



Family Handbook

School Year 2019-20

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HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

Community Montessori was founded by Barbara and Glenn Fondren with a passion to establish school choice and new learning opportunities in our community. The school developed a Board of Directors and gained 501(c)(3) (non-profit) status in November 1997. Community Montessori had its first day of school operation in August 1998, filled to capacity with 56 children. The school began at Summit Square in New Albany and added additional space in 1999 to meet its first goal, to add an age level every year through high school. The school moved to Floyds Knobs in 2000 where it was able to fulfill its second goal of allowing children to attend tuition free. This happened when Indiana passed Charter School legislation and Community Montessori became authorized as a Charter Public School by Ball State University for the 2002-03 school year. Finally, in 2006, we moved into Phase I of our “Dream School” that was designed by children, families, staff, and Board Members. Phase II was completed in 2008, and our teens’ program was added to our beautiful learning environment on St. Joseph Road.

Community Montessori held graduation ceremonies for its first graduating class in May 2011 and is now at capacity with about 620 learners ages birth through high school graduation.

Mission Statement

Respecting Children. Engaging Families. Encouraging Thoughts. Embracing the Community.

Community Montessori gives children an environment that respects all people and ideas. We also give families a vehicle to learn cooperatively, have fun and promote peace with their children. As a school family we continue to expand our minds and use this knowledge to make an impact on our community.

Our Vision

We believe in holistic education which goes beyond teaching and helps children and teens expand their minds with a focus on cooperation, peace and respect. We believe that giving learners a safe, consistent and enriched learning environment will nurture their need to be independent, critical thinkers and problem solvers. We believe they should be given time to practice and repeat new skills in a collaborative and self-correcting atmosphere. We believe in assisting each learner in developing self-respect and self-monitoring behavior instead of only making good choices when someone is watching. We provide every child and teen a continuous Montessori learning opportunity by offering an educational program for birth through high school graduation. **(See School Belief Statements, Attachment A1/A2 and Graduation Requirements, Attachment E, for further examples.)**

ADMISSIONS

Community Montessori does not permit or condone discrimination based on race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, religion, family status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or disability.

Our annual application process for all ages begins in September with a lottery deadline in December for Charter School applicants. Admission is a multi-step process consisting of the application, observation, lottery (if applicable), and enrollment.

Early Education

Our Early Education program consists of 3 & 4 year olds in a multi-age environment of 3, 4 and 5 year olds. All children in the Early Education program should be three years of age with an independent bathroom routine established.

Families wishing to apply to the Early Education program must first attend an observation to discuss the school's philosophy. An application and some additional paperwork must then be completed in order to complete the child's application. All spaces are filled based on availability, with preference given to full day positions.

It is understood that children enrolled in the Early Education program will be able to re-enroll for the next year if the parents have met their responsibilities in the Parent Commitment Form to foster the best learning environment for their child, without reapplying. Currently enrolled learners will automatically be sent an email with information about the enrollment process in March for the upcoming year. Please note that in order to transition to our school smoothly, a new 3 or 4 year old learner will start school a few days later – (day 5 or day 8) than the other children at this level. The exact date will be emailed to the parents towards the end of the summer.

Although five year olds are part of the Early Education Program, learners who will be five years old by October 1st of the upcoming year are eligible for enrollment in “kindergarten” and will need to re-apply based on Charter School guidelines.

Children enrolled in Early Education at Community Montessori are not automatically enrolled in ‘kindergarten’ but will get preference in the ‘kindergarten’ lottery if a lottery is held. All families must still complete the entire application process for the Charter School when their child is entering the ‘kindergarten’ level. This includes an application and Family Communication and Commitment forms. Children already attending CM are exempt from the observation portion of this process only.

Charter School

Our Charter School program is for ages 5-18 (“kindergarten” through “twelfth grade”). The Charter School program receives state funding and is a tuition-free program.

