

*Northwest*  
MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Community Handbook  
Updated August 2021

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**LICENSING POLICIES**

*Copies of the most recent childcare records are available upon request. These include monitoring and renewal checklists and all compliance agreements. Copies of health care policy, disaster plan, pesticide policy, and pet policy are available for your review at all locations.*

*All Policies, procedures and information contained in this handbook are subject to change without notice. Northwest Montessori School will strive to inform the community of changes as they occur.*

## SECTION I: INTRODUCTION, MISSION, NON-DISCRIMINATION, ACCREDITATION & AFFILIATIONS, STAFFING & SPECIALISTS

### **Introduction**

Welcome to Northwest Montessori School! The *Community Handbook* has been developed to provide families and staff with helpful information on our policies, procedures, and practices and to establish a healthy family-school partnership. While these guidelines are not a contract and may through necessity be adjusted, know that we will keep you advised of any changes through email memos, posted notices, or revised Handbook pages.

Please take time to familiarize yourself with the contents of the Handbook. Full copies of Northwest Montessori School's policies, including the Pet Policy, Pesticide Policy, Health Policy, and Student Action Plan are available upon request at each of our three branches. A full copy of the Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan is provided to each family annually; additional copies are available in the school office and in your child's classroom. If you have questions about any of our policies or procedures, please ask the administration and we will endeavor to answer them in a timely manner. We believe that each family contributes directly to the success of our school and we value your input. We take pride in having you as a member of our community.

### **School History**

Northwest Montessori School (NWM), a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, was founded in 1965 by Marietta Rawson, who began her career in education as a public-school teacher. After attending a lecture on the Montessori Method of individualized education, Marietta was so inspired that she traveled to Italy to take the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) teacher training. Upon her return, Marietta Rawson founded the first Montessori school in Seattle. Today, Northwest Montessori School remains one of a select few AMI Recognized schools in the greater Seattle area. NWM has offered high-quality education to the children of Seattle for more than 55 years. Our nurturing, non-competitive, multi-age classrooms—with an emphasis on social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development—have prepared thousands of children for lives full of academic success and meaningful involvement in their community.

### **Our Mission**

To provide an individualized learning environment, based on the principles of Dr. Maria Montessori, that is designed to help students become independent, life-long learners who are academically grounded and socially confident about their place in the world.

## **Our Goal**

To build an environment that will help every student explore, communicate, work, and perfect skills to their highest potential.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Northwest Montessori School (NWM) is an equal opportunity organization. It will not discriminate and will take active measures to ensure against discrimination in all conditions of admissions, enrollment, and employment. NWM does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ancestry, national origin, results of genetic testing, gender, religion, creed, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran's status in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and other school-administered policies.

## **Accreditations and Affiliations**

### AMI Recognition

Northwest Montessori School is a Recognized Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) school, the highest standard of accreditation bestowed by AMI. AMI was established by Dr. Montessori to protect the legacy of her life's work. In order to receive Recognized status, AMI schools must meet such standards as fully prepared classroom environments, AMI-trained teachers, and 3-year, mixed-age classrooms. In this way, NWM ensures we are providing the highest fidelity Montessori environment for your child.

### Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

Northwest Montessori School's elementary program is an approved Private School Program under the auspices of OSPI. OSPI ensures private programs are compliant with all necessary state standards and practices.

### Department of Children, Youth, and Families

Northwest Montessori School is fully licensed as an Early Learning Provider through the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). Through working with our Licensor and during annual licensing renewal visits, NWM ensures we are upholding the standards and requirements as set forth by DCYF to ensure children's health, safety, and well-being.

### Montessori Verification

Northwest Montessori School is also a Verified Montessori program in Washington State. Verification is a process administered by the Pacific Northwest Montessori Association (PNMA) that enables the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to recognize schools for meeting a minimum threshold to be considered a Montessori program. This is

of particular importance because the term “Montessori” is in the public domain and consequently, programs with the name “Montessori” vary widely in terms of fidelity and authenticity to Dr. Montessori’s theory and practice. Verification ensures both DCYF and families of adherence to an agreed-upon standard for Montessori implementation.

### Other Affiliations

In addition to our affiliations with the organizations and agencies listed above, Northwest Montessori School is also a member school of the following organizations:

- *The Pacific Northwest Montessori Association (PNMA)*: The mission of PNMA is to encourage, support, and advocate for excellent Montessori education in the Northwest. For more information, visit [www.pnma.org](http://www.pnma.org).
- *The Washington Federation of Independent Schools (WFIS)*: WFIS exists to strengthen education for the students of Washington State as an advocate for and voice of independent schools. For more information, visit [www.wfis.org](http://www.wfis.org).

### **Staffing Details & Specialists**

All staff members at Northwest Montessori School are interviewed, hired and trained in compliance with the guidelines set by the State of Washington and the City of Seattle. The staff members at Northwest Montessori are aware of state policy, have training and/or schooling in education and childcare, have undergone a Washington State background check, TB test, MMR immunization, and are certified in CPR, first aid, and bloodborne pathogens. All of the staff members at Northwest Montessori School maintain ongoing training and review school policies on an annual basis per the requirements of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). It is the policy of Northwest Montessori School to facilitate staff and child relations that are consistent, nurturing, responsive, supportive and respectful, encouraging creativity and independence in the child.

### Head of School and School Administrators

The Head of School and School Administrators at Northwest Montessori School have experience working with children aged 2 ½ to 12 years old. They are Montessori trained, and educated in childhood development. The Head of School and School Administrators of Northwest Montessori School are responsible for overseeing and implementing the programs at the school and are not included in the daily student to staff ratio. The Head of School and School Administrators have the ability to appoint another staff person in charge during their absence and are also able to serve as staff in the classroom.

### Lead Teacher in a Classroom

All lead teachers at Northwest Montessori School have extensive childcare and education experience through training with the Association Montessori Internationale and/or post-secondary education.

### Assistants in the Classroom

Assistants are trained by Northwest Montessori and are supervised by the lead teacher in their classroom. All of our assistants have completed a 30 Hours Childcare Basic course and are working toward completing the requirements for an Early Childhood Education Initial Certificate.

### Aides in the Classroom

Aides are trained by Northwest Montessori and are supervised by the lead teacher in their classroom. All of our aides have completed a 30 Hours Childcare Basic course.

### School Psychologist

A private psychologist is working with Northwest Montessori School. All classes will be observed during the first months of the school year to identify any signs of developmental differences and delays among the children. In the event that a question arises a meeting with the parents, psychologist, teacher and administration will be held to discuss further support and action.

### Spanish Specialist

Northwest Montessori School provides Spanish as a second language to all students in all classrooms once a week.

Please call the main office at (206) 524-4244 if you have any questions regarding the staff or specialists that are supporting our school.

## **Governance**

As a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, Northwest Montessori School is a board run organization (contact: board@northwestmontessori.org). Northwest Montessori's Board of Trustees meet on a routine basis and are responsible for the following:

- Development of a Strategic Plan and Mission
- Ensure NWM's financial well-being
- Oversight & Assessment of the Head of School

*Current Executive Officers: Debora Abbott-Nuckolls, Dorothy Chambless, Jan Thorslund and Janine Edgin.*

## SECTION II: MONTESSORI EDUCATION AND PHILOSOPHY

### The Montessori Approach

Dr. Maria Montessori viewed education as an aid to life. Her years of observing children of all ages allowed her to create an environment where children master self construction as they progress from childhood to maturity. The Montessori method is based on the child's natural progression through the stages, or "planes" of development, encouraging the child to engage in spontaneous and meaningful work. A challenging and nurturing environment allows the child to develop positive self-discipline, a sense of social community, and a life-long love of work.

### Characteristics of the Developing Child

Dr. Montessori discovered, through her scientific observations of children, the characteristics of the developing child. It was a genuine revelation and over many years she carefully studied and documented these characteristics, many of which are still not generally recognized in our society at large. These characteristics are:

- ***Love of Order*** – This extends itself to the most minute particulars and is expressed in an intense love of the environment and the desire to preserve the order in it. The intellect is the principle of order, so that the child's internal order is supported by the external order present in the prepared environment.
- ***Love of Work*** – Work in this sense means any activity with a purpose, involving the child's whole personality. In the primary (2 ½ - 6) environment, the child uses their hands and concrete materials to accomplish work. Elementary (6 – 12) children use their minds to explore the world around them. The child's love of work has an unconscious aim at the construction of personality and is a form of self-expression that brings a corresponding joy. It is true creativity.
- ***Profound Spontaneous Concentration*** – This is a biological phenomenon. It is the child constructing themselves through contact with the outside world. Concentration is unmistakable, characterized by an intense interest and repetition in the child's work.
- ***Attachment to Reality*** – The mind constructs itself through contact with reality, not make-believe. Contact with the real external world forms the foundation, taken in by the senses, and results in the ability for abstract thought and great imagination.
- ***Love of Silence and Working Alone*** – This does not mean the child exclusively seeks solitude, but rather that they enjoy the psychological isolation which is the result of concentration. At other times, as the child progresses through the planes of development, children frequently work together in spontaneously-formed groups.

- ***Sublimation of the Possessive Instinct*** – Children love the environment enthusiastically, and their aim is not possession, but use. Their interest in any object leads them to a stage where it is no longer the object, but the knowledge of it, which fixes their attention.
- ***Power to Act from Real Choice and Not from Whims*** – This is not “doing as you please,” but doing what you are truly motivated to do. Given the freedom, suitable materials, and environment, what the child longs for is purposeful work.
- ***Spontaneous Self-Discipline*** – This is one of the features that usually surprises first-time visitors to a Montessori classroom. Discipline and freedom cannot be separated; they are opposites of the same coin. To achieve self-discipline, one must have the freedom to make a reasoned choice.
- ***Obedience*** – This is not blind obedience or submission to a stronger will, but the natural outcome of freedom and discipline. The Montessori child shows obedience through having the self-discipline to respect the free will of others. To carry out the command of another now becomes a joyful exercise of the will.
- ***Independence and Initiative*** – The child should acquire as much independence as possible at each stage of development. In a class of developing children, there will be much mutual aid; the children will understand and sense how much aid should be given to one another.
- ***Joy*** – The children form a cohesive community and share wordlessly the pleasures of development. It is more than the pleasure of being entertained. It is the joy that is the natural result of children in an environment that supports their developmental needs and satisfies their need for independence.

