learning, cultural awareness, and a commitment to service.*



## ***SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES***

### **ADMISSION POLICY STATEMENT**

(Nondiscriminatory Policy)

The Montessori Academy at Edison Lakes welcomes all students regardless of race, religion, national origin, or gender.

### **APPLICATION**

Applications for enrollment are accepted throughout the year. The non-refundable application fee of \$75.00 places the child in a waiting pool.

- Applicants are scheduled for interviews with an appropriate age level teacher when there is an opening, or during the Spring Enrollment period.
- Interviews and previous school records for new students applying to Elementary through Junior High are required.

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Students enrolled in the Before Care program may arrive before 8:20 and proceed to those areas. Students left at school prior to arrival and who are not enrolled in Before Care are subject to a fee equivalent to the late pick up fee.

Arrival and dismissal are adult-supervised. Parents dropping off and picking up Early Childhood or Lower Elementary students should pull up against the curb. Children are not allowed to walk between parked cars or be let out onto the drive. Upper Elementary and Junior High parents will use the right lane of the west drive, pulling up to the west gym doors and then circling around the prairie to exit.

Please do not use cell phones during arrival or dismissal. Only move your car when children are properly buckled. Please be patient as it may take a little longer to enter, exit or buckle for some children, especially those with car seats or multiple children in a car.

Any child walking to and from school is required to have a signed permission slip in order to be dismissed from school.

#### **Late Arrival and Tardiness**

Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. need to check in at the main office. EC late-arrivals will be escorted to the EC building on the half hour. Parents of EC children arriving late must wait at the main office with their child until child is escorted to the EC building. Please do not knock on classroom doors for entrance. Teachers need to focus attention on the beginning morning responsibilities. The administrative staff will escort your child to class so as to minimize disruptions.

Excessive tardiness can impact the child's relationships with peers and interfere with morning adjustments or lessons. Please help your child have a positive beginning each day by coming to school on time.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Educational materials are presented through hands-on activities and the active involvement of students and teachers in the learning process. Regular attendance is vital to the child's learning process. Although every effort will be made to provide make-up work, missed class time can never be recaptured. Parents need to notify teachers if a student will miss any class time.

### **Absences**

An absence from class is disruptive for the learning process of your child. In addition, the child may miss group lessons or projects with classmates, particularly at the Elementary and Junior High levels. Casual absences give your child a message that school responsibilities may not be important.

Excused absences are illness, family emergency, religious observations or weather travel restrictions.

Parents should make an effort to schedule vacations during school holidays. An absence from class disrupts the teaching and learning process for your child, his peers in class, and the faculty.

Absences for family vacations or other plans may be excused with approval from the Head of School and no less than one-week advance notice to the teacher. The elementary and junior high students must complete all work provided for him/her during the absence. Parents are responsible for assuring that the work has been completed and submitted upon return from the absence.

In accordance with Indiana State Law Section 18IC 20-33-2-11, any student who has accumulated ten (10) days of absences for one (1) school year, which are either trancies, unexcused absences and/or absences without parental notification, will be reported to the St. Joseph County Prosecutor's Office as a "habitually truant and/or unexcused absent student."

## **CELL PHONE AND OTHER PERSONAL ELECTRONIC USE**

Elementary students may not have or use cell phones or other personal electronic equipment at school or any school sponsored activity or event. Making or receiving calls or text messages or other communication via cell phones or any electronic device is not permitted on school premises or on field trips or at camp. Student use of cell phone cameras is not permitted during school or school sponsored events, activities or class outings. Montessori Academy Edison Lakes is not responsible for damage to or the loss of cell phones or other personal electronic equipment (including the possibility of equipment being stolen). The school will confiscate the cell phone or electronic device if a student fails to comply with the policy.

Junior High students who identify *in writing* the need for a cell phone that will be *used off school premises* may keep the cell phone in their lockers during school. Cell phones must be turned off and cannot be in vibrate or silent mode. Making or receiving calls or text messages or other communication via cell phones or any electronic device is not permitted on school premises. The use of personal electronic devices on school trips is determined by the teacher. Respectful use is

required. The cell phone camera policy is included in the Junior High computer contract agreement. Montessori Academy at Edison Lakes is not responsible for damage to or the loss of cell phones or other personal electronic equipment (including the possibility of equipment being stolen). The school will confiscate the cell phone or electronic device if a student fails to comply with the policy.

All Elementary and Junior High families will be required to review, sign and abide by the policies described in the *Communication Agreement for use of Cell Phones, Electronic Devices and Social Networks* form.

## **COMMUNICATION AND PROBLEM RESOLUTION**

This policy is designed to clarify and facilitate communication and problem resolution procedures at Montessori Academy Edison Lakes.

### **Principles**

One of the key principles of a Montessori education and school is community responsibility. What this means in this context is that Montessori Academy community members are encouraged to communicate and address issues of concern as directly as possible. Teachers and administrators take responsibility for their actions and make adjustments as the Montessori philosophy and common sense dictate. Similarly, parents should step in and address concerns as they see them, and as a first step, talk to the person who has responsibility for the specific issue at hand. Parents, teachers, and administrators should work to resolve issues in a spirit of trust, knowing that, in the end, we all want the best education for our children and students.

This trust and spirit mean that communication and resolution should first take place at the lowest and most direct level. Parents should always feel comfortable talking to teachers, and vice versa.

As Montessori Academy exists to serve its students and their families, much of what follows is directed at the concerns of, and procedures for, the families.

### **Communications**

Montessori Academy has numerous formal and informal communication mechanisms at all levels. The teachers and administrators communicate via email bulletins, notes in students' work folders, occasional telephone calls or emails with parents, regular conferences, and so forth. Montessori Academy also holds a number of events each year that allow and encourage plenty of contact between faculty, administrators, parents, and often students. These include social events, the parent-teacher education events, student performances, sporting events and fundraising events.

### **How to communicate with:**

- Teachers: To get in touch with your child(ren)'s teacher(s), you may email them, call to arrange a conversation and/or call or text them after class hours.
- Division Chairs: Division chairs may be contacted through the same means.
- Head of School: the Head of School also may be contacted by email or telephone.
- A list of teacher's, division chair's and administrative staff email addresses and extensions may be found on page 35.

### **Recommended Steps for Resolution**

Because we are a learning community of students, parents, teachers and administrators we believe in resolving issues of concern as they arise. Sometimes such issues require facilitated intervention in order to obtain resolution. The level of contact should proceed according to the following order of authority:

- Teacher
- Division Chair
- Head of School
- Issues Resolution Committee

If, after the first level, you have not reached a mutually satisfactory agreement in addressing the issue at hand, please initiate a discussion with the next level, as specified above, using the communication mechanisms in the previous section

If the situation justifies proceeding to the next level, those involved in the previous discussion should write down a list of the points they made and a list of the points made by the other party, for forwarding to the next level. If the situation remains unresolved, all parties should write down their inventories of points and forward them to the next level.