Any child residing in the state of Indiana that is five years old by October 1 of the attendance year may apply. Children turning 5 years old after October 1 will only be considered applicants after successfully completing an Early Entry Evaluation. Early entry kindergarten learners are not funded by the state of Indiana. Please see the program fees for tuition for early entry kindergarten.

In order to be considered for admission in our annual admission lottery, families applying to the Charter School must complete the application process by the first Friday in December. The application process consists of an application form, Family Communication Form and Parent Partner Commitment Form(s), as well as attendance at an observation session. Families with learners currently enrolled in our Early Education program as a 4 year old, do not need to complete the observation, as they have already met this requirement. Families completing this application process after the first Friday in December will be added to the waiting list behind those applicants who meet the application deadline.

It is understood that children/teens enrolled in the Charter School will be able to re-enroll each year without reapplying.

We may have more 'kindergarten' children apply than we have spaces available for 'first grade'. Therefore a lottery may be possible for incoming 'first graders'. We need to make sure you're aware that your 'kindergartener' may have to participate in a lottery for a 'first grade' spot. Should a lottery be necessary, it will be between currently enrolled 'kindergarten' level families only. There is no chance that your child will participate in the lottery after they are admitted into 'first grade'. Please contact a member of the Cupola Staff if you have any questions about this process.

Lottery

Any child/teen who currently attends Community Montessori's Charter School will not be subject to the lottery, with the possible exception of "Kindergarteners" entering "first grade". It is possible that more of our "Kindergarteners" will apply than we have spaces available for "first grade". Therefore, a lottery among those children might be necessary to determine both acceptance and waiting list order. Children who do not currently attend Community Montessori would then be added to the waiting list behind those children who already attend. **(Please see Attachment G, Lottery Guidelines.)**

If there are more new applicants applying for a particular grade level than there are spaces available, a lottery will take place to fill those spaces. The lottery, when applicable, will be conducted in February at Community Montessori.

If a child/teen already attends Community Montessori, or is chosen in the lottery, and he/she has siblings who have completed the application process, those siblings will be given preference for admission.

Per Indiana state guidelines, children of school founders, children of the school's governing body, children of Community Montessori employees as well as siblings of CM alumni will be given preference in the lottery for enrollment.

Adjustment of Grade Level for Charter School Learners

Teachers and parents are able to recommend a "grade" level adjustment for a child/teen based on social, emotional and/or academic needs for an upcoming school year. These decisions are made typically by January of the current year for the following school year. Families can direct this request to their child's teacher or advisor. Once a recommendation has been made there will be a meeting to discuss the rationale based on social, emotional, academic growth/support. Many times other staff members participate in this conversation dependent upon the circumstances of the individual learner. Based on the outcome of this meeting, the Director will finalize the decision with the teacher/advisor. A form is placed in the learner's record to document the decision.

For teens in the 15-18 year old program, families/Advisors wishing to retain a teen in his/her "junior" year should communicate that information in the spring of the "junior" year. Families/Advisors who would like a teen to graduate early should communicate that information in the spring of the "sophomore" year. A meeting will then be scheduled and appropriate documentation will be placed in the teen's record.

Mc-Kinney Vento Homeless Act

Community Montessori believes in providing equal enrollment opportunities to any family experiencing homelessness, permanent or temporary. Please refer to Attachment J for further information on how the state defines a homeless learner and what are the rights of a family seeking enrollment at Community Montessori.

HOME/SCHOOL CONNECTION

We place great emphasis on family involvement and believe that it is imperative for each learner's individual success. We invite and encourage families to participate at our school and its events. Doing so not only emphasizes to your learner the importance you place on their education, but it helps you learn more about the Montessori philosophy. The more you know, the more consistent you can be with your child/teen outside of school. The following information will support a strong home/school connection.