### Planes of Development

Dr. Montessori identified developmental powers that motivate human behavior at specific stages of growth, and that each of these six-year “Planes of Development” has specific developmental needs from the environment, feature identifiable physical and psychological powers, and lead to specific “creations” or tasks of self-construction/self-development.

Successful work in one Plane is essential for subsequent Planes. For optimal development to occur in a given Plane of Development, three conditions are necessary: 1) An environment adapted to the needs and tasks of that Plane; 2) Liberty to act in that environment towards self-construction; 3) A linking adult, who prepares the environment, and guides and facilitates the activity within it.

**First Plane: Birth to 6 Years – Creation of the Psychic Being/Formation of the Individual**

<i>Powers</i>	Absorbent Mind – ability to absorb knowledge quickly & effortlessly Sensitive Periods – a stage of developmental when a child naturally masters a specific skill
<i>Characteristics</i>	Learning through unconscious absorption, manipulation of concrete materials, and sensorial exploration
<i>Needs</i>	Psychological and physiological nurturing and protection; a primary environment with a consistent caregiver; safety, security, order, and consistency; psychological comfort of a consistent environment; opportunities for sensorial exploration; social interaction with family and friends; opportunities to observe and absorb the elements of material and social culture; liberty to move and manipulate objects; exposure to language and opportunities for communication; opportunities to develop and explore with all five senses; opportunities to develop the skills of functional independence
<i>Creations/Tasks</i>	Functional independence; coordination of movement; development of the intellect; cultural adaptation; development of the will, neuro-psychological growth; language; refined sensorial perceptions; points of consciousness; sociability; capacity for obedience.

**Second Plane: 6 – 12 Years – Development of the Individual/Acquisition of Culture**

<i>Powers</i>	Reasoning and Imagination
<i>Characteristics</i>	Conscious learning through intellectual exploration; the need to interact in an expanded environment; the passage of the intellect from concrete concepts to abstract thought; birth of a moral sense and increased social development
<i>Needs</i>	Security in home and family; movement out into the world; social interaction with a peer group; opportunities to explore all aspects of the natural world including human tendencies; concrete materials as a basis for abstract studies; physical exercise tied to purposeful activity; collaborative work; opportunities to explore roles in a fixed society along with ethics and morality; ideal exemplars of behavior and achievement; excellent and trustworthy role models
<i>Creations/Tasks</i>	Intellectual independence; physical strength; mental stability; love of the abstract; vivid imagination; gregariousness; relationships with peers; valid sense of justice and morality; conscience; understanding of the universe; ecological awareness.

*Third Plane: 12 - 18 Years – Formation of the Socially Conscious Individual/Search for One's Own Place in Society*

<i>Powers</i>	Physical – the Sexual Transformation Psychological – Exploration and Experimentation
<i>Characteristics</i>	Physical and hormonal changes of puberty; physical and mental instability; lessened intellectual capacity; a “social newborn” – the end of childhood and formation of the adult; humanistic exploration of humanity and all aspects of human social life
<i>Needs</i>	Opportunities to explore all aspects of interpersonal relationships; opportunities to make a meaningful contribution to society; exploration of a wide variety of economic contribution occupations; real-world, hands-on opportunities; the experience of earning and managing equitable compensation for labor; a self-sustaining environment of peers apart from the family; adult guidance for exploration; opportunity to construct personal validation through work and direct experience; opportunities for physical activity; opportunities for restful calm – processing, integration, and reflection
<i>Creations/Tasks</i>	Emotional independence; understanding of human behavior; abstract love for humankind; ability to create and orient self in human society; philosophical ideals.

*The Prepared Environment*

Classrooms at Northwest Montessori School follow Dr. Maria Montessori’s guidelines for the creation of a beautiful and prepared environment that inspires the child’s natural tendency towards work. The Prepared Environment is not a carbon copy – it is a unique, thought-out environment that can change and evolve over time in accordance with the needs of the children. It takes us into the real world and is designed for the particular kind of work that matches the natural interests of the child at a particular stage of development. Some common elements of any Montessori Prepared Environment are to promote, assist, nurture, and protect development; and to ensure that each individual has the liberty to follow their own natural path of development.

*Characteristics of the Primary Prepared Environment*

The Montessori materials of the Primary environment have been developed and in use for over a century and are designed to optimally support the growth and development of the child aged 2 ½ - 6. A well-prepared Primary classroom is clean and orderly. Each object has a specific place on the shelf and remains there unless in use. The environment features materials and furnishings proportional to the size of the children, enabling them to function

with the utmost independence. It is simple, intentionally limited, and comfortable. Everything the child needs is within reach. There is a teacher, well-trained and cheerful, ready to put the children in contact with the materials that are the catalyst for their concentration and self-construction.

Children enter the classroom with lessons in *Practical Life*: pouring, washing, polishing, and sweeping all provide opportunities for practicing hand-eye coordination, task persistence, and concentration. These real-life, purposeful activities give tremendous satisfaction and will carry over at home. The *Sensorial Materials* are designed to develop and refine all five senses. At this age, the senses are especially keen; it's the time when the artist's eye and the musician's ear are developed. The materials are designed to help the child classify and give mental order to the experiences they are absorbing from their environment, and to give the vocabulary and comparative language that accompanies them.

In addition to Practical Life and Sensorial Materials, the Primary environment has materials to enhance understanding of *Language, Mathematics, Science, Geography, Music, and Art*. As children move through the classroom, they may choose to work with a puzzle map or models of various land forms, play the bells or walk on the line, trace metal insets or manipulate materials that sink and float. For language, the children may choose to work with nomenclature cards, sandpaper letters, and the moveable alphabet. For mathematics, the child has the opportunity to count with the spindle box or to use the golden beads to explore the decimal system up to the thousands. The Primary environment has been furnished with concrete materials that the children may manipulate independently with their hands and minds.

### Characteristics of the Elementary Prepared Environment

As the children transition to the Elementary classroom, they do not require as many concrete, sensorial materials. While there are many common materials between the Primary and Elementary environments, the Elementary environment is designed for the more complex intellectual work of the elementary-aged child. This child continues to use the Montessori materials that are on the shelves, but also begins to look beyond the classroom for information.

The Elementary Prepared Environment provides *grammar boxes* for language. The student manipulates color-coded cards that teach the parts of speech, building upon the work begun learning the function of words in the Primary environment. A child explores math concepts through the use of bars of beads, "*racks and tubes*" for long division, or the

*checkerboard* to learn higher concepts in mathematics. *Science* is taught through experimentation and research. *Art* comes in many lessons, such as watercolors, clay, and charcoal shading.

Children in Elementary develop new interests, particularly the love of facts and figures, the sense of social justice, and the glories of the imagination. Interests are now global and cosmic. The Elementary student is constantly conducting research projects, seeking the subjects which interest them the most. The Elementary Environment is designed specifically to *not* include every resource the student may need to complete a project. For information, the students plan Going-Outs, which take them to the library, zoo, museum, or an expert in the field for more information.

### Montessori At Home

Parents at Northwest Montessori frequently ask, “What can we do at home? How can we assist in our child’s Montessori experience?” First of all, *enjoy your children*; they are one of life’s greatest gifts. Share your home with them and everything you enjoy. As they age, continue to share more and more of life’s experiences and simple tasks with your children. Help them to gain independence as they progress through the planes of development.

“Help me to do it myself” is the theme song of the child all the way through adolescence. It is so strong that it is the source of many parent-child conflicts. Help the child to be as independent as possible in the care of self, care of the home, doing for others. Dr. Montessori stresses that the greatest obstacle to development is the well-meaning, overly-helpful adult. In the words of Montessori, “Every useless aid prevents development.”

*The Primary Child* – Children under the age of six have a heightened sensitivity to shape, size, color, taste, hearing, etc. They respond strongly to the order and décor of your home with their powerful absorbent minds. Play music you enjoy; show them the art objects you appreciate. Name the things that you love and that will be the foundation for their own tastes and values. Teach them the names of the flowers in the garden, the names of all the tools you use.

If someone in your home or neighborhood speaks a different language, encourage your child to listen. The ear then opens to the new system of speaking and will never completely close. It is well-known that if the ear has opened to a second language, it will open more readily to a third. At this age, children have heightened abilities; never again will it be so easy to make the sounds of another language.

“Teach by teaching, not correcting” is one of our maxims. Demonstrate using exaggerated, slow movements. Analyze such simple operations as closing a door, folding, etc. and the child will be grateful.

Above all, believe in the developing child. Be aware of their plane of development and watch carefully as they progress into the second plane.

### *The Elementary Child*

During the second plane of development, children are more emotionally stable; their interests become global and insatiable. The absorbent mind is fading, and they use more reasoning and become more reasonable. They have become skillful with their hands and can share in more of your activities. To help with the intellectual insatiability, have at home a good dictionary and encyclopedia. Make trips to the library. Lend a listening ear to the new facts they are learning, even when you do not feel a particular need for them.

Children at this age are preoccupied with justice, for what is “fair” and “unfair.” They have little patience with unfairness. Since perfection is impossible, it is the cause of parent-child conflicts. Be willing to discuss such things until they see that justice is an ideal.

Second-plane children are also very social. They are making lasting friendships. They are beginning to enjoy team sports and cooperative work and play. They need time for undirected play with others. This can be arranged at home or at local play fields where there is supervision without too much adult direction. Encourage your children in hobbies, as these are the basis of lasting interests.