If the issue cannot be resolved in discussion with the Head of School, the final stage of resolution is for the Board of Trustees to appoint a Resolution Committee. This committee will receive all written materials resulting from the proceedings at the lower levels of resolution and will convene in entirety to hear all the points that all sides involved wish to make. Every attempt will be made to obtain resolution as quickly as possible, but this priority does not preempt the need to gather all the information needed to make the best decisions for our children and students. The decision of the Issues Resolution Committee is the final decision made by the school.

### **Issues Resolution Committee**

This committee shall be composed of two (2) trustees, one (1) faculty member, and two (2) parents, none of whom may be connected directly with the issue at hand. The composition of this committee will rotate such that no member is allowed to serve on any two consecutive impaneling of this committee. The Head of School shall serve on the committee unless the issue or conflict directly pertains to the Head of School. In this case, an administrative director or education director shall be appointed to the committee. Persons who have any perceived potential conflict of interest with the matter may not serve on the committee.

NOTES: Please note that the Board is tasked with specific long range tasks: recruiting, fundraising, policymaking, and so forth. Board members may be approached as friends and, as friends, asked for advice. But please do not make specific appeals to individual board members. This is asking Board members to be unprofessional. Board actions must reflect the entire Board. Board members are charged with guarding and promoting the interests of the entire school.

## **COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY**

The Montessori Academy's community-wide policy for the management of computer networks and stand-alone computers owned by or operated within the Montessori Academy community is as follows:

### **General**

Computer use has become an integral part of the Montessori Academy community. Procedures for gaining access to and making optimum use of these resources are currently available to Montessori Academy students. Use of the Montessori Academy computer system and use of the Internet shall be consistent with school policies and the mission of the school.

### **Internet**

Students are expected to know and adhere to the school policies regarding the acceptable use of the internet. The use of the Montessori Academy system and access to use of the internet is a privilege, not a right. In order to access the system, a student must have a Student Use of Electronic Information, Services and Networks Agreement on file.

### **Legal Use**

Computing resources may only be used for legal purposes by the school community.

### **Ethical Use**

Computing resources should be used in accordance with the ethical standards of Montessori Academy.

### **Cooperative Use**

Montessori Academy endorses the practice of cooperative computing. It includes:

- Regular deletion of unneeded files from shared computing resources.
- Refraining from use of sounds and visuals which might be disruptive to others.
- Use of any computing resource in a responsible manner.

### **Social Network Use**

Please be aware that Montessori Academy Edison Lakes considers discretion and prudent judgment in social networking activities to be a serious matter with regard to protecting the school, its students, and employees.

### **Unacceptable Uses**

- Users will not use the school system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post or distribute pornographic or obscene material.

- Users will not use the school system to transmit or receive obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful language.
- Users will not use the school system to access, review, upload download, store, print, post or distribute materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people.
- The use of external devices with Montessori Academy computers is restricted to devices that hold only Montessori Academy related materials and cannot be used to share or store other materials or information.
- Users will not use the school system to knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization, nor to bully or harass another person.
- Users will not use the school system to vandalize, damage or disable the property of another person or organization.
- Users will not use the school system to post private information about another person or to post personal contact information about themselves or other persons.
- Users will not use the school system to try to gain unauthorized access to school information, network system or any other system.
- Engagement in online peer-to-peer file sharing, chat rooms, games and instant messenger services is prohibited.
- User will not connect personal devices to the Montessori Academy computers or network systems.
- Users, including alumni or non-Montessori Academy students, are prohibited from use of the Montessori Academy name, logo, or images in any posting to the internet unless such use is explicitly authorized in writing by the Head of School. Unauthorized use may constitute trademark and/or copyright infringement and Montessori Academy may prosecute such infringement to the full extent of the law.
- Users will not use the school system for any purpose other than those purposes explicitly permitted by Montessori Academy.
- Users will not impersonate anyone online and/or create an online profile for anyone but themselves.
- Users will not use the school system to access any social networking websites.
- Employees are discouraged from “friending” parents of current or prospective students, due to the inherent conflicts of interest that this may raise.

### **Sanctions**

Violation of the policies described above will be dealt with in a serious and appropriate manner. Should the user violate the school’s acceptable use policy, the user’s access privileges may be revoked, disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

### **Limitation on Montessori Academy Liability**

Disclaimers limiting the school's liability include:

- Use of the Montessori Academy system is at the user's own risk
- The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. Montessori Academy will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage or unavailability of stored data on school computer hard drives or accessories
- Montessori Academy is not responsible for information retrieved through school computers, networks or online resources
- Montessori Academy is not responsible for personal property used to access school computers, networks, or online resources

Montessori Academy will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the school system or the internet.

### **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The school pursues a goal of self-discipline for children following the Montessori principle of *Freedom with Limits*. Lessons in grace and courtesy, peace-making skills and guided respectful social communication present the expected social behaviors for Montessori Academy students. Students are provided with appropriate and stimulating activities, anticipating that children who are actively engaged in successful work will be more likely to develop responsible behavior. The development of self-discipline begins with clearly presented expectations, ground rules and procedures for self-management and respectful social behaviors. The teachers role-play scenarios and involve children in the identification of appropriate class behaviors and ground rules. Children are given the tools to make appropriate decisions at their age level and teachers intervene with representations at the 'teachable moment'. Much of the learning occurs within the structure of the lessons and procedures for using materials and partnership work.

When an inappropriate behavior incident occurs, the teacher guides the child toward an appropriate solution and redirects the child to engaging work.

If an inappropriate behavior persists, the teacher monitors the child's activities by limiting:

- Freedom to socialize
- Working partnerships
- Selections of work area and/or choices of activity

The child regains independence and freedom when respectful and appropriate behavior is consistently exhibited.

When a child does not respond cooperatively to the above procedures or show consistent progress in demonstrating expected behavior, the child:

- Is removed and/or isolated from the group or activity or from peers
- May be assigned a limited work area
- May be required to stay near the teacher or assistant
- If needed, will be removed from the classroom (visiting the office or administrative staff)

The parents will be contacted to discuss and establish a collaborative plan of action between home and school with the goal to achieve the expected self-management needed for success in a Montessori class. If a child does not respond cooperatively to this second stage process, arrangements will be made with the parents for the child to be taken home when identified behavior patterns occur.