Visiting the Building and Studios

We encourage family members to visit the school and their learner's studio often. **All families are expected to spend at least 10 minutes a week at the observation window for Early Education families, in the studio (before or after school) for elementary children, or reviewing Advisory notes and studio communication at the teen level.** Once a parent has been approved as a volunteer and has attended the Volunteer/Substitute Workshop or watched video of the workshop, they should make a plan with the studio if visiting during the day is an option. This ensures safety and consistency among all adults in the building.

When you visit the building for longer than the time it takes to drop off/pick up your learner, you must sign in at the Curved Desk and receive a visitor badge. You will also need to sign in and receive a visitor badge if you are volunteering or acting as a Studio Assistant (substitute). This is to ensure we know who is in the building and is an important part of our school safety plan. All visitors should exit through the Cupola to return their visitor badge.

We want families to feel welcome and visit anytime throughout the day while also protecting the safety of the children/teens in our care. We have implemented a keyless entry system at the Early Education and Teen entrances for families to use. Families will be able to enter with the code only during drop-off/pick-up times at both the teen entrances and the early education entrance. The code will be sent home at the beginning of the school year and is changed annually (or more frequently if deemed necessary). We ask that you hold this code in confidence and notify a member of our staff if you have any concerns regarding inappropriate use or safety concerns. Please note that if you will be spending more than a few minutes to walk your learner into the building you must visit the Curved Desk for a visitor badge. Visitor badges will only be given if you are an approved volunteer or substitute and you have a plan with the studio for supporting or observing.

Communicating with the School

All phone calls will be answered by staff or the school's answering system. Unless there is an urgent matter, calls to speak with teachers during the school day will be directed to voicemail or we will have them return your call. Voicemail and email are checked frequently by staff, and messages responded to promptly whenever necessary. All staff voicemail messages are sent directly to that staff member's email account. The school phone number is 812-948-1000 and school email addresses and phone extensions can be found on the Contact page of our website at www.shiningminds.com. Messages for staff can also be left at the Curved Desk. Any communication with the school about a learner leaving early or going home ill, should be communicated through the Curved Desk.

Studio related questions should be directed to the teachers/advisors in order to support ongoing communication. Any question, comments or concerns pertaining to individual grievances, school procedures or policy should be directed to either the Assistant Director/Family Liaison or the Director. If this process does not resolve the situation, you may communicate to the Board of Directors by filing a Request for Presentation to the Community Montessori Board (**See Attachment F**). The Board meets throughout the year and times and dates are posted in the Cupola.

School-Wide Information and Studio Communications

OUR PRIMARY MEANS TO COMMUNICATE WITH FAMILIES IS THROUGH EMAIL. Updates from studio teachers, weekly Cupola Notes and other information are all sent home by email, so please ensure that you check your email regularly and update us of any changes to your email address. Families who do not have email or internet access should contact

the Cupola staff for assistance in setting up an email address. Families are welcome to check their email at a computer in their learner's studio or can ask the Curved Desk for support. Typically you can expect to receive school-wide information on Monday in the Cupola Notes, and studio specific emails on Friday in the studio's weekly notes home.

In addition, we utilize a school messaging system to send text, voice messages and other communication to families. Text and voice messaging will primarily be used for emergency situations to quickly notify families of pertinent information such as school closings or early dismissals. Occasionally, this system will be used for time sensitive reminders. To opt-in to our school messaging system, you must have a cell phone number on file with us. We can maintain cell phone numbers for four adults. Once your number is on file, text YES to 68453. You will receive a confirmation message if your opt-in was successful. There are information stations located in the Cupola which share pertinent school-wide information as well as community-wide information that might be of interest to families.

Studio communication areas will be designated in each individual studio. **All elementary and teens program learners are directly responsible for their own belongings and for transporting any information home to their family. Please ask your learner how this happens in their studio.**

Studio level contact lists will be provided to all families for their studio at the beginning of the school year. We ask that families respect the information of others and not send out bulk emails or other mass communications. In addition, please do not use this contact information to promote your business, event or other activity. Contact information is provided so that family members may contact one another to arrange transportation, schedule play dates, or send invitations. We appreciate your adherence to these guidelines and thank you for respecting the privacy of our families.