### *The Adolescent*

Adolescence can be one of the most challenging planes of development for parents. The adolescent is rapidly seeking independence and is apt to challenge authority. Give the adolescent the ability to engage in reality-based, hands-on activities; to seek meaningful relationships with their peers; and to discover the world around them. Remember that a characteristic of the third plane is to be a “social newborn” who is fascinated with the exploration of humanity. They are seeking independence more than ever. To disrupt this quest is to inhibit the development of the third plane child.

## SECTION III: GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Admission and Enrollment Procedures**

1. Families interested in enrolling their child may call the main office to schedule an appointment for a classroom observation.
2. This observation is followed by an interview with a school administrator.
3. To apply, complete the online application form and submit the non-refundable application fee.
4. Upon acceptance, an enrollment agreement and non-refundable registration fee must be returned to the school office.
5. Submission of the required student paperwork including the immunization form and student information and registration form must be completed to finalize the enrollment process.

### Enrollment Details

#### *Primary Classes*

- Entry level in the Primary Program is around the age of 2 ½ - 3 ½.
- Children must have mastered toilet learning before enrolling.
- Children age 4 and older who have begun their Montessori education at another Montessori school may be considered for admission as transfer students.
- Children age 4 and older who have no prior Montessori experience may be considered for admission depending upon spaces available, the balance of ages and genders, an interview with the parents, and a visit to the school by the child.
- Children age 4 and older are required to make a one-on-one classroom visit with a lead Montessori teacher, by appointment. Additional visit(s) may be required by the teacher.
- All students will have a one-month trial period to assure the student and the community will create a successful experience at school.
- If a child has attended a previous school, copies of school records will be required.
- Children age 4 and older who have attended a previous school, will also be required to have a former or current teacher complete a Student Evaluation Form. The school administration will provide you with this form upon request.

#### *Elementary Classes*

- Children are enrolled in the Elementary in the fall at age 6 – 7.
- Occasionally a group of 2 or more children will transfer from the Primary program during the academic year. The decision as to when the child will enter Elementary is made by the Primary teachers, Elementary teachers, administrators, and parents.

- Children enrolled in the Primary classrooms have priority in enrolling in Elementary.
- Placement of students from outside NWM will be dependent upon available spaces, the balance of ages and gender, prior school experience, interviews with the parents, and a visit to the school by the child.

### *Transfer Elementary Students*

Occasionally there is space to start a child in our Elementary Program with no prior Montessori experience to balance the mixed-age classroom with a child of a specific age and gender. The steps for enrollment are as follows:

1. Families interested in enrolling their child may contact the main office to determine if space is available, and if so, to schedule an appointment for a classroom observation and meeting with the Admissions Administrator.
2. To apply, complete the online application form and submit the non-refundable, non-transferrable application fee. Progress reports, transcripts, evaluations, and achievement test scores, if available, should also be provided.
3. Prospective students will also be required to have a former or current teacher complete a Student Evaluation Form. The school administration will provide you with this form upon request.
4. The Admissions Administrator reviews the application and additional materials.
5. Parents and prospective student meet with lead teacher after school at a mutually agreeable time. During this visit, the student will spend additional one-one-one time with the teacher while the Admissions Administrator simultaneously meets with parents to answer questions.
6. The Admissions Administrator will arrange a half-day classroom visit for the prospective student.
7. The family is notified of the status of their application by the Admissions Administrator.
8. Upon acceptance, an enrollment/tuition contract and non-refundable registration fee must be returned to the school office.
9. Submission of the required student paperwork including the immunization form and student information form must be completed to finalize the process.
10. All elementary transfer students have a sixty-day trial period to assure the placement is successful for both the individual student and the classroom community. If during this trial period the determination is made that Northwest Montessori School cannot meet your child's needs, you will be asked to withdraw your child and the enrollment agreement will be terminated.

### Admission Placement Policy

Criteria for placement is based on classroom availability, as well as the child's age and readiness for the program. We strive to maintain classrooms that are balanced in age and gender, as this provides the optimal environment for academic and social growth. Priority for placement of new students is given as follows:

1. Siblings of current students
2. Children with previous Montessori experience
3. New applicants

### Completion of the Primary & Elementary Cycles

The integrity of the program depends upon the consistency and continuity of the mixed-age classroom community. Therefore, each and every child's completion of the final or "capstone" year in the Primary Program is important to all the children in the classroom community, not just the eldest children. Likewise, the Elementary Program is six years, which means an individualized education that allows each student to progress through the curriculum at their own pace.

When siblings are considered for admission, the school will give priority to families that have kept their older child(ren) enrolled for the full Primary cycle (3 to 4 years) over those who have not. Therefore, NWM reserves the right to revoke admission priority otherwise provided under the enrollment policies. NWM will continue to evaluate each situation in good faith on a case-by-case basis. The needs and composition of the classrooms will determine NWM's admissions decisions.

### Additional Admission and Enrollment Information

Children with Special Needs: Children with special needs are qualified for admission if the child can meet the general admission requirements. If your child needs an accommodation within the application process or within the classroom, please discuss these accommodations with the School.

Accommodations may be met if:

1. The requested modification is reasonable for the School to accommodate;
2. The requested modification is necessary to enable the student to participate in the program; and
3. The modification does not fundamentally alter the nature of the application of the Montessori philosophy and curriculum and/or cause an undue burden to the School.

Specific trial period and evaluation procedures may be established prior to admission as needed. Similarly, periodic assessment may also be required during the school year and prior to re-enrollment as deemed necessary by the School. An educational assessment made during this time will determine the child's progress and whether our environment supports the developmental needs of the child.

### Developmental Monitoring and Screening

**Developmental monitoring** observes how your child grows and changes over time and whether your child meets the typical developmental milestones in communication, social and problem-solving skills, and physical ability. When you take your child to a well check, your health care provider will also do developmental monitoring. They might ask you questions about your child's development or will talk and play with your child to see if he or she is developing and meeting milestones. A missed milestone could be a sign of a problem, so the provider or another specialist will take a closer look by using a more thorough test or exam.

**Developmental screening** takes a closer look at how your child is developing. The *Ages and Stages Questionnaire* is one example of a commonly used developmental screening tool. Your child will get a brief test, or you will complete a questionnaire about your child. The tools used for developmental and behavioral screening are formal questionnaires or checklists based on research that ask questions about a child's development, including language, movement, thinking, behavior, and emotions. Developmental screening can be done by a health care provider, but also by other professionals in healthcare, community, or school settings.

Your child should be screened if you or your doctor have a concern. However, developmental screening is a regular part of some of the well-child visits for all children even if there is not a known concern.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends developmental and behavioral screening for all children during regular well-child visits at these ages:

- 9 months
- 18 months
- 24 or 30 months

If your child is at higher risk for developmental problems due to low birthweight, pre-term birth, environmental risks, or other factors, your healthcare provider may also discuss additional screening. If a child has an existing long-lasting health problem or a diagnosed condition, the child should have developmental monitoring and screening in all areas of development, just like those without special healthcare needs.

If your child's healthcare provider does not periodically check your child with a developmental screening, you can ask that it be done.

Using developmental screenings can be instrumental in identifying areas of concern that may warrant further evaluation, which in turn will indicate whether additional support is needed. According to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, about 1 in 6 children have one or more developmental or behavioral disability such as autism, a learning disorder, or ADHD. In addition, many children have delays in language or other areas that can affect how well they do in school. When children receive support as early as possible, it can prevent problems from becoming more challenging as they get older.

### *The Centers for Disease Control website*

(<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/screening.html>) is an excellent resource for further information on developmental screenings and includes resources such as an age-specific list of developmental milestones to look out for:

[https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/Checklists-with-Tips\\_Reader\\_508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/Checklists-with-Tips_Reader_508.pdf).

Your child's health care provider is also an excellent resource for developmental monitoring and screening information.

Please see the *Community Resource* pages in this handbook for more a more detailed list of resources on child development and available services.

### Readiness for the Elementary Program

Primary teachers observe children closely during everyday classroom activities to take note of their ongoing progress and development for the duration they are in the program. Knowing more about children's skills and strengths helps teachers and families work together to support their growth and development.

For the eldest or "capstone" 5 and 6-year-old children in the Primary Program, this also means determining readiness for the Elementary Program, or first grade. Teachers take an inventory of each child's developing skills in various areas, including *social-emotional, physical, cognitive, language, literacy, and mathematics*. Your child's Primary teacher will discuss these developing skills with you at fall and spring conferences, and as needed or requested.

### Re-Enrollment

Re-enrollment for the coming school year occurs in February. Currently-enrolled families will receive an enrollment agreement and will be asked to return it along with the non-refundable, non-transferrable re-enrollment fee to secure their child's place for the next academic year. Updated health and student information forms are due prior to the

beginning of school in September. Applications for siblings should be submitted at the same time as re-enrollment for current students so that the school can plan accordingly. As stated in our Admission Placement Policy, sibling applications received at the time of re-enrollment are given priority over new students entering the school.

### Withdrawal

Enrollment is an annual commitment, and tuition is due in accordance with the payment plan you select. Provisions are made for each child based upon the enrollment agreements received at the time of enrollment or re-enrollment. Most of the costs relating to the resources needed for the coming year are committed in the Spring, and the school will incur these costs even if the child is withdrawn. It is necessary, therefore, that each family understands that by signing the enrollment agreement, they are obligated to pay a pro-rated portion of the tuition for their child even if their child is absent from school for any reason or if they withdraw their child.

In the event you withdraw before the school year is over, written notice of no less than 30 days should be provided to the Administration. Tuition liability for withdrawing your student(s) prior to the end of the school year is detailed in the enrollment agreement.