Parents will be expected to take a child home from school when any of the following occur:

- The child bites another person
- The child's tantrum is uncontrollable and prolonged
- The child intentionally or seriously hurts another person
- The child is consistently aggressive with others
- Arrangements have been made with parents to take a child home because of prolonged and persistent negative behaviors

Montessori Academy adheres to the policy that a person's independence and freedom are the result of responsible and self-controlled behavior. All persons, their belongings/work and the environment are to be treated respectfully and courteously. The needs and good of the whole community limit personal freedoms. Montessori Academy has a long history of developing productive, respectful citizens. All members of the community are expected to demonstrate respect for others, the environment and maintain self-control on and off campus including school related events away from the school property. Adults, employees and volunteers are responsible to role-model and communicate expectations to the students, guiding the appropriate responses at the child's level of maturity.

#### **Conduct Standards and Campus Restrictions**

- Items deemed hazardous by the school are not permitted on the campus
- Skateboards or similar equipment that damage the property are not permitted on campus
- Possession and/or being under the influence of alcohol or non-prescribed medical drugs is prohibited
- Tobacco and/or other smoking substances are prohibited
- Verbal or physical harassment or aggression, bullying, violence, vandalism or theft are prohibited
- Wrongful use of equipment including computers or related technology is prohibited

Students may be asked to leave school temporarily or permanently if the student fails to consistently comply with the conduct standards, campus restrictions or displays consistent behaviors that cannot be managed within the context of the developmental expectations at the child's program level. Decisions regarding permanent exclusion from school are made by the Head of School in conference with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. Elementary and Junior High students who consistently display verbal or physical harassment or aggression and have not responded to Montessori Academy's disciplinary processes may be asked to leave school temporarily or permanently.

## **ENROLLMENT POLICY**

Montessori Academy seeks those who are in agreement with and in support of the Montessori philosophy and method of education for the family. Enrolling implies that parents accept the mission, values and Montessori educational methods of Montessori Academy.

Montessori Academy reserves the right to maintain class balance with respect to age and gender. Students will be considered based upon class space at the time of application, with respect to the following priority schedule:

- All currently enrolled Montessori Academy students
- Siblings not presently enrolled at Montessori Academy
- Students from other Montessori schools
- General applicants

### **Class Placement**

Student placement is made by the Head of School. Placement decisions are based on several criteria related to class schedules, openings, gender and age described below:

#### **TODDLER AND EARLY CHILDHOOD**

- Class schedule in which child is enrolled
- Openings in the class
- Age and gender balance
- Individual learning or developmental needs and compatibility with class community and ability for school to meet needs and corresponding parent support

#### **ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH**

- Openings in class
- Balance of enrollment in each class at each level
- Age and gender balance
- Grade level entering the class
- Individual learning or developmental needs and compatibility with class community and ability for school to meet needs and corresponding parent support
- Limited openings for students without a Montessori experience

Teacher feedback and parent requests are taken into consideration with the expectation for compatibility with the above criterion.

### **Individual and Special Needs Enrollment**

A Montessori environment is designed for a range of individual learning styles and personal interest. Children with specific learning or behavioral needs are considered for inclusion within the parameters of the dynamics of the class community, the ability of the teacher to fulfill the educational needs of an individual child and balanced between educational expectations/needs of the individual child and those of the class community.

Parent support for school expectations and structure along with associated external resource support may be required for students that involve an individualized learning or behavior plan. Montessori Academy has an Educational Support Director/Specialist on staff that facilitates the ongoing services for the student by working with the teachers, parents and external services. The Educational Support Director/Specialist's service does not include diagnosis or ongoing specialized tutoring or behavior interventions.

### **Multi-Age Grouping**

Montessori Academy classrooms (excluding Toddler) are based on multi-age groupings to promote an atmosphere of cooperation, teamwork, and peer teaching while meeting the needs of each child regardless of age. Multi-age classes promote positive community and social relationships.

## **GUEST PASS PROCEDURE**

Please register and pick up a guest pass at the school office to enter either the Early Childhood or the main building. The guest pass must be worn in a visual place. Please sign out upon leaving.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Accidents and/or Emergencies**

Minor accidents occurring during class time (i.e. cuts and scratches) receive prompt attention from staff members. In the event of any minor injury sustained by a student during school hours, teachers fill out accident reports in duplicate. One copy is given to parents and the other remains in the student's medical file. In the event of a serious accident, the family is notified at once. If parents cannot be reached, emergency procedures indicated by parents on their Emergency Form will be followed.

### **Communicable Diseases**

In the event that a communicable disease is diagnosed and the school is informed, a review of each individual case will be conducted by the Head of School. Notices will be sent at the discretion of the Head of School to parents of all children who may have been exposed. A doctor's release may be requested upon the return of any student who was absent due to a communicable disease.

### **Head Lice**

Head lice, parasitic insects that can be found on the head, eyebrows, and eyelashes, are found worldwide. In the United States, infestation with head lice is most common among preschool and elementary school (ages 3-11). Head-to-head contact with an already infested person during play at school, at home, and elsewhere is the most common way to get head lice, and, although uncommon, head lice can be spread by sharing clothing or belongings. While head lice are an annoyance, they do not transmit disease to humans.

Signs and symptoms of head lice infestation are

- Tickling feeling of something moving in the hair.
- Itching, caused by an allergic reaction to the bites of the head louse.
- Irritability and difficulty sleeping; head lice are most active in the dark.
- Sores on the head caused by scratching.

Montessori Academy takes a serious and active role in detecting and educating its community about head lice cases, while at the same time maintaining the confidentiality of every family and student. Students with head lice while already at school will not be sent home from school.

Montessori Academy head lice policy and procedure:

- Notify classroom/level parents of a detected case
- Send home “A Parent’s Guide to Head Lice.”
- Screen entire class/level for head lice
- Clean the classroom environment, including washing any work rugs
- Bag children’s extra clothing and send home
- Allow child(ren) to return to school once child(ren) has/have been treated and checked.

### **Forms**

The Montessori Academy is required by The State of Indiana and The Indiana State Department of Health to abide by Indiana Code IC 20-34-4-5 which states no child shall be permitted to attend school beyond the first day of school without furnishing immunization records, unless:

- The school gives the parents of the child a waiver (for a period not to exceed 20 days)
- The local health department or a physician determines that the child’s immunizations have been delayed due to extreme circumstances and that the required immunizations will not be completed by the first day of school. The parent must furnish a written statement and a time schedule approved by a physician or health department; or
- A medical or religious exemption is on file (both must be resubmitted in writing to the school each year).