Inclement Weather and Emergency Dismissal Information

During inclement weather we will notify families of school closures or delays in several ways. Text, voice and email messages will be sent to families via the school messaging system. You can also call the school and press * from the main menu for pre-recorded closing information, or tune to local TV stations. **We DO NOT follow New Albany-Floyd County's schedule. Our closing/delay information will be listed under Community Montessori.** Because we have a work at home plan in place for snow days there should not be a need for us to make up any snow days. Please look for information from teachers/advisors by 10 am during snow days to support your child in completing all assignments from home. Any exceptions or changes to this process will be communicated directly to families.

Following is the schedule on closing and delay days:

	TEENS (grades 7-12)	ELEMENTARY (grades 1-6)	EARLY EDUCATION (ages 3-KG)	Nurtury (ages birth-3)	EXTENDED LEARNING
CLOSED SCHEDULE	Closed	Closed	Closed	1 hour delay 9:00am	1 hour delay 8:30am
DELAYED SCHEDULE	1 hour delay 9:20am	1 hour delay 9:40am	1 hour delay AM begins 10am PM begins 2pm	1 hour delay 9:00am	Regular Schedule 7:30 am

*When the school and Extended Learning are closed, ALL programs are closed.

Currently, Extended Learning is available on Snow Days to any child/teen that is enrolled in the Extended Learning Program. If this process changes, we will notify families immediately. Extended Learning fees are not prorated for snow days. In particularly bad weather, there are days when school AND Extended Learning are closed. Our messages will specifically say if Extended Learning is closed, otherwise, we follow the schedule above.

In the case of emergency dismissal, we will use the media and the school messaging system to contact families. A staff member will always remain with all learners until everyone has been picked up.

Family Involvement

Ten hours of family involvement are expected of our families as part of their commitment to their child's education (**See Parent Partner Commitment Forms, Attachments C1 and C2**). This commitment can be met in a variety of ways, from Parent Involvement Partnership committee participation, to mentoring on going out trips, to providing material care for studios at home. Volunteering and "subbing" in a studio is a great way to learn the Montessori philosophy and support the studio, learners and staff. Because we have a co-teacher model (with two teachers in every studio) parents who assist as a "sub" during a staff absence get the benefit of supporting the studio without the pressure of "being in charge". Community Montessori and the Parent Involvement Partnership (PIP) work together to provide a variety of additional involvement opportunities for families. Any questions regarding family involvement can be directed to the PIP Council at pip@shiningminds.com.

Partnering with families on Technology

As a Montessori school, we most certainly utilize technology when developmentally appropriate for learning. However, as a staff we work tirelessly to create the right balance for learning with real life and technology. We have also seen a direct correlation with screen time that is out of balance having negative effects on children/teens and their learning.

Although the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) suggests that children and teens have no more than one to two hours of screen time per day, our early education staff have worked with many families to reduce screen time for children from 3-6 years to even less than that - "As Montessorians, our daily observations of children have led us to a conservative conclusion in this area. What is best for children are multisensory experiences with real objects and real people. Please partner with your teachers to explore these possibilities." - Early education staff.

The AAP encourages children under 18 months should have no screen time at all. Screen use for children between 18 months and 24 months should be extremely limited and used in partnership with an adult. Screens consist of iPads, phones (borrowing the adult's), computers, TVs, tablets, gaming devices and consoles. Screen time should not be a replacement for time spent by your child engaged in real world activities. ([AAP full article](#))

We encourage elementary and teen families to create a family media plan where the whole family and each member of the family sets goals and parameters for conscious screen time usage. [Here is a tool from the AAP](#) to further support you in creating this plan -- but, we encourage parents to add themselves in as well.