### Termination of Enrollment

Admission and continued enrollment at the School and participation in its activities are privileges which may be temporarily or partially suspended, totally withdrawn, or terminated by the School at its sole discretion (a) for failure to pay, when due, any and all amounts due to the School under the enrollment agreement for the current or any prior school year during which the Student was or is enrolled in the School; (b) for academic or disciplinary reasons; (c) for failure of the Student or any of his or her parents, legal custodians, or guardians to fully comply with any and all policies, rules, and regulations of the School as they now exist or as they may be amended or supplemented at any time; (d) in the event that the School determines, at its sole discretion, that there does not exist a constructive and positive working relationship between the School and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the Student; (e) for such other reasons as the School may determine to be in the interest of the health, safety, or orderly learning environment of the student, other students, faculty, or staff.

Please note: past-due tuition and fee amounts will be noted in all school records, transcripts, progress reports, and teacher recommendations and evaluations released to other schools.

### Action Plan & Evaluation Period

If a question arises as to whether a child can function successfully in the school, the parents, teacher, and administration will hold a conference to discuss ways in which the needs of the child might best be met. In such cases, an action plan and evaluation period will be established. The teacher, parents, child, and administration will agree to certain goals for improvement over a stipulated period of time. These goals will be documented in a written action plan which is clearly defined, with measurable outcomes.

Parents will be informed regularly of the child's progress and are expected to support the child in achieving his or her goals, including developmental screening, professional assessment, and therapeutic intervention, if deemed necessary by the teacher and administration. Families are encouraged to inform the child's primary health care provider so that developmental and health evaluations may be conducted, and the provider may serve as a coordinating support for the family. Please refer to the *Community Resource List* in this Handbook for more information.

Should a professional assessment take place, it is expected that the family will provide the school with complete copies of all assessment information in order that the school can make reasonable accommodations to assist the student. Assessment recommendations for additional support personnel, such as a one-on-one teaching aide, is to be coordinated with school administration and would be provided at the family's expense.

At the end of the established evaluation period, the teacher and administration will evaluate whether the goals for improvement have been met. A meeting will be arranged with the parents to discuss the results of the evaluation period and action plan. At that time, a determination will be made as to whether the needs of the child and of the classroom community are able to be met.

If a determination is ultimately made that our program is unable to meet the needs of the child, the family will be informed of this decision in person and in writing by the administration, which will detail the reasons leading to the decision. If the family wishes to appeal the decision, they may do so in writing within one week to the administration. The administration will evaluate the appeal and will inform the family of the final decision.

In the effort to support the growth and development of each child, Northwest Montessori will continually strive to promote children's social-emotional and behavioral health and appropriately address challenging behavior; form strong, supportive relationships with

children; provide resource information about community-based service providers and connect families to additional services and supports as needed; form strong relationships with families; expand our understanding of culture and diversity; and utilize self-reflective strategies and cultural awareness training to prevent and correct implicit and explicit biases, including racial/national origin/ethnic, sex, or disability biases.

#### Transition to Another School or Program

We ask families who choose to transition to another school or program to give us ample notification of this upcoming change so we can develop a transition plan to support the child and family. We will provide the new school/program with the most recent progress reports and immunization records upon receiving a formal signed request or will provide these documents to the family. Faculty members are also able to write recommendation forms to specific schools upon request. Please note that these requests are submitted by the teacher directly to the program in a sealed envelope or via private link in order to ensure confidentiality and a full and honest review.

### **Financial Information**

#### Tuition, Fees, Payment Plans, and Receipts

Tuition is based on the academic school year (early September – mid-June). Tuition may be paid annually; in three payments; or in 10 installments via credit card or monthly or post-dated checks. The enrollment agreement is signed annually with a tuition obligation percentage for the entire year, outlined on the enrollment agreement. Northwest Montessori also offers an approximate 15% tuition discount for siblings.

Receipts for tuition payments are available upon request. If you would like to receive regular statements, please contact the main office at (206) 524-4244.

#### Tuition Assistance

A limited amount of financial aid is available by way of loans and partial scholarships for families whose child has been in attendance for at least one full academic year, and whose financial statement is paid current with no outstanding balance. The awards may be for periods of one month to a full school year.

Tuition Assistance applications must include the most recent W2 form and be submitted by March 1<sup>st</sup> for consideration for the coming academic year. Award notifications are sent by April 1<sup>st</sup>. Tuition Assistance applications may be requested from the Head of School or the Business Administrator at the Wedgwood (main) office.

### Working Connections Subsidy

The Washington State Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) subsidy program helps families with low incomes pay for childcare while they work. Northwest Montessori is a participating Working Connections childcare provider. For more information, please visit <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/earlylearning-childcare/getting-help/wccc>.

## **Daily Schedule and Hours of Operation**

Each classroom at Northwest Montessori School has its own daily schedule. The following are the guidelines that teachers use to schedule the daily classroom environment.

### *Daily Primary Schedule for Half Day, Full Day & Dawn to Dusk*

For Primary children (ages 2 ½ - 6), the schedule is as follows:

*Half Day:* 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

*Full Day:* 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

*Dawn to Dusk:* 7:00 am – 6:00 pm

Assistants will courteously greet your child(ren) at the classroom door and encourage them to hang up their own coat and put away shoes and lunchboxes on their own. This fosters independence and sets the tone for the whole day. The same procedure will be followed at dismissal. Saying goodbyes and hellos at the classroom door makes for an easier separation and reuniting for all. A staff member is available to help with this transition, if needed. The adult should sign the child in/out on the tablet provided with their full, legal signature.

7:00 – 9:00 am	<u>Dawn to Dusk Arrival:</u> Children arrive in the classroom and are signed in. Children engage in free-choice activities.
9:00 am	<u>Arrival:</u> Children enrolled in all primary programs arrive in the classroom and are signed in by their parent or authorized adult.
9:00 – 11:00 am	<u>Work Cycle:</u> Teachers give individual and group lessons to students. Children independently choose their activities with the Montessori materials. Children have individual or group snack. Spanish class meets once per week.

11:00 am – 12:00 pm	<u>Group Time &amp; Outdoor Play</u> : Children enjoy a large group activity (singing, reading, games) and outdoor play.
12:00 pm	<u>Half Day Dismissal; Lunch Set-Up</u> : Half day children are dismissed and signed out; full day and dawn to dusk children prepare for lunch.
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<u>Lunch</u>
1:00 – 3:00 pm	<u>Afternoon Work Period/Rest Time</u> : Teachers give individual and group lessons to the eldest full-day children, who are also free to independently choose activities with the Montessori materials. Young full-day children have a rest or nap period.
3:00 pm	Nappers awake
3:00 pm	<u>Full Day Dismissal</u> : Full day children are dismissed and signed out by their parents or authorized adults.
3:00 – 6:00 pm	Dawn to Dusk children have afternoon snack, engage in free-choice activities, and (weather permitting) enjoy outdoor playtime. Children are picked up and signed out by their parents/authorized adults.
6:00 pm	<u>End of Day</u> : Program closes.

### *Elementary Daily Schedule*

The elementary school day is *8:45 am – 3:15 pm*. Children in the elementary program are welcome and encouraged to walk themselves into the building. An elementary staff member will greet children as they arrive and will bring the children outside for dismissal at the end of the school day.

7:00 – 8:45 am	<u>Early Birds</u> : Children enrolled in the before-school program arrive and must be signed in by a parent or authorized adult. Children then engage in free-choice activities.
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8:45 am	<u>Arrival</u> : Children walk into the building, are welcomed by a staff member, put their belongings away, and join class.
8:45 – 12:00 pm	<u>Morning Work Cycle</u> : Teacher leads individual and group lessons and activities while the remaining children work with Montessori materials. Group meetings occur weekly, as well as individual student/teacher meetings. Spanish is taught weekly.
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<u>Lunch &amp; Outdoor Recess</u>
1:00 – 1:30 pm	<u>Silent Reading</u> . Teacher may work with individual children at this time.
1:30 – 2:30 pm	<u>Afternoon Work Cycle</u> : Teachers lead individual and group activities while remaining children work with Montessori materials. Physical Education occurs twice per week.
2:30 – 3:15 pm	<u>Read-Aloud</u> : Teacher reads aloud to all children in class.
3:15 pm	<u>Dismissal</u> : Children who are not enrolled in the after-school program are dismissed to parents/authorized adults.
3:15 – 6:00 pm	<u>“Coocadagy” After-School Program</u> : Elementary children enrolled in Coocadagy are involved in various activities, such as swimming, gymnastics, arts, and free play. Parents & authorized adults enter the classroom to sign their child out from the program.

## **Staggered Start**

We begin our year with a staggered start for all new students, allowing the children a developmentally appropriate, gradual start to the school year. All new primary students, as well as students entering a new classroom will be offered a 15-20 minute Open House visit prior to their individually scheduled first day of school. These visits allow the child & their family the opportunity to visit and explore the classroom privately with the classroom teacher(s).

All returning students will join us for an orientation class, allowing them to assimilate to the changes in the environment and reintegrate into the classroom routines.

Children (& families) will be notified, via email or phone call from their teacher, of their specific day & time for their visit or orientation. At the beginning of the new school year, the Primary teachers carefully prepare a “Stagger Start” list for new students. On the first day of school returning students attend their class, allowing the students to begin building the classroom dynamics with a smaller group. During this time the teacher introduces (or reintroduces) the learning environment to the students. New students are scheduled for shorter individual visits during the following days. This stagger start allows the teacher to spend small-group time or one-on-one time with each new student. This process helps young children with their transition, and offers them better opportunities to get the attention they may need.

## **Attendance Procedures**

### Sign-In and Sign-Out Details

Parents or other adults authorized to drop off and pick up your child from school shall sign the child in and out of school daily, using a full, legal signature. This is performed on the iPad provided for this purpose. As these are legal attendance records, we ask that the *tablets be reserved for adult use only*.

Additionally, when dropping off and picking up your child, *be sure to make some form of contact with a staff member*. This can be as simple as eye contact and a wave, but it is essential for staff to be aware of when your child is in your custody, particularly at pick-up time.