Please note that if the required immunizations records, medical or religious exemption, or immunization schedule approved by a physician or the local health officer are not received and a waiver has not been granted, your child will not be allowed to attend school beyond the first day.

In addition, a Family Information Form (including transportation, emergency contact, and medical information) is required for each student upon enrollment. Also, a dental and vision exam is recommended at the 1st grade level.

### Illness

When children are ill, they need special attention and tender loving care. Please do not send your child to school with a fever, sore throat, bad cough, runny nose, or flu symptoms. If your child is too tired or ill to participate in the outdoor portions of the program, it is important he or she remains at home.

A student who appears ill upon arrival shall not be admitted into the school. If illness occurs at school, the parents will be contacted to pick the child up from school.

If your child has been sent home ill, he/she may not return to school until:

- They have been without a fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication).
- They have not vomited for 24 hours and are taking fluids and food.
- They have been taking medication for at least 24-48 hours if antibiotics have been prescribed.

By following these guidelines, we can reduce the spread of infection/viruses such as strep throat and influenza. Please be considerate of other students and staff when your child is ill. Keep them home!

### Medication

State law mandates that any medication, whether prescription or over-the-counter, must be accompanied by written permission from the student's parents or guardians and in compliance with the written instructions from a physician. According to TMA procedure and in adherence to state requirements, the parent must fill out an Authorization & Permission for Administration of Medication form which will indicate the date, time, dosage, and the name of the school official administering the medication.

### **LATE PICK-UP**

Prompt dismissal is important for the children and respectful of staff that have responsibilities after dismissal. Teachers are not available to stay with children who are not picked up on time.

Parents are charged a Late Pick-Up Fee of **\$10.00 for every 5 minutes when a child is left after their scheduled dismissal period:**

- Toddler and Early Childhood Morning: 11:30 – 11:40 a.m.
- Early Childhood Full Day: 3:15 – 3:25 p.m.
- Elementary and Junior High: 3:30 – 3:40 p.m.
- Early Childhood Late Day & Aftercare: 6:00 p.m.

Students who are enrolled in the Now and Then aftercare program will be escorted to the Aftercare area. To minimize unnecessary wait time or confusion, please call the school if you are late and request the child go to Aftercare.

If an emergency occurs that may warrant a late pick-up, a phone call to the school is expected. Parents whose children attend Aftercare until 6:00 p.m. are expected to arrange for an emergency pick up with another family in Aftercare. Late fees will be applied to late pick-ups after 6:00 p.m.

## **RECESS**

Outdoor activities are a daily part of the all-day classroom schedule, weather permitting. Students will not go outside if the temperature/wind chill is below 15 degrees. Students who are too ill to participate in outdoor activities should be kept at home.

## **FIRE SAFETY PLAN**

All students and staff practice routine fire drills. Children exit the classroom in a single file line and go to a common meeting area outside the building. Attendance is taken immediately.

## **STORM DRILLS**

Storm drills are rehearsed during the spring months. The administration and staff determine procedures with regard to the facility.

## **LOCKDOWN/SAFETY DRILLS**

All students and staff practice Lockdown/Safety drills on a regular basis. The administration and staff determine procedures with regard to the facility and classroom.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

All student records will be kept on file in the school office. All files are confidential. No records will be released outside the school without the consent of a parent or guardian, except records which may be released under judicial order provided that parents and students are notified of such orders in advance. Montessori Academy maintains parental rights to review and comment on their child's student file.

Records will not be released for students who may have any outstanding tuition or fees.

## **TUITION PAYMENTS**

When re-enrolling or upon acceptance for new enrollment, a non-refundable tuition deposit is due with the enrollment contract. The deposit is a portion of the total tuition.

One of two payment options is selected with the enrollment contract:

- Single payment of the total tuition and fees (less tuition deposit) is due by July 1st. Payment is made by check or cash.
- Monthly payments are processed by FACTS Management and total tuition and fees (less tuition deposit) are paid in 12 equal payments on either the 1st or 15th of the month beginning July 1st. Payments may be billed or automatically deducted. There is an annual fee payable to FACTS (\$43.00) and late fees are assessed by TMA. *Monthly FACTS payments, in general, should be made directly to FACTS and not paid through the school office or made out to TMA.*

Tuition collection policy and procedures:

- 30 days late: Montessori Academy sends a past due notice to parents.
- 60 days late: Parents are sent a past due notice that payment is due within 15 days (75 days past due) in order for the child(ren) to continue enrollment at Montessori Academy.

- 75 days late: Parents are notified that the child(ren) will no longer be enrolled at Montessori Academy within 15 days (when the account is 90 days past due). Parents are also notified that the outstanding debt may be referred to collection.
- When parents have outstanding past due accounts, two options are available: The Director of Finance and the Head of School with approval by the Finance Committee may accept a written payment plan from the family or the account may be sent to collection by an external agency.
- Children may be re-enrolled if the account is paid in full and parents make monthly payments directly to the school. Any missed payment automatically results in dismissal from the school and account may be sent to collection.

### **Tuition Discounts**

Montessori Academy considers that the family is primarily responsible for the education expenses of their children. In order to assist families to afford and continue a Montessori education at Montessori Academy, tuition discounts are available for families as follows:

- Sibling Discounts are awarded as: 10% for second, 20% for third, 30% for fourth and additional siblings.
- Tuition Assistance is awarded to families based on defined need within the level budgeted. Early Childhood three day programs and Toddler programs are not eligible for Tuition Assistance.
- Families submit a Tuition Assistance Application to the Director of Finance along with required financial documents and an application to Fast Automatic Cash Transfer (FACTS), with a fee. FACTS is an external service that evaluates family financial information and recommends tuition discounts. Montessori Academy awards a percentage of identified need in order to provide assistance to all qualified applicants.
- Scholarships and other discounts are considered when calculating the Award.

### **Scholarships**

Montessori Academy seeks to identify scholarships which are awarded through external organizations and facilitate the process for its families. The Director of Finance manages scholarship information. Tuition Assistance through Montessori Academy's need-based Tuition Assistance program is NOT considered a scholarship.

## **WEATHER RELATED SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION**

Montessori Academy will not follow any other school system for weather related school closings. In the event that Montessori Academy is closed, we will send a message via **[RainedOut.com](http://RainedOut.com)** (***You will receive a text or email only if you have pre-registered yourself***), and the closing will be listed on WNDU, WSBT, ABC57 and FOX 28 (under our own name) as early as possible. Please listen or watch for the announcements or check our website, Facebook pages or voicemail message to determine if Montessori Academy is open. Montessori Academy will not delay the start time of school. We will either be open or closed. On days with inclement weather when Montessori Academy is open, we ask that parents use their best judgment as to whether it is safe to transport their child to school. No child will be counted absent or tardy on days when there is inclement weather.