Among the AAP recommendations for home:

- Parents should co-view media with children to help them understand what they are seeing and apply it to the world around them.
- For children ages 6 and older, place consistent limits on the time spent using media, and the types of media, and make sure the media does not take the place of adequate sleep, physical activity and other behaviors essential to health.
- Designate media-free times together, such as dinner or driving, as well as media-free locations at home, such as bedrooms.
- Have ongoing communication about online citizenship and safety, including treating others with respect online and offline.

Ideas at School:

- Take advantage of the drive to and from school which provides an opportunity for conversations with your child, telling true stories, singing to music, and observing the world around you.
- While in car line, please put your cell phones away so you are ready to be present with your child/teen when they arrive. This ensures that car line runs safely, smoothly, and efficiently AND is great modeling!
- When you walk into the building, put away your devices and observe and talk to your child/teen about the day ahead or completion of the day.

Parent Involvement Partnership (PIP)

Mission Statement: We believe that family involvement is the best foundation for school and personal success. We support the continued growth of each member of our school community through opportunities of involvement at the school and with its activities.

PIP is different from traditional parent associations in that our main goal is to provide a home/school connection for our families through social and educational involvement opportunities. All families are members; there is no registration or fees. PIP supports its mission by communicating opportunities to families throughout the year. These opportunities are in four main areas: Studio Support, Special Events, Staff Appreciation and Spring Celebration.

Families are encouraged to attend PIP Educational Workshops throughout the year. Different educational topics are discussed to support the home/school connection. Families are encouraged to put this “date night” on your calendar. Although childcare is not available for these workshops, some families bring books or drawing material for their child, if developmentally appropriate. These workshops will be available online at the [INFORMontessori blog](#) on our school’s website after the event for viewing by family members.

PIP information is communicated through the information boards located in the hallways in the Cupola, sent weekly in the Cupola Notes email, monthly in the “PIP Connection” email and on the PIP Facebook page. You can contact PIP to get involved at any time by emailing pip@shiningminds.com.

Fundraising and Expansion Development

Our school is very careful about any fundraising programs we initiate. We want to limit the amount of fundraising so that our communication to families is based mostly on the learner and not overshadowed by fundraising ventures. Instead of some traditional school fundraisers that may overwhelm some families, our goal is to include our families in helping our school grow. We appreciate all your support.

We currently fundraise in two different ways, through PIP and Expansion Development, to raise funds for the studios and facilities.

PIP Fundraising: A portion of all PIP organized fundraising is maintained by PIP for family activities and PIP Grants. Grants are available to studios and areas throughout our building to support learning activities and materials. Following are PIP sponsored fundraising programs:

- Cash Back Programs: Kroger, Amazon SMILE
- Box Tops for Education
- Winter Gifting Program – our annual holiday giving program
- Spring Celebration fundraising options
- Scholastic Book Fair
- Spirit wear orders
- 5K Run
- Chili Cookoff
- Lifetouch Picture Day
- Montessori Meet-ups

Expansion Development: All funds raised through Expansion Development go directly to support items from the Board Strategic Plan. There are several ways families can participate:

- Purchase a Maria’s Way Stepping Stone: Create a lasting memory for your family or business by purchasing a stepping stone, available in three sizes.
- Help Us Grow Program: Donate directly to the Expansion Fund in a one time or monthly donation. You might donate the cost of a dinner out each month, or consider donating the cost of a year of private school tuition.
- Help Spread the Word: If you know a business or organization that might like to become a sponsor of our school, let us know so we can contact them. Give contact information to our Director or Expansion Development Coordinator.
- Various other community involvement and gifting programs.

Social Media Policy

We recognize that our learners' access to technology is unlimited and also that it can be harnessed in an educational environment as an important tool in our teaching arsenal. Given its widespread use, we are often faced with 'teachable moments' with learners in regard to technology and its appropriate use.

As a school, we also have an online presence in our website, Facebook, Twitter and other accounts.