### Late Pick-Up

Please note that in every classroom, a *\$25 late fee will be charged daily for any child picked up after the scheduled pick-up time*.

### Child Care

Assistants at Northwest Montessori School may make themselves available for baby-sitting outside of school hours. School hours are 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. Assistants may also need to be present at the school for early morning, late evening and weekend activities. Please do not ask, or expect, an assistant to make himself or herself available to you during their scheduled shift.

When hiring a school assistant to babysit, please understand they are NOT doing so in the capacity of a Northwest Montessori School employee. The school does not have control over your child and or over the care provided by the assistant in these circumstances.

Our assistants are very special to us. We spend a lot of time, money, and energy finding, screening, training, educating, and building relationships with them. Families and children within our school also have grown to know and love the relationships they have built with their teachers. Please do not recruit them for any position that would require them to leave their position with the school (i.e. part-time or full-time nanny).

### Late Arrival

For the safety and security of your child, it is required that all children arriving late are escorted into the building and signed in by an adult. Please be sure a staff member is aware of your child's arrival so that we are sure to account for your child. This is of major concern in the event of an emergency.

It is not always possible to schedule appointments outside of school hours. If this is the case, please notify your child's teacher by leaving a note, emailing, or you may call the school office and the information will be relayed.

### Regular Attendance and Being on Time

We cannot over-emphasize the importance of regular attendance, and of being on time. Children are very sensitive to the order of the day. They need an opportunity to greet their teachers and say hello to friends before settling in to their school day. Children who enter the classroom late miss the opportunity for that transition, which can in turn make them feel uncomfortable entering class. They may miss an important lesson, activity, or communication regarding the day's events.

Likewise, children need to attend regularly in order to internalize the rhythms and routines of the school day, to form friendships, and to progress through the curriculum. It is strongly encouraged that planned absences such as family vacations are scheduled during school breaks.

We consider more than six late arrivals for the year to be problematic. Teachers are expected to speak with parents directly about late arrivals. If there is no improvement, then teachers are expected to inform the administration when late arrivals are excessive. At that point, the administration will contact the parent and together they will discuss how to manage more timely arrivals and/or whether continued enrollment is appropriate. If you have a personal situation that is contributing to your late arrivals, please speak to the staff about the situation as your comfort level allows. Open communication is important and encouraged.

## Scheduled School Closures

School holidays, when possible, will coincide with those of Seattle Public Schools. In addition, there will be **eight** conference days per year when school will close at noon and parents will come in for an individual conference with the teacher. Four conference days will be held in the fall, the remaining four in the spring.

In addition, teachers have **six** in-service days per year. These dates are published annually on the school calendar.

Dawn-to-Dusk classes will close on legal holidays and six in-service days. These classes will remain open with substitutes on many other scheduled school closures. These dates are published annually on the school calendar.

## First Fridays

We believe that a strong partnership between all of the caregiving adults in a child's life is essential to supporting their development. We have established a variety of ways to help further this partnership between parents and a child's lead teacher. However, due to the nature of our all-day programs we have struggled to find routine times for the staff working in each classroom to have an established time to meet and strategize how best to support each child. In-service days alone do not provide consistent enough team meetings. Therefore, **on the first Friday of each month from October through May we will be open from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM for primary classrooms and 8:45 AM to 3:15 PM for elementary classrooms.** We believe this is in the best interest of the children and directly benefits child outcomes.

## Unexpected School Closures

School may close due to inclement weather. School closure, delay announcements, and unexpected early dismissal will be made on KIRO TV channel 7, KING TV channel 5, our school website and via email. If school is delayed in opening, all classes will begin at 10:00 a.m. unless you are notified otherwise by way of the news channels identified above or the school website. In addition, detailed messages will be left on voice mail at all branches. If the school is forced to close early, families will be contacted immediately. Every family is encouraged to have an emergency plan in place in the event of school closure, so each child may be picked up quickly. An adequate supply of extra food and water will be on hand for emergency situations. It is the practice of NWM to provide the most comfort possible in an emergency situation. A full copy of the Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan is

provided to each family annually; additional copies are available in the school office and in your child's classroom.

## **Summer Programs**

Northwest Montessori School offers a summer program to students who are currently enrolled in our school. Yearly tuition extends from the first day of the academic school year in September to the last day of school in mid-June. Summer programs are **in addition to yearly tuition** and are in session beginning the week after the end of the school year through the third week in August. All programs at all branches are closed the two weeks before the start of the school year for maintenance, teacher preparation and planning. Summer registration is available in April and will include the current tuition rates for summer.

## **Religious, Holiday, or Cultural Activities**

Northwest Montessori School is not affiliated with any religious organization. Cultural celebrations are shared at different times throughout the school year. Parents are invited to share their family rituals and celebrations. Children who do not wish to participate are excused and invited to do something else within the classroom.

## **School Field Trips and Outings**

Parents will be notified in advance concerning all outings from the school. Parental permission is required and is included on the student information enrollment form each year. Primary children will occasionally take field trips as an entire class. Elementary students will have the opportunity to participate in individual "Going-Outs" which are planned by the children and overseen by an adult. The Elementary classes will also take small or large group field trips. Northwest Montessori School has vans to transport the elementary outings.

Walking field trips are also taken throughout the school year at all levels. A walk to a nearby park, playground or neighborhood is thoroughly enjoyed by the children.

## SECTION IV: HEALTH, NUTRITION & SAFETY

### Student Health Policies

Northwest Montessori School's health policy is a description of our health and safety practices. Our policy is prepared by the administration. Our staff is oriented to our health policy at the beginning of each school year. The health policy is accessible to staff and parents and is located in the office area at each branch, as well as in each classroom.

For each child we keep up-to-date health information including the last physical examination, immunization records, and consent for emergency care.

### Illness Exclusions for Staff and Children

Do not send your child to school on days when any or all of the following symptoms are present:

- Diarrhea\* (two or more watery stools or one bloody stool within 24 hours)
- Vomiting\* (two or more times within 24 hours)
- Open or oozing sores, unless properly covered with bandages
- Suspected communicable skin infections such as pink eye, impetigo, and scabies. Children may return 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment.
- Lice or nits (students may return after treatment)
- A fever\* of 100° Fahrenheit or higher and also one or more of the following:
  - Earache
  - Headache
  - Sore Throat
  - Rash
  - Fatigue that prevents regular activities

**If any of the aforementioned conditions presents while the student is at school, they will be sent home. \*Your child must be symptom-free (e.g. without the use of fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours before returning to school.**

### Injury and Illness Policy

Children who show signs of illness will have their temperature taken. If an injury or illness should occur at school, the incident and treatment will be recorded on an incident log and the parent will be notified immediately, if necessary. Non-emergency incident reports will be given to the parents at the end of the school day. Parents will be notified in writing

when their children have been exposed to infectious diseases or parasites. Notification may either be in a letter given to each parent or will be posted in a visible location.

Communication procedures in the event of illness or infectious diseases:

- If your child is sick at home, we ask that you call the school office at your local branch before the start of class to let us know your child is absent due to illness so that we can inform the classroom staff.
- If your child becomes ill while at school, we will contact you immediately by phone and request that your child is picked up within an hour. If we cannot reach you/do not hear back from you, we will contact individuals on your child's approved pick-up list until we are able to contact someone who is able to pick up your child.
- Please call the school office if your child or a sibling has contracted a contagious disease or parasites so that our families can be notified immediately. The office will distribute information to all families who may have been affected. Examples of common childhood illnesses needing notification are Fifth's Disease, Hand Foot and Mouth, Roseola, and Ringworm. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

#### Administration of Medications

All medications must be in the original container and accompanied by a completed form, available in each classroom. The information on the form includes:

- Child's first and last name
- Name of the medication
- Reason for giving the medication
- Amount of medication to give
- Start and stop dates
- Expected side effects
- How to store medications.

The parental consent form is good for the number of days stated on the medication bottle for prescriptions. The following medications may be administered with a parent's consent and is subject to the discretion of the staff:

- Ointments or lotions for itchy or dry skin
- Sunscreen

All other medications, including antihistamines, non-aspirin fever reducers/pain relievers, non-narcotic cough suppressants, decongestants, vitamins, herbal supplements and fluoride **must be accompanied by a consent form from the child's health care provider.** Medications will be stored according the package directions with the child's first and last

name on a container that is inaccessible to children. Consent from the child's health care provider is required to administer medication beyond the recommended dosage. Unused medications will be returned to the parents or properly disposed of.

### Emergency Procedures

1. Life threatening emergencies
  - a. One staff member stays with injured/ill child
  - b. One staff member calls 911
  - c. Parent is contacted, or emergency contacts listed on the student information form if parent is unreachable
  
2. Minor emergencies
  - a. Staff member trained in first aid takes appropriate steps
  - b. Record incident on class accident report
  - c. Report incident to parent within one hour
  
3. If parents cannot be contacted
  - a. Call emergency numbers
  - b. Call family doctor

Please make sure that your file is continuously updated with any changes so Northwest Montessori staff is able to contact you in the event of an emergency. A full copy of the Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan is provided to each family annually; additional copies are available in the school office and in your child's classroom.

### Immunizations

The State of Washington requires that all children's immunizations be up to date and current records be on file at the school. Medical, religious and personal exemptions must be stated on the form and signed by the parent. Please notify the school whenever your child is given an updated immunization, so your child's records can be kept current.

**Per Washington State law effective July 22, 2011, all children who are exempt from any or all vaccines must submit a Certificate of Exemption signed by your child's health care provider – no exceptions.**

**In May 2019, the Washington State Legislature passed a bill that removes the personal and philosophical option to exempt children from the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine required for school and child care entry. The bill took effect July 28,**

**2019 and removes the option for a personal/philosophical exemption to the MMR vaccine requirement for schools and child care programs.**

In the event there is a serious illness event at school such as varicella, pertussis, etc., unvaccinated children will be excluded from attending school until the King County Health Department advises us it is safe for these children to return.