## **WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

Students enrolling in the toddler and early childhood classes have an adjustment period of six weeks from the day the child enters school. During the adjustment period, the teacher and parents work to give the student positive separation from home to school through phase-in schedules to create security for the child. The teacher and parent maintain regular communications and collaboration. If the child does not adjust during this period, the family may withdraw from the enrollment contract agreement. The tuition deposit is non-refundable and any additional fees are pro-rated based on the time the child was enrolled. *A thirty-day (30) advanced written notice of any withdrawal after the six-week adjustment period is required.* Full contract payments are due and collected if a child is withdrawn from the school after the six-week adjustment period. Exceptions are made for families who move out of the driving region of Montessori Academy enrolled families as determined by the School and as approved by the Head of School.

Enrollment in the elementary and junior high levels does not include an adjustment period and there are no adjusted payments for students who are withdrawn from the school during the contract period. Exceptions are made for families who move out of the driving region (40-mile radius) of Montessori Academy or whose student has been deemed not a “good fit” for our classes as determined by the School and as approved by the Head of School.

## ***SCHOOL ORGANIZATION***

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

A volunteer Board of Trustees governs Montessori Academy. As a tax-exempt (non-profit) organization, the collective obligation of the Board is to uphold the mission. The Board's primary functions are to set general policies, finance the school, and plan for its future. All implementation, overseeing of day-to-day operations, personnel matters, and relationships with constituents are the responsibility of the Head of School's administrative team. The board relies upon the administration to hear and adjudicate any grievances according to the policies found in the Employee and Family manuals.

Board meetings are open and all are welcome to attend. The time and date will be posted on the website and in the weekly memo. If there is a topic you would like the Board to discuss, please call the office in advance of the meeting and ask to be added to the agenda. Minutes and agendas of each Board meeting are available in the school library and on our website at [www.tma-el.org](http://www.tma-el.org) for review.

### **Mission Statement of the BOT**

The Mission of the Board of Trustees is to ensure the vitality and values of Montessori Academy's institutional mission for present and future generations of students. We do this by fulfilling our fiduciary and governance responsibilities for the well-being of Montessori Academy.

### **Annual Report**

The Annual Report, published each fall, highlights significant academic and school community accomplishments of the past year, including a summary of school finances and contributions made by volunteers and donors.

### **School Advancement**

As an independent, private school, The Montessori Academy at Edison Lakes does not receive federal or state funding. The school relies on the generous support of parents, grandparents, alumni, and others to maintain our tradition of Montessori excellence. Financial support for our operating budget comes from the following sources of revenue: tuition and fees, Annual Giving, our Windfall Auction, events which specifically support our classroom at the Center for the Homeless and our Endowment. Your participation through volunteering and/or financial support is crucial to our mission, our legacy, and most importantly, to our children.

### **ANNUAL GIVING**

Contributions raised through the Annual Giving Campaign allow the School to maintain its superior education by providing strong academic programs, a low student-faculty ratio, technological programs and faculty enrichment. It also helps bridge the gap between tuition and the School's operating expenses. Donations can be made in the form of cash, check, credit card, stocks or investments. Please call the school for more information.

### WINDFALL AUCTION

For more than twenty years, the annual Windfall event has brought together members and supporters of the school community for an evening of celebration. It has evolved into one of the most important fundraising initiatives to help the school support its mission, instilling in students a lifelong passion for learning.

### ENDOWMENT

The Montessori endowment fund is set up through the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County and donations can be designated through the Foundation for The Montessori Academy at Edison Lakes.

### **Volunteerism and Participation**

Volunteer opportunities include leadership positions with the Board of Trustees Committees, Parent Network Committees and classroom or office support. A variety of tasks are available. Projects range from a one-time activity, a project to be done at home, and committee participation. All families are expected to volunteer and participate during the school year.

- The school schedules a variety of education sessions for parents and teachers to increase knowledge about TMA, Montessori Method, child development or topics of interest to parents. There are also all school and classroom meetings scheduled annually to inform parents about the school goals and routine procedures and expectations.

### **PARENT NETWORK**

In order to foster the mission of Montessori Academy and to promote the education of our children, the Parent Network is committed to supporting Montessori Academy's programs and activities, its parents, faculty and administration, and to assuring an open forum for communication between those individuals. To that end, the Parent Network maintains a Steering Committee to facilitate communication between the parents, faculty, and school administration; provides information and volunteers to advance the efforts and image of the school; and generates funds to support its own activities and assists in raising funds to support the school's programs and activities.

All parents, step-parents, or legal guardians of students of Montessori Academy are automatically members of the Parent Network. Everyone is encouraged to support the Parent Network with their talents and ideas.

## **SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

Montessori Academy administrative staff works as a team to manage the day-to-day operations of the school within the scope of the school's mission and policies. The Head of School is employed by the Board of Trustees to be the educational leader, supervise the operations of the school and support the parents, students, and staff to implement an authentic and excellent Montessori School.

The administrative staff is composed of: the Director of Finance, who is responsible for managing the school's financial operations and maintaining the facility; the Development/Events Coordinator, who leads the schools advancement and fundraising operations; the Alumni and Community Relations Director, who is responsible for coordinating all aspects of marketing to internal candidates for retention, to alumni and to the community-at-large; the Executive Assistant to the Head of School/Admissions Coordinator, who manages all tours, operations for enrollment and records for students and supports recruitment and admissions functions for the school; two Division Coordinators (Early Childhood and Elementary) who facilitate communications between administrative and education staff and provide leadership for level meetings and classroom functions and the Receptionist, who supports the daily functions of the front office for the school. The administrative team works with the educational leadership to form continuous systems to support parents, volunteers, the Board of Trustees, and Parent Network and ultimately serve the educational needs of the students.

## **THE MONTESSORI TEACHER ACADEMY**

The Montessori Teacher Academy is a program of Montessori Academy to educate and certify Early Childhood Montessori teachers. This program is for adults who are interested in professional development courses or an American Montessori Society Teaching Diploma. Further information is available through Montessori Academy office or online at [www.tma-el.org](http://www.tma-el.org).

## **THE SOUTH BEND CENTER FOR THE HOMELESS CLASSROOM**

In 1994, a unique partnership was formed between the South Bend Center for the Homeless and The Montessori Academy at Edison Lakes, the only Montessori school of its kind. Because of this partnership, an Early Childhood program now serves children at the Center giving them a Montessori program that also addresses their special needs.