We have written and implemented a Social Media Etiquette policy (Attachment I) that you should familiarize yourself with and also share with your learner. Together, our ongoing discussions with children and teens about the acceptable use of technology and appropriate online behavior will help shape the responsible digital citizens of the future.

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

The information in this section applies across all three of our programs, Early Education, Elementary and Teens. Please see each program's individual section for more information specific to that level.

Overall Goals and Expectations

Our children and teens learn how to learn. They learn to focus their attention on an interest, and in doing so make a commitment to learning about something. Through this active engagement they discover the joy in learning. We touch their imaginations and kindle in them a sense of the limitless possibilities in their world. We recognize the importance of each learner's early experiences in the formation of an emotionally healthy, responsible adult. We see our role as nurturing the immense potential in each of them, and supporting them in the task of inner development.

We believe that learning is not neat and linear - it is a messy process. We expose learners to a range of intellectual, physical and social activities, and we give them long blocks of uninterrupted time to work with activities. In this way they take responsibility for their own learning. They learn to ask questions and to seek explanations and then to ask more clarifying questions. They learn to make decisions, to challenge themselves, and to think at higher levels.

We believe that intellectual growth is intertwined with social and emotional development. Intellectual growth flourishes in a non-judgmental community where freedom for the individual is balanced with the needs of the group. In our studios, learners can choose to work independently or with classmates. As they develop more and more competencies, they quite naturally take on increased responsibility in the activities of the studio.

We encourage learner's independence through many avenues throughout the course of the day. Just as we guide and coach a learner to put away their "work" we do the same with other tasks throughout the day. Children/teens are encouraged and expected to take care of their belongings and be an active participant in their own education. We encourage our families to not "sweat the small stuff" and challenge you to practice the same philosophy at home.

Learning Environments

Our school community consists of parents, children, teens, teachers, and other persons involved in the development of each learner. It is our goal to actively seek open communication about and consistency for your child at school, at home and at all locations responsible for the learner. We consider our school to be a YEAR ROUND/HOMESCHOOL educational program and therefore we expect learning to take place seamlessly at home, school, etc... all the time.

Studio (classroom) practices include mixed-age groupings, a focus on global education, valuing teacher observations and the careful design of the environment and materials. We feel that these practices empower all participants (children, teens, parents, and teachers) as collaborators, teachers and learners. A typical studio will consist of 25-40 learners, 3 year age groupings, with up to two teachers/advisors. In our learning environments, children and teens initiate, do, talk and collaborate. The day is theirs; the room is theirs—with its floor-rugs, tables, attractive materials and accessible storage shelves.

Mixed-age groupings enable children/teens to learn from one another, gain autonomy, and develop positive self-esteem. Diverse groupings encourage learners to accept, respect and understand themselves in our varied society. We create communities in which everyone learns, works, plays, shares and celebrates together.

Studio activities are carefully designed to focus on the development and integration of specific skills and concepts. We know that engagement with hands-on, real-world tasks supports the growth of problem-solving strategies, innovation, collaboration, reflection, and a positive disposition toward "figuring things out" — qualities needed throughout life.

The studios contain a full range of Montessori materials and other instructional materials necessary to meet the needs of the learner. These materials assist them in attaining educational and personal goals. Individual strengths and interests will steer the curriculum with a strong emphasis on lifelong learning skills.

Exceptional Learners

We respect all children/teens and their learning. We believe that all learners are gifted and they all have areas of goals. If a child/teen has an area of exceptionality that adversely affects their education, as a public charter school, we provide additional services to that learner to help them access the curriculum. Community Montessori charter school follows all state and federal special education laws. Our goal with all learning is to ensure children/teens receive additional support when necessary with their dignity and respect intact. We have a variety of services available to support individual needs through contracting with agencies and individuals in the community and creating support plans here at school if a learner qualifies for additional services. Some of those licensed services are: a Speech Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, and a School Psychologist. Licensed Special Education Staff work with Developmental Specialists (support staff) to create an environment that supports all learners.