## **Meals, Snacks and Food Preparation**

### Lunch

The school does not provide daily meals. Each child should bring a box lunch with a drink. We encourage good nutrition and would appreciate your cooperation in sending nutritious lunches and snacks. Basic to a nutritious meal is eating a variety of foods from the basic food groups: protein, grains, fruits, and vegetables. Fruits are the preferred choice for desserts. Teachers may have additional policies and guidelines for lunches in their classroom.

As your child is gaining independence, we ask that you invite them to participate in preparing the lunch. By giving a few choices of foods in each group and providing containers and supplies for making the lunch, the child will take great pleasure in this daily routine. Lunch is a special time for the children to socialize. At school the children will have a placemat, napkin and plate. Utensils are provided when needed.

Uneaten portions of food will be sent home in the child's lunch box. This may indicate too much food and you can then adjust the quantity of food to meet your child's appetite. Trust your child to eat the amount that they desire. If the child chooses to not eat all of their lunch in a Dawn-to-Dusk classroom, they will always be given the opportunity to eat more later in the day.

### Classroom Snack

Snacks are served each morning to Half Day and Full Day students, and two to three times a day to Dawn to Dusk students. Parents provide requested bulk food for supplemental snack food for the class periodically. Daily snacks will be posted in each classroom. Snacks are served between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. and again between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. Individual snacks brought from home should be prepared from nutritious foods from at least two food groups.

Snacks that are provided by families must come in the manufacturer's original packaging. Northwest Montessori School is unable to serve any snack that is homemade or not in its original package.

### Food Preparation in the Classroom

Providing ample opportunities for children to work with real objects and interact in the classroom community through purposeful materials is an important aspect of your child's Montessori education. Therefore, Northwest Montessori School encourages children to participate in food preparation activities. Children may work with food that they prepare for themselves to eat (food work on the shelf), or for the group as a whole (such as snack). Children will be closely monitored, given age-appropriate tools when needed, and encouraged to maintain a high level of hygiene during these activities.

Sometimes children will enjoy food that is brought in as part of a birthday celebration or other cultural presentation. Food allergies are posted in the classroom and always considered in the planning of food work and consumption.

### **Food Allergies**

It is the responsibility of the parent to alert the school of any food allergies that their child may have or may develop during the school year. Additional forms must be completed. Children's allergies will be posted in the location where food is prepared. **Parents must provide or suggest an alternative to foods that their child is served.**

Written directions from the child's health care provider must be presented for children who require nutritional supplements (such as iron) or are on a medically modified diet (such as a diabetic or an allergy diet).

### **Sign-in and Sign-out Requirements**

Parents are required to sign their full legal signature when they drop-off and pick-up children. The sign-in/sign-out record will be located by the entry door. Children are not permitted to sign themselves in or out of the school. Children will only be released to persons authorized on the student information and registration form unless given written permission by the parent or guardian who enrolled the child to release the child to another person. We will ask for verification of identity. Children will not be released to a parent or any other person who is or appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

### Authorization to Pick-Up a Child

**We cannot under any circumstances release your child to anyone who is not on your approved pick-up list without prior written authorization.**

- If you want your child to go home with a friend, we need a written note from you. If the child goes home with someone on a regular basis, please add that person to your approved pick-up list.
- Please send notification far in advance when possible.
- Please have as many people as possible on the approved pick-up list in case of emergency. You can add or remove approved individuals throughout the year by updating your pick-up/emergency contact information by contacting the administration.

### **Drug-Free, Smoke-Free Environment**

It is the policy of Northwest Montessori School to maintain a drug-free environment that is safe and productive for employees, families, children and others having business with the school.

The unlawful use, possession, purchase, sale, distribution, or be under the influence of any illegal drug and/or the misuse of legal drugs while on school premises or while performing services for the school is strictly prohibited. Additionally, children will not be released to a parent or any other authorized adult who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Smoking is not allowed in school buildings or grounds at any time. "Smoking" includes the use of any tobacco or marijuana products, electronic smoking devices, and e-cigarettes containing nicotine cartridges.

### **Weapons Policy**

NWM prohibits the possession of weapons on its property at all times, including our parking lots or company vehicles. Weapons include, but are not limited to, handguns, rifles, automatic weapons, and knives that can be used as weapons (excluding pocketknives, utility knives, and other instruments that are used to open packages, cut string, and for other miscellaneous tasks), martial arts paraphernalia, stun guns, and tear gas.

### **Violence Prevention**

NWM is committed to providing a safe, violence-free environment. Due to this commitment, we discourage any members of our community from engaging in any physical confrontation with a violent or potentially violent individual or from behaving in a

threatening or violent manner. Threats, threatening language, or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward or by any member of our community will not be tolerated. A threat may include any verbal or physical harassment or abuse, attempts to intimidate others, menacing gestures, stalking, or any other hostile aggressive and/or destructive actions taken for the purposes of intimidation. This policy covers any violent or potentially violent behavior that occurs at school or school-sponsored events.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

The staff of Northwest Montessori School are mandated by Washington State law and licensing requirements to immediately report any instance where there is reason to suspect the occurrences of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or child exploitation to Child Protective Services (CPS). The school may not be able to notify parents/guardian when the police or CPS are called, depending upon the recommendation of CPS.

Child abuse or neglect is defined as “any injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or negligent treatment or mistreatment of any child by any person such that the child’s health, welfare and safety is harmed.”

## **Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan**

Northwest Montessori School has an Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan describing responses to various emergency situations including: earthquakes, fires, power outage, loss of water, serious accident or illness among staff or children, severe winter storms, school intruder/strangers/volatile encounters, hazardous waste accidents or chemical emergency. A full copy of the Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan is provided to each family annually; additional copies are available in the school office and in your child’s classroom. NWM staff review it annually and rehearse portions as scheduled. All staff members are trained in First Aid, CPR and have taken a Bloodborne Pathogen – HIV/AIDS prevention course.

Licensing and state law dictate that we rehearse regularly with the children the appropriate way to evacuate the building in case of fire, how to lock down or shelter in place and how to seek protection in an earthquake. This can be upsetting to some of the younger children and we strongly encourage you to practice for earthquakes, and to develop and practice a fire evacuation plan at home so that this is a familiar concept and not just something that happens at school.

### Emergency Closure –Snow, Ice, etc.

We have the ability to send you email and text alerts via our school database when we close school. If you would like to arrange additional notification of school closures, please sign-up at [www.flashalert.net](http://www.flashalert.net) as soon as possible. We use Flash Alert to notify the media when we are closed.

Northwest Montessori School follows Seattle Public Schools decision to close due to inclement weather. If Seattle Public Schools are closed, then Northwest Montessori School is closed as well. If school is delayed in opening, all classes will begin at 10:00 a.m. unless you are notified otherwise by way of the local news outlets or the school website. In addition, detailed messages will be left on voice mail at all branches. If the school is forced to close early, families will be contacted immediately.

### Shelter in Place Situations

These situations are practiced via drills twice yearly, or as determined by Northwest Montessori. In a situation where the threat is imminent, the school will be open as long as students need to be here. The school has stores of bottled water and food for such a situation. In the event that a shelter-in-place is declared, we strongly discourage parents from coming to the school until instructed to do so.

***Severe Weather/Chemical Spill:*** Students and teachers will shelter in place in the event of tornado, nearby chemical spill, or other events that require us to seek shelter indoors. In the event of chemical spill or other air-borne hazard, the ventilation system carrying outside air will be shut down.

***Internal Lockdown:*** occurs if a threat has entered or is trying to enter the building. Students and teachers proceed to safe spaces which they are able to lock from the inside and remain there until the doors are unlocked by Northwest Montessori or Seattle Police.

***Modified Lockdown:*** occurs if an event has happened in the general vicinity, yet there is no direct or clear threat to the school. All personnel, teachers, students, and visitors are instructed to come inside the school. All exterior doors and gates will be locked by Northwest Montessori staff.

## **SECTION V: THE SCHOOL / FAMILY PARTNERSHIP, EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES**

Northwest Montessori School strives to create a strong community between the students, staff and parents. To accomplish this, we ask that parents stay active in the school and their child's education through observation, conferencing, volunteering and giving. In addition, we encourage parents to study the Montessori philosophy and to learn how they are able to bring Montessori into their home. When parents follow these guidelines, children see the parents as interested and active in their life and community.