## ***EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION***

### **EDUCATIONAL DIVISIONS**

#### **Toddler and Early Childhood**

The *Toddler Program* is designed for that first peer group experience when children are ready to explore beyond the family circle. They strive for independence and growing motor and language skills evolve through their social interactions under the guidance of the Montessori staff. The environment is prepared to give them security as they leave their parents at the doorway. The freedom with structured limits gives them the opportunity to explore, discover and gain the ability to communicate, increase vocabulary, and express needs and feelings. The perceptual motor work develops the ability to match, compare, contrast and identify differences, which are all preparation for later academic work. The practical skills cover self-care, care of the environment, motor coordination and balance.

The *Early Childhood Program* is prepared to meet the intellectual, emotional, physical and social needs of children in a Montessori prepared environment. The children explore and experience a wide range of opportunities and activities that correspond to the development *sensitive periods* for learning. The children gain social and communication skills that evolve into cooperative relationships, they acquire the ability to make decisions through guided choices, and the emphasis on peace education develops skills in respectful problem solving and conflict resolutions. Through a diversity of activity the children gain confidence, concentration and independence. The perceptual motor work directly prepares them for reading, writing and math. The enriched language materials give experience in self-expression, vocabulary development, as well as pre-reading and writing skills. The concrete math work is process-based for an understanding of concepts while the geography, science and history work are integrated for greater cultural awareness of the world and its people.

The Early Childhood three-year cycle allows for children to move through the program at their individual developmental pace. Children are fully prepared for the Elementary program when they are able to complete the Early Childhood developmental level in an environment prepared for their full range of academic and social needs.

#### **Elementary**

The *Lower Elementary Level*, for students 6-9 years (first – third grades), begins with a “Bang” and offers a smooth transition from the Early Childhood classroom. In the elementary grades your child will receive individualized instruction in all subject areas. The curriculum is highly individualized, which allows your child to move at a pace that is appropriate for him/her at the time. The 6-9-year-old child is continually working on establishing individual friendships/relationships, as well as learning to be a part of a larger community. The Lower Elementary cultural curriculum can be connected with our Five Great Lessons, which are a springboard for all of our Science, Geography, History, Botany and Zoology work. Montessori Math begins at the most concrete level, reinforcing concepts of quantity and symbol. The Lower Elementary students begin work towards abstraction of these concepts with materials such as Test Tube Division. We focus upon the process of the work, so as to make sure your child has a strong foundation of

mathematical knowledge. Our curriculum is reading-enriched, so your child is working on basic reading fundamentals at the same time as increasing their vocabulary and learning the structure of language.

The *Upper Elementary Level*, for students age 9-12 years (fourth – sixth grades), presents an individualized approach to the curriculum while also providing experience with collaborative and group work. The program is research oriented and allows for integration of academic skills with areas of interest that motivate students to challenge themselves. Complex concepts experienced with concrete Montessori materials evolve into skill application with abstract activities using texts, library materials, and teacher designed lessons. Language, reading and writing skills are applied to the work in Geography, Science and History with the Montessori Great Lessons serving as a springboard to recognize knowledge relationships and internalize information. The Montessori math materials place emphasis on developing mathematical thinking and analysis while maintaining proficiency with basic operational skills. Students set appropriate goals and accept personal responsibility for their learning through structured organizational methods for time management, planning and self-correcting. The students at this level are expected and supported to achieve their full potential in all areas and the resulting self-confidence reinforces their expanding efforts.

### **Junior High**

The *Junior High Level*, for students age 12-14 years (seventh and eighth grades), provides a curriculum of experiences, both academic and social, that are designed to meet the needs of the young adolescent. During this phase, your child develops a social awareness through practical experiences in various community projects and activities. Academic, social and work experiences develop the skills that are a preparation for life-long learning. Practice in personal communication skills, both written and oral, is integral to the program across all disciplines. Students are encouraged to formulate their own problem solving, logical reasoning and research expertise through participation in real-life activities that involve and engage the adolescent's interests. Characteristics such as self-expression, collaboration, leadership and responsibility are highly valued.

## **EDUCATIONAL DIVISION SUPPLEMENTS**

### **Co-Curricular Classes**

The Montessori Academy strives to provide an enriched and well-rounded educational experience for students. The inclusion of these enrichment programs by qualified staff enhances the classroom curriculum through the Visual Arts; Music, including chorus and band; Spanish Language; Physical Education and/or Movement and Computer Technology for elementary/junior high students. After school enrichment programs further expand the opportunities for the students in such activities as organized sports, drama classes, voice lessons, and other varied specialized classes.

### **Communication: Parent and Teacher**

Ongoing communication between home and school is an important element in providing the most well rounded education for the child. The school and teachers maintain a regular system of communication with the parents through such means as:

- Weekly Memo and flyers regarding school/class events.
- Level newsletters published four to six times per year and including articles about Montessori and education, ongoing class activities and information of a general interest.
- Regularly scheduled contact from the class teachers through phone calls, letters or notes and/or emails.
- Follow-up contact from the teacher after a parent observes or in response to a parent inquiry.
- Montessori Academy's website ([www.tma-el.org](http://www.tma-el.org))
- Facebook (The Montessori Academy at Edison Lakes)
- Blogs (linked to our website)

Teachers do not receive phone calls during the class instructional period. Please leave a message with the office if the inquiry needs a timely response or leave a voice mail message or send an email to the teacher (see directory listing for email addresses). The teachers will respond to your inquiry in a timely manner. Often administrators can manage the need for you so as not to interrupt instruction time. Parents may not interrupt the teacher during class time. If you drop by, please have the office staff help facilitate contact with the teacher if the matter is urgent.

Arrival and dismissal periods are not appropriate times for conversations with staff members. The attention is on the child and on safety. Please respect the teacher by not engaging them with questions. Both you and the staff can model respectful greetings while also giving the child the focus they desire during transitions.

### **Conferences: Parent and Teacher**

Conferences are held with the teacher throughout the year. Parents may initiate a conference by contacting the teacher for an appointment.

Progress reports are prepared and presented at conference meetings scheduled with parents three times a year (November, March, and at the end of the school year). The end of the year report is a progress summary.

### **Educational Support Systems**

The Educational Support Director is responsible to provide the learning and developmental support for students and teachers so that the best individualized methods can be implemented for the students. The ESS Director also works with parents and facilitates the relationships with the external resources to support the individual needs of students.

### **Orientation**

The gradual orientation of each child at the beginning of the year is crucial to your child's success in the classroom. For the very young child, it eases their anxiety of separation if he/she is not waiting for an extended period of time wondering if parents will really return for him/her. As the class hours lengthen, so does confidence in separating. The returning child uses this time to reorient himself to the procedures he has been away from for several months and in doing so, acts as a role model for the new children. For all children, this is a most important time of establishing and practicing the ground rules, which in turn allows them to work purposefully, peacefully, and independently in an environment of freedom. Proper orientation insures a successful school year for all.