Community Montessori believes in integrating additional services when possible to help support the educational, social and/or emotional needs of each learner and only pulling a child/teen out of his/her environment if necessary. If you feel your child/teen (enrolled in the charter school) may be in the need of additional services, please begin a dialogue with their teacher(s) first. We will do the same if we feel additional information is necessary. We will then begin a school intervention process, consult with our licensed special education teachers in that area and begin the referral process if necessary. Our school intervention process helps the staff brainstorm and implement interventions and track those interventions to help learners with specific needs. The purpose is to resolve any concerns the child/teen is having before a referral is made for a partial or full individual evaluation to determine eligibility for formal special education services.

The intervention process is usually implemented for at least a month to see if minor studio support/consistency can support the individual concern. If there is not marked improvement after interventions have been implemented by the studio teachers, the Developmental Specialists may begin the more formal process of evaluation. At any time, a parent/guardian can request an evaluation for special education services if their learner is enrolled in the charter school. Depending on the need of a child/teen, we may administer additional assessments. These assessments help the Case Conference Committee (CCC) consisting of parents, studio teachers, Developmental Specialists and the school Director to make a decision about providing additional support through special education and implementing an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). An IEP is a written plan that addresses specific areas of exceptionality and what accommodations will be made to assist the child/teen in those areas.

Dyslexia

In accordance with Indiana Senate Enrolled Act No. 217, Community Montessori Charter Public School will administer a universal dyslexia screener to all "kindergartners, 1st graders, and 2nd graders" annually. Parents/guardians have the option of opting their child out of this screener during the enrollment process. Children who show signs of dyslexia will also be given a level 1 dyslexia screener with permission from their parent/guardian. This information will be used by Community Montessori's reading specialist and teachers to best support each individual child with their reading goals.

English Language Learners

Per federal guidelines, if a child is identified as an English Language Learner by the Home Language Survey given at enrollment, the child will participate in a Placement Test to determine English language needs. If the child is found to need additional support in English language acquisition, an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) will be established to support the child in receiving English language support in the studio setting. These children will also participate in the state mandated World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) in the early spring semester.

Transgender Youth

Community Montessori believes in respecting and supporting every learner. Transgender children/teens, like all other learners, have a right to a safe and supporting learning environment. As a staff, we strive to follow best practices for providing that environment and for being sensitive to the unique needs of these learners. There is also an expectation that our families and other learners will also be sensitive and respectful.

It is our goal to support each family in an appropriate way in dealing with the issues arising from questions of gender identity. If your family is dealing with this issue and you need support here at school for your learner, or if you have questions about this issue in relation to its impact in the educational environment, please contact the Director.

Snack

Staff must be notified in writing if your child/teen is allergic to any foods.

Learners are asked to provide snack for their studio about twice a year.

Early Education Studios: Fresh fruits and vegetables should be sliced and ready to eat unless you have communicated otherwise with the studio teachers. Your child should help prepare this snack and will be able to serve themselves with another friend in the class. The snack provided should feed about 30 children a day. Water is provided for all children; please do not bring juice or other drinks.

Elementary and Teens: Learners are given more responsibility in the preparation and clean-up procedures and we encourage families to give their child/teen a budget from which they can purchase their snack for the week. We also encourage learners to practice cooking and try out various recipes that meet the guidelines for appropriate snack. Snack should consist only of fruits, vegetables, eggs, and cheese. The snack provided should feed 30-40 and should be prepared and maintained by the child/teen. Water is provided; please do not bring juice or other drinks.

Transportation

Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parent (except as applies to 511 IAC 7-36-8, under specific circumstances for learners identified for special education). Each year at enrollment, the school will offer a sign-up sheet for parents interested in carpooling and it will be emailed to families in July. Families may then contact one another to make carpooling arrangements. A copy of this list will be on file at the Curved Desk should you become interested in carpooling at a later date.