### **Rights, Responsibilities, and Guidelines**

*Parents have the right:*

- To know that their child is cared for in a safe, supportive environment
- To unlimited access to their child (unless prohibited by court order)
- To communicate with their child's teacher regarding questions, concerns, and their child's progress
- To be informed of any serious issue pertaining to their child (health, discipline, progress, etc.)
- To be regularly informed about school activities
- To participate in the school community in a way that will utilize their interests and abilities
- To observe their child in her/his classroom environment

*Parents have the responsibility to fulfill their obligations as described in this Handbook.*

*Obligations include, but are not limited to:*

- Paying tuition and fees on time
- Dropping off and picking up their child on time
- Keeping their child's records up to date
- Keeping the school informed of any change in contact information (home/work/cell phone numbers, address, email)
- Following the health policy and informing the school of any significant medical issues, such as allergies, medications, etc.
- Making contact with a staff member when picking up or dropping off the child so that the school is aware of all the children in their care at all times
- Letting the school office know if their child will not be attending on a regularly scheduled day, and the reason why

- Acknowledging any and all communications from the administrator or teacher regarding their child's behavior and cooperating in any and all efforts to bring about improvement in the situation
- Attending Parent Education events and other school events
- Supporting our two major fundraising events: Annual Giving and the Spring Fundraiser
- Attending twice-yearly Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Becoming familiar with Montessori theory and application through reading, parent ed, workshops, etc.
- Keeping apprised of school events/activities and important information by reading the weekly email notes, newsletters, and the school website
- Informing the school of any significant changes that occur in the home, including, but not limited to: the death of a family member or friend with whom the child had a relationship; temporary or permanent separation of the child's parents; divorce or any other circumstance that could result in a change in the child's mood, behavior, or ability to concentrate

***Children have the right:***

- To experience a safe, supportive, and consistent environment
- To do their own work during the work cycle and to choose their own partners with whom to work
- To work alone if desired
- To repeat a work as many times as needed or desired
- To observe others in any activity (with their permission) without participating
- To ask for and receive help from an adult
- Not to join in a group activity if she/he prefers, unless it pertains to learning about safety issues
- To be treated with respect
- To experience discipline that is fair and non-punitive
- To receive nurturing care from staff members

***Children have the responsibility:***

- To be accountable for their actions
- To respect the rules that guide them while they are at school
- To respect the environment
- To respect the concentration of others and to not disturb others who are working
- To complete the work cycle for the materials they have chosen
- To remain with the group and staff at all times

- To care for materials and equipment properly, and return materials in good order to the shelves

### *The Role of the Adult in the Environment*

- To respect the child
- To prepare the environment
- To act as an appropriate model
- To observe the child at work
- To reinforce the guidelines
- To intervene if a child is disturbing others or behaving in a dangerous or destructive way

## **Behavior Management and Guidance**

### Northwest Montessori School's Approach to Behavior

The goal of each classroom, and of the entire school community, is that it functions as a community with each individual respectful of the needs and rights of one another. The basic ground rules of the school are that no child may hurt another in any way and no child is to interfere with the work of another.

Northwest Montessori School monitors behavior while being aware of the student's individual needs and current stage of development. Children are taught socially appropriate behavior, self-control and respect for others through the use of positive behavior guidance, natural consequences, and conflict resolution. Each Teacher is expected to develop their own individual way of addressing the usual array of behavioral support needs that arise in the classroom and elsewhere on school ground or school-sanctioned outings. As a Montessori Teacher, their actions are expected to be formulated upon:

1. Respect for each child
2. Knowledge and understanding of the developmental needs and characteristics of each child, as well as the needs of the group
3. The understanding that it is the adult's responsibility to model appropriate behavior and respectful communication (language, body language, tone) at all times

The manner in which each intervention occurs is expected to reflect a patient, respectful attitude and to consist mostly of verbal assistance. Northwest Montessori School prohibits any individual on the premises from using discipline including corporal punishment, verbal abuse, physical restraint, or withholding of food or liquid. No student of Northwest Montessori School will be subjected to any form of corporal or verbal punishment while in

school. All other discipline related incidents will result in a full report to be placed in the child's file and given to the parent.

### Limit Setting in the Child's Community

Young children test the environment to learn how their world works and to learn to make responsible choices. To help them do this, we allow the children liberty and support them in learning to make choices. We give them clear, consistent limits, and we use logical and natural consequences. Our goal is for the child to develop self-discipline. We seek to lead the child to cooperative behavior and membership in a productive, loving, caring classroom community. Methods include:

- Modeling of desired behavior by adults
- Problem-solving skills that help children learn to communicate their needs
- Careful classroom structure and ground rules
- Clear and consistent communications of behavioral expectations by adults in the community
- Giving the children opportunities to make choices regarding their behavior
- Time and help to make "amends"
- Regular opportunities to "role play" social situations and conflict resolution through the school day

Children learn what they live. As families and as educators, we are the most influential models for dealing with others. Modeling understanding, kindness, and assertiveness in our relationships with other and with the children provides the opportunity for children to learn the appropriate responses.

### Normal Peer Conflict

Normal peer conflict is a part of every child's life experience. As children learn the give-and-take of social interaction and cooperation, conflict naturally occurs. Young children are still learning self-control and developing a sense of personal space. Pushing or getting upset about not being first in line, taking an item from another child, disagreeing or saying, "I'm not going to be your friend anymore" are all examples of normal peer conflict. They do not necessarily mean a bully/victim problem exists.

### Bullying

Bullying is a willful, conscious desire to hurt, frighten, or threaten. Although bullying may consist of a single, intentional incident, it is usually a series of repeated, intentionally cruel incidents, or threat of harm, that involve the same children, in the same bully/victim roles. It involves an imbalance of power, either real or perceived. It can be physical or verbal and

can include intimidation, inappropriate gestures or touching, and social exclusion. Due to the willful and conscious nature, children under the age of 5 are not typically developmentally capable of carrying out bullying and are more often involved in normal peer conflict.

Each instance is assessed on a case-by-case basis, and staff will respond with appropriate intervention as needed.

### Discipline Procedures

When, in the judgement of the Teacher and/or Head of School, a child's behavior is disruptive, disrespectful, cruel, or unsafe to the child or others, it cannot be tolerated.

- If a child is disruptive or endangers others, staff immediately intervene in as positive a manner as possible.
- If a child has difficulty settling into the class, they are redirected to an activity by the adult.
- If a child is still unable to settle in, the Teacher will intervene and have the child remain beside or with them until the child calms and is able to make appropriate choices.
- When an incident occurs, the staff member involved will submit a summary of the incident on an Incident/Injury Report Form, which will be shared with families.

**If a child demonstrates an inability to respond appropriately to ordinary redirection, and/or is otherwise signaling through behavior that they have needs that are not being met:**

1. The Teacher informs the Head of School
2. The Teacher meets with the parents/guardians (with or without the Head of School)
3. If the Teacher is dissatisfied with the resolution, an Action Plan is established which will outline an evaluation period for resolution and a schedule of school/parent meetings to check on progress toward a goal. This Action Plan will be provided to the family.
4. If the Teacher feels they cannot appropriately communicate to parents within the context of usual parent contact, the Teacher will elicit assistance from the Head of School.

*More information about Student Action Plans can be found on pages 21-22.*

## **Parent Visits & Observations**

Parents are free to visit and observe any part of our school and your child's environment without prior notice, at all times. However, parents are encouraged to officially schedule at least two observations of your child's class during the school year. Observation is an important teaching tool in a Montessori classroom and is the most beneficial way for parents to understand their child's day. Scheduling a classroom observation prior to a conference with your child's teacher will bring insight to the parents. To make an appointment for an observation please contact your child's teacher or the school office.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher Conferences are designed for discussion regarding the time that each child spends in the classroom. Conferences are for the parents and teachers only, and children should not attend. Northwest Montessori School schedules two conference sessions per school year: in the fall and in the spring. Conferences will be spread across four days. This allows teachers to be adequately prepared and energized for every child's conference. Parents must schedule their half-hour conference with the teacher's posted schedule. During Parent/Teacher conferences, school will close at 12 noon.

## **How Do I Get Answers to My Questions?**

Here are some suggestions for resolving your general questions about our school:

### Philosophical Questions

- Attend Parent Education meetings
- Attend Parent/Teacher conferences
- Schedule an appointment with your child's Teacher
- Read books about Montessori education

### Practical Information

- Read the NWM Parent Handbook
- Read the Weekly Notes
- Contact the office
- Schedule an appointment with your child's Teacher about classroom procedure or the Head of School about school policy

### How to Address Concerns with the Educational Program

If at any time you have a question or concern about any aspect of your child's educational program, please follow the steps below, in order:

1. *Meet with the Teacher:* Northwest Montessori encourages open and direct communication between faculty and parents. The Teacher works closely with your child and is the most qualified person to answer your concerns directly. Please schedule a meeting immediately if there is a question—don't wait. It's important for everyone concerned that we move toward a solution.

2. *Meet with the Teacher and Administration:* If you do not arrive at an acceptable solution after meeting with the Teacher, please communicate your concerns to the Administration. The Administration will arrange a meeting with all parties concerned and will work toward an acceptable solution.

### Concerns Unrelated to the Classroom

Please contact the office and you will be directed to the appropriate person for resolution.

## **Parent Education Evenings and Open Houses**

Northwest Montessori School hosts many parent education evenings and open houses throughout the year. These are times for parents to come into the classroom, learn about the Montessori curriculum and meet other members of the community. In addition, these evenings are designed to educate our parents about the Montessori method and specialty topics such as the independent child, nutrition, and media.

## **School and Family Communications**

Northwest Montessori School encourages many forms of communication between the school and the families that attend. Weekly Notes are sent home via email. Weekly Notes include information for the entire school, and individual teacher notices. Please read the Notes every week, as they contain important information. Teachers may also send home additional letters or emails to their families. The website, [northwestmontessori.org](http://northwestmontessori.org), is also a source of information for our current and prospective families, as well as the Northwest Montessori School Blog. The current calendar is also posted on the website.

## **Parenting Plan**

Please provide the school a copy of a parenting plan or custody and visitation agreement if applicable to your family. In cases of divorce and separation, both parents will receive their own copies of school newsletters and reports so long as address information for both parents is on file.

### Child Custody Situations

In cases of newly separated or divorced parents, both parents retain equal access to a child's records and to the child himself or herself until we receive a court order stating otherwise. If a court order is on file in our office and a non-custodial parent arrives to pick up a child without written clearance from the other parent, the child will not be released. We also require copies of parenting plans and any restraining orders on file so that our staff may follow them.

### **Email and Social Media**

Email is a great way to contact your child's Teacher for brief communications regarding schedule questions or information, to set up a meeting, etc. It is not the communication tool to use for problem-solving, discussing important issues, or for requesting advice. Your child's Teacher will be more than happy to set up a time to have a phone conversation or face-to-face meeting regarding any concerns you may have about your child.

The internet and social media tools are integrated into everyday life. Consequently, the line between school and personal life can become blurred. The following guidelines are intended to clarify Northwest Montessori's policy with regard to the internet and social media:

- Staff members have been asked to refrain from "friending" or "following" currently-enrolled families at the school via social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat), in order to maintain appropriate boundaries and be sure that electronic communication occur via school-sanctioned means. Please know that if you have sent a "friend" request to a staff member, it is not personal when it is declined.
- Discretion is necessary when posting photos/video content taken at school events in order to protect the right to privacy for our community members.
- The Northwest Montessori website is a great way to communicate on-line via parenting or Montessori resources, local goings-on, and other family resources.