### **Teacher/Parent Partnership**

Parents are the child's first educators and the family is where core values are established. Trust, security, and self-confidence begin with experiences among family, friends, and relatives. Parents form a collaboration with the school to help their child achieve potential.

The teachers work with students individually and in groups introducing materials and giving guidance where needed. One of the primary tasks is careful observation of students to determine individual needs and to prepare the environment to aid growth. They actively seek ways to help accomplish goals and learning. The role of the teacher is to help the children teach themselves through the use of the Montessori materials and through a more abstract, research-based curriculum.

The teacher works with the students in small groups or "one-on-one" as they develop new skills. Elementary and Junior High students work from individualized plans. Upper Elementary and Junior High Students use weekly/monthly planners, developing time management and organizational skills.

### **Montessori Academy Library**

Montessori Academy's library, located in the Elementary building, contains a variety of Montessori educational literature and other related reading materials. All parents are invited to use the library for their own Montessori reading enrichment.

## **ROUTINE PROCEDURES**

### **Clothing**

Montessori Academy students have followed a standard of dress, which has made the establishment of a formal dress code unnecessary. However, the following suggestions will help to serve as guidelines:

- In cold weather, children should be dressed warmly, since they go outside for recess.
- All outside clothing should be labeled with the child's name.
- Clothing must be clean and in good repair and may not be obscene or contain vulgar language, drug, alcohol, or sexual innuendo related messages.
- Cut-offs, tube or tank tops, halters, backless dresses, spaghetti-strap blouses/shirts (unless worn over a t-shirt), bare midriff shirts or skirts and shorts shorter than "fingertip length" are not allowed.
- Health and safety requirements necessitate wearing appropriate footwear at all times.
- Clothing which causes excessive school maintenance problems (cleats, waist chains, shoes that scratch floors, or rivets on trousers) should not be worn.
- Visible tattoos are not allowed.
- Piercings other than on the ears are not allowed.

Any lost clothing that is not claimed after a reasonable time will be donated to charity.

### **Field Trips and Enrichment**

Field trips are reserved for Elementary through Junior High students, with permission slips from parents being a prerequisite. Students are also exposed to enrichment programs that are scheduled within school. Parents who have special interests or expertise are invited to share with classes as well. There may be additional costs involved in participating in field trips in the Elementary and Junior High levels.

### **Holiday Traditions**

There are two important goals in Montessori philosophy: Cosmic or "Global" Education and Education for Peace. Cosmic Education means understanding the whole, and understanding of the universe and the needs of humankind. This leads to the study of different peoples throughout the world and their needs; such as shelter, clothing, religion, art, and their holidays.

Because of this philosophy, we discuss the holidays the children celebrate. We do not teach theology, but focus on how they celebrate (origins, foods, songs, games, stories, etc.). They may share a story about why it's traditional or why it's their favorite. In keeping with the cosmic understanding by Maria Montessori, holidays around the world are explored. Though we live on one continent, we study other continents too.

### **Homework**

For the benefit of the individual student and the class as a whole, the classroom teacher may give homework assignments. The Elementary and Junior High assignments are supportive and supplemental. Assignments may include reading, literature studies, spelling, and basic research and memorization skills. The amount of homework is directly related to the age level and ability of the student. Incomplete daily assignments at the elementary level and junior high level may result in homework. Junior High students may be required to attend after-school study groups.

### **Observation**

Parents are invited to observe the students working in the classes at least once each semester. Non-interactive observation is one of the best ways to gain a full perspective of your child's learning and social skills. An essential element in our Montessori training is that of observing children socially and intellectually in order to guide their educational program.

Observation differs from volunteering or helping the children in that without interaction, the adult can gain a broader perspective of how the child interacts with others, solves problems and approaches learning and challenges. Please schedule the observations in advance so that we can confirm the class activity schedule with you and so that only one family per day per class is scheduled to observe. The teachers will follow up your observation with a call to discuss your perspective and questions.

The Toddler and Early Childhood classes have a one-way window so that you can observe without being seen by your child. At these ages, the presence of a parent will distract not only your child but the whole class. Your one-way observation will be more objective and also respect the growing attention spans of the children. Please call the office to arrange observation in the Toddler and Early childhood classes.

The Elementary and Junior High class observations will occur within the class. As volunteers are often part of the environment the children are more accepting of parents visiting. We encourage parents to schedule objective observation sessions. The teachers prepare the students to recognize the difference between a volunteer and an observer. They are guided to respect the 'work of the observer' and go about their own work. Observations can be arranged either through the office or via email with the classroom teacher.

### **School Lunch Program**

A school lunch program is available for full-day students. It offers students a variety and is available Monday through Thursday throughout the year. Milk is included in the cost of the lunch. Additional milk or milk for students bringing a sack lunch may be purchased for fifty cents per milk through pre-order. The cost per lunch is \$2.90. Late lunch orders cannot be accepted. Please contact the Director of Finance for further information.

**Staff In-Service Days**

School is dismissed early on staff in-service days. These days are scheduled on the school calendar to provide for total school staff meetings for program planning/evaluation, observation at other schools, material making, and professional development through attendance at workshops and lectures.

## **WHO TO ASK?**

Our goal is to make communication between the school and family as easy and direct as possible. Our staff can be reached by email or phone at 574-256-5313 (email and phone extensions listed on page 36).

Please direct all questions, inquiries or concerns to the person whose responsibility it is for that particular area. If you are not sure *who* can help you, please call the main desk at 256-5313.