Teen drivers are able to drive themselves to school when following certain parameters. They must sign up EACH YEAR for a parking permit for that year and complete and adhere to the expectations on the Teen Parking Permit Commitment Form. They are also subject to the applicable attendance guidelines which can be found in the Attendance section of this handbook.

**Please see individual Program sections for drop off/ pick up procedures for each age level.*

Extended Learning Program

Extended Learning is available each school day between 7:30 am and 5:30 pm for enrolled children, except as noted on the Family Calendar. We currently offer three options for extended learning these are:

Before Care (7:30 am until program begins)

After Care (program's end until 5:30 pm)

Before/After Care (for learners attending full day programs only)

Any family picking up their child/teen after 5:30 pm will be expected to pay an additional \$5.00 for each 15 minute interval directly to the staff member supporting your learner, upon arrival.

As applicable, Snow Day Extended Learning is available for all learners who are enrolled in the Extended Learning Program. Enrolled learners may attend all day on Snow Days, not just at their normal time. Extended Learning fees are not prorated for Snow Days.

Learners who are absent from Extended Learning due to the birth of a new sibling may pay ½ of their monthly bill for up to two months. Please make these arrangements with the Family Liaison prior to the absence. Unfortunately, there is no prorating when children/teens miss school due to illness or personal vacation.

Extended Learning is a program (not a day care) designed for the learners that attend Community Montessori and is an extension of the Montessori philosophy. The program follows the Montessori principles and integrates the Montessori philosophy with more blended materials throughout the school year, as well as lots of outside time. It provides learners with an enriched, fun, safe, and caring environment beyond regular school hours.

There are several different locations throughout the building for children/teens enrolled in the Extended Learning Program. Often children and teens will not be in their designated area because they are exploring outside or in a different part of the building. Please check at the Curved Desk for location information.

We recommend enrolling for Extended Learning during enrollment in spring if you believe you may need it in the fall. We staff for Extended Learning based on the number of learners enrolled, therefore, if you have not enrolled for it, we may not have spaces available for your child/teen in the fall. Any changes to your learner's enrollment in Extended Learning, either dropping or adding, must be initiated at the Curved Desk. Families wishing to change their child's enrollment will be asked to complete a Change Request Form. A notice is required 15 days before any changes in Extended learning enrollment. In the absence of any notice period, additional 15 day Extended learning charges will be added to your account. A family wishing to ADD Extended Learning will be notified as soon as possible if we are able to accommodate their request.

Enrichment Programs

Enrichment programs are offered ongoing throughout the year by individual staff members, teens, parents and community members. Although Community Montessori conducts a limited background check on these individuals, we encourage all families to meet and discuss the enrichment with the provider since you will be paying them directly for the program. Each provider will provide one scholarship for a family in need of financial support.

Some examples of classes are: sign language, music, chess, drama, world languages, creative movement, ceramics, volleyball, basketball, dodgeball, archery, etc. Enrollment forms for these programs are sent home via email during the year.

We strive to make these programs consistent with the philosophy and methods of Community Montessori. Families interested in teaching or assisting in a course should contact the Administrative Services Coordinator.

Summer Enrichment Programs

To support families who need care for their learner during the summer months, staff members (in collaboration with parents and community members) put together weekly enrichment programs throughout the summer for a variety of ages. We encourage all families to meet and discuss the enrichment with the provider since you will be paying them directly for the program. Each provider will provide one scholarship for a family in need of financial support. Information will be distributed in the spring about annual offerings.

EARLY EDUCATION SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

The Early Education Program includes children ages 3-6. “Kindergarteners” are a unique group in that they are considered both Early Education and part of the Charter School.

The programs available within Early Education Program are:

- Five-day AM, PM or Double Session Early Education
- Full day “Kindergarten”

Drop Off and Pick Up

Car line