### **Volunteering at Northwest Montessori School**

Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in many activities at Northwest Montessori. Volunteering is essential for the school and helps to maintain a beautiful environment and strong community. This can be done in many ways – school beautification, material making, event planning, to name a few. When families enroll at Northwest Montessori, they are asked to complete a volunteer form indicating how they would like to be active in the school. Families will be contacted as volunteers are needed, via a phone call, email, or through postings in Weekly Notes. All families are encouraged to assist the school in the manner that is most in line with their time and talents.

In addition to individual volunteer opportunities, parents will have the chance to work at their branch at work parties, organized throughout the year, and be on committees for social events and fundraisers. Parents enjoy these events, as they provide a wonderful time for meeting other parents in their class, branch, and school.

## **Annual Giving**

Annual Giving is necessary to maintain the high standards of Northwest Montessori. Annual Giving is a way of supplementing the operational budget by means of a tax deductible, charitable gift, and keeps our tuition reasonable for all members of our community. 100% participation is expected. We ask each family to contribute a minimum of the equivalent to one month's tuition. A payment plan can be arranged.

Many employers will contribute to Northwest Montessori's Annual Giving by means of corporate matching. Please ask your employer if they will match your donation. An Annual Giving letter will be mailed home in the fall, along with a form for corporate matching.

## SECTION VI: RESOURCES & REFERENCES

### Community Resource List

#### Child Development Resources

- Child Find (developmental screenings and evaluations): [https://www.seattleschools.org/departments/special\\_education/accessing\\_services/child\\_find](https://www.seattleschools.org/departments/special_education/accessing_services/child_find)
- Children and Adults with ADHD (CHAD): [www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org), (206) 622-2127
- Families for Effective Autism Treatment (FEAT): [www.featwa.org](http://www.featwa.org), (425) 223-5126
- Hearing, Speech, and Deafness Center: [www.hsdc.org](http://www.hsdc.org), (800) 761-2821
- Learning Disabilities Association of Washington: [www.ldawa.org](http://www.ldawa.org), (425) 882-0820
- Northwest Center Kids: <http://nwcenterkids.org/early-intervention/>

**Child Protective Services (CPS)**: <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/safety/report-abuse>, (866) END-HARM

**Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)**: <https://dcyf.wa.gov>

#### Death of a Loved One, Mourning & Loss

- Providence Hospice of Seattle/Safe Crossing Program: 2811 S. 102nd St., Suite 220 Tukwila, WA 98168, (206) 320-4000, [www.providence.org/hospiceofseattle](http://www.providence.org/hospiceofseattle)

#### Domestic Violence

- King County reference list: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/how-do-i/domestic-violence.aspx>
- Washington State Domestic Violence Hotline: (800) 562-6025

#### Food Allergy

- American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology: <http://www.aaaai.org>
- Food Allergy Research and Education (FARE): <http://foodallergy.org>
- Washington State Schools Food Allergy Guidelines: [http://www.wwps.org/images/departments/health\\_services/GuidelinesCareStudentsAllergies.pdf](http://www.wwps.org/images/departments/health_services/GuidelinesCareStudentsAllergies.pdf)

#### Food Bank/Food Security Resources

- Solid Ground: <https://www.solid-ground.org>, (206) 694-6700
- Within Reach Washington: <http://www.withinreachwa.org>

## Health Insurance

- Washington Apple Health (Medicaid): <https://www.hca.wa.gov>
- Washington Health Plan Finder: <https://wahealthplanfinder.org>

## Legal

- Avvo Advisor: <https://www.avvo.com/advisor>
- Columbia Legal Services: <http://www.columbialegal.org>
- Northwest Immigrant Rights Project: <https://www.nwirp.org>

## Medical/Dental

- Children's Hospital: <http://www.seattlechildrens.org>, (206) 987-2000
- Community Health Access Program (CHAP): (800) 756-5437, <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/locations/health-insurance/access-and-outreach/community-health-access-program.aspx>
- Within Reach Washington: <http://www.withinreachwa.org>

## Mental Health Services

- Crisis Clinic: <https://www.crisisconnections.org>, *emergency: dial 2-1-1*
- Children's Hospital Behavioral Medicine: <https://www.seattlechildrens.org/clinics/psychiatry-and-behavioral-medicine/>
- King County Mental Health Resources: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/community-human-services/mental-health-substance-abuse/services/Youth/Providers.aspx>
- Ryther Center: [www.ryther.org](http://www.ryther.org)

## Nutrition

- Ellyn Satter Institute: <https://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/>
- King County Healthy Eating for Children: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/nutrition/child.aspx>

## Parent Support

- Arc of King County Parent-to-Parent Support Program: <https://arcofkingcounty.org/services/parent-to-parent.html>
- Children's Trust Foundation: <http://www.childrenstrust.org/>
- Program for Early Parent Support (PEPS): [www.peps.org](http://www.peps.org)
- Washington State Fathers Network: <http://fathersnetwork.org>

## Safety

- Car seat inspections (free): Children's Hospital, <https://www.seattlechildrens.org/health-safety/keeping-kids-healthy/prevention/car-seat-checks/>
- King County bicycle helmet resources: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/violence-injury-prevention/traffic-safety/bicycle-safety.aspx>
- Safe Kids Coalition: <https://www.safekids.org/coalition/safe-kids-seattle-south-king>
- Savvy Parents, Safe Kids: <http://savvyparentssafekids.com>

## Sexual Education/Sexual Abuse

- American Sexual Health Association: [www.ashasexualhealth.org/parents/resource-for-parents](http://www.ashasexualhealth.org/parents/resource-for-parents)
- Birds, Bees, and Kids: <http://birdsandbeesandkids.com>
- KidSafe Foundation: <http://kidsafefoundation.org/kidsafe-for-parents>
- King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (KCSARC): [www.kcsarc.org](http://www.kcsarc.org)
- Stop It Now: [www.stopitnow.org](http://www.stopitnow.org)
- Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs (WCSAP): <https://www.wcsap.org/harborview-center-sexual-assault-traumatic-stress>

## References For Further Learning

Members of the Northwest Montessori community are encouraged to learn more about the Montessori Approach to education. Please refer to the following resources or contact the office for more information about the international Montessori community:

### *Association Montessori Internationale & Association Montessori Internationale – USA*

Northwest Montessori school is recognized by AMI, whose aim is to maintain the goals of Dr. Montessori's work and passion for educating the whole child. AMI's website is an excellent resource for educators and parents alike. Please visit the Association Montessori Internationale at, [www.montessori-ami.org](http://www.montessori-ami.org) or [www.amiusa.org](http://www.amiusa.org)

### *North American Montessori Teacher's Association*

The staff at Northwest Montessori School are active in NAMTA, a teacher's association that hosts regional conferences every year. NAMTA's website provides resources, including education videos, books and journals [www.montessori-namta.org](http://www.montessori-namta.org)

## Books about Montessori Education and Parenting

Evans, Robert (2004). *Family Matters: How Schools Can Cope with the Crisis in Childrearing*. San Francisco: Jossey Press.

Kohn, Alfie (2005). *Unconditional Parenting*. New York: Atria Books.

Lillard, Angeline Stoll (2005). *Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius*. Oxford: University Press.

Lillard, Paula P. (1996). *Montessori Today*. New York: Random House.

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Montessori, Maria. (1948). *To Educate the Human Potential*. Madras, India: Kalakshetra Publications.

Montessori, Maria. (1949). *The Absorbent Mind*. Madras, India: Theosophical Publishing House.

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## SECTION VII: CONCLUSION

We welcome your family to Northwest Montessori School. We are pleased to have you in our community, and we hope that this Parent Handbook has answered any questions that you may have about our school. Please feel free at any time to contact the office and administration with any questions or comments.

### **Summary of Policies**

Our Pet Policy is available to read in the office at each location and includes information on pet care, cleaning and safety precautions for pets in the classrooms.

Our Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan is provided to each family annually; additional copies are available in the school office and in your child's classroom. This plan includes information on evacuation, temporary relocation, safety and lockdown procedures for each branch.

Our Pesticide Policy is available to read in the office at each location and includes procedures and 48-hour prior notification of any pesticide use at our facilities.

Our Health Policy is available to read in the office at each location and includes forms for procedures and administration of medications due to allergy, asthma and other medical emergency treatment.

## STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

The Northwest Montessori Parent Handbook contains the policies, procedures and other information that informs you about our daily operations, our expectations of you as school community member and reflects our commitment to excellence. Please understand:

- The handbook is intended as a reference;
- The school reserves the right to change any or all plans, policies, or procedures, in whole or in part, at any time, with or without notice;
- Nothing here creates or constitutes a contract between the school and any school family.

By signing below, you certify the following:

- I certify I have read and have had an opportunity to discuss with the administration any questions or concerns about the rules and policies contained in the Northwest Montessori Parent Handbook. This Handbook supersedes any prior Handbooks issued by Northwest Montessori School.
- I certify that I understand I have a choice to review Northwest Montessori School's Health Care Policy and Pesticide Policy and have been informed where to find the information.
- I certify that I have received a copy of Northwest Montessori School's Emergency & Disaster Preparedness Plan and have been informed where to find additional copies of this information.
- I certify that I understand that working with food is an important part of the Montessori curriculum. I am aware that my child may prepare food in the classroom, as well as consume food prepared by other children. My child may also eat food that is brought in for a cultural or birthday celebration. I understand that the allergies of the children in each classroom have been considered in all food that is prepared and/or served.
- I am aware of the American Dental Association recommendation that children's teeth should be brushed twice daily. I take full responsibility for my child's daily oral hygiene regimen.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_