### **DAY TO DAY SCHOOL OPERATIONS**

Interim Head of School, Randy Kelly

- Management of the business and educational functions of the school
- Fulfill responsibilities for the Board of Trustees annual agenda, policies and procedures
- Staff and parent support and maintenance of an open door policy for communication and problem solving
- Respond to general needs, questions or inquiries for any aspect of the school's functions

### **FINANCIAL, FACILITY OR GENERAL OPERATIONS**

Director of Finance, Susan Finster

- Tuition, fees, enrollment and other payment agreements for services, Tuition Assistance, facility use and all general operations questions
- Now and Then Before/After Care program

### **ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT**

Admissions Coordinator, Kim Bosworth

- Enrollment, class placement, family/transportation/emergency contact information, health records, school rosters and after school enrichment registration

### **FUNDRAISING**

Development/Events Coordinator, Tanya Hagen

- All aspects for fundraising procedures and activities and volunteer communication and actions
- Annual Giving, Windfall Auction, Special fundraising events and Endowment
- All aspects of social networking

### **EDUCATION AND CLASSROOM**

Toddler/Early Childhood Division Coordinator, Jodi Price

- Toddler and Early Childhood program information, procedures and practices

Elementary/Junior High Division Chair, Becky Dennis

- Inquiries about co-curricular classes, such as music, art, band, computer and Spanish
- General information about activities

Your child's teacher

- Class work, homework, behavior, social relations, work habits, class activities and co-curricular classes

## **GENERAL SCHOOL OPERATIONS**

Front Office - 574-256-5313

- Lunch program, school pictures, calendar, athletics schedule, schedules and appointments for teachers and other general communication between school and families

## **PARENT NETWORK (An organization made up of all enrolled families.)**

- Schedules and manages social events for families
- Coordination of volunteer participation
- Coordination of Parent Network fundraisers that directly support Parent Network social events and activities

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Weekly Memo (All submissions need to be emailed to Kim Bosworth by noon on Friday)

- Prepared weekly and sent home on Tuesday in student folders, posted on the website and sent via email to families who have an email on record
- Includes calendar updates, athletic schedules, reminders, general on-going announcements and information

Montessori Academy's Website ([www.tma-el.org](http://www.tma-el.org)) contains:

- Weekly Memo
- Monthly calendar updates
- Athletic schedules and locations
- Parent Network activities
- Lunch menu

## STAFF COMMUNICATION INFORMATION

Name	Title	Email	Ext.
Melissa Baldwin	Toddler Teacher	<a href="mailto:mbaldwin@tma-el.org">mbaldwin@tma-el.org</a>	232
Jeanine Bilik	Music Teacher	<a href="mailto:jbilik@tma-el.org">jbilik@tma-el.org</a>	235
Stephanie Birkle	Early Childhood Assistant	<a href="mailto:sbirkle@tma-el.org">sbirkle@tma-el.org</a>	213
Kim Bosworth	Admissions Coordinator	<a href="mailto:kbosworth@tma-el.org">kbosworth@tma-el.org</a>	212
Dan Chapman	Art Teacher	<a href="mailto:dchapman@tma-el.org">dchapman@tma-el.org</a>	223
Sonia Costilla	Lower Elementary Assistant	<a href="mailto:scostilla@tma-el.org">scostilla@tma-el.org</a>	229
Jenn Darmogray	Lower Elementary Teacher	<a href="mailto:jdarmogray@tma-el.org">jdarmogray@tma-el.org</a>	231
Stephanie Davis	Early Childhood Teacher	<a href="mailto:sdavis@tma-el.org">sdavis@tma-el.org</a>	213
Becky Dennis	Upper Elementary Teacher and Elem/JH Division Chair	<a href="mailto:bdennis@tma-el.org">bdennis@tma-el.org</a>	226
Janine Faini	Early Childhood Assistant	<a href="mailto:jfaini@tma-el.org">jfaini@tma-el.org</a>	221
Susan Finster	Director of Finance	<a href="mailto:sfinster@tma-el.org">sfinster@tma-el.org</a>	211
Terri Foley	Upper Elementary Assistant	<a href="mailto:tfoley@tma-el.org">tfoley@tma-el.org</a>	226
Julie Gabrielse	MTA Director/Pro. Develop. Coord.	<a href="mailto:jgabrielse@tma-el.org">jgabrielse@tma-el.org</a>	
Chasten Glezman	Junior High Teacher	<a href="mailto:cglezman@tma-el.org">cglezman@tma-el.org</a>	228
Tanya Hagen	Development Events Coordinator	<a href="mailto:thagen@tma-el.org">thagen@tma-el.org</a>	215
Barb Harvey	Early Childhood Teacher	<a href="mailto:bharvey@tma-el.org">bharvey@tma-el.org</a>	233
Judy Hill	Science Teacher	<a href="mailto:jhill@tma-el.org">jhill@tma-el.org</a>	241
Randy Kelly	Interim Head of School	<a href="mailto:rkelly@tma-el.org">rkelly@tma-el.org</a>	214
Ashley Kenney	Early Childhood Assistant	<a href="mailto:akenney@tma-el.org">akenney@tma-el.org</a>	237
Deb Kletka	Front Desk Receptionist	<a href="mailto:frontdesk@tma-el.org">frontdesk@tma-el.org</a>	210
Kathy Kolata	Alumni & Comm. Relations Coord.	<a href="mailto:kkolata@tma-el.org">kkolata@tma-el.org</a>	236
Gary Lippincott	Assistant Athletic Director	<a href="mailto:glippincott@tma-el.org">glippincott@tma-el.org</a>	217
Becky Ludwick	Early Childhood Assistant	<a href="mailto:bludwick@tma-el.org">bludwick@tma-el.org</a>	237
Porzia Micou	EC Teacher SB Campus	<a href="mailto:pmicou@tma-el.org">pmicou@tma-el.org</a>	282-8700 x81316
Chandler Miller	Upper Elem. Asst./Athletic Director	<a href="mailto:cmiller@tma-el.org">cmiller@tma-el.org</a>	217
Helen Muffoletto	Upper Elementary Teacher	<a href="mailto:hmuffoletto@tma-el.org">hmuffoletto@tma-el.org</a>	234
Carolyn Owens	Lower Elementary Teacher	<a href="mailto:cowens@tma-el.org">cowens@tma-el.org</a>	227
Michael Poole	Math Teacher	<a href="mailto:mpoole@tma-el.org">mpoole@tma-el.org</a>	224
Jodi Price	Early Childhood Teacher/ EC Division Coordinator	<a href="mailto:jprice@tma-el.org">jprice@tma-el.org</a>	230
Rhonda Reynolds	Lower Elementary Teacher	<a href="mailto:rreynolds@tma-el.org">rreynolds@tma-el.org</a>	229
Donna Rockafellow	Toddler Teacher	<a href="mailto:drockafellow@tma-el.org">drockafellow@tma-el.org</a>	232
Meg Rooney	Assistant Librarian	<a href="mailto:mrooney@tma-el.org">mrooney@tma-el.org</a>	222
Jayne Russell	Librarian	<a href="mailto:jrussell@tma-el.org">jrussell@tma-el.org</a>	222
Cindy Shelley	Early Childhood Teacher	<a href="mailto:cshelley@tma-el.org">cshelley@tma-el.org</a>	237
Erin Tracy	Student Services Director	<a href="mailto:etracy@tma-el.org">etracy@tma-el.org</a>	216
Lindsay Turner	Early Childhood Teacher	<a href="mailto:lturner@tma-el.org">lturner@tma-el.org</a>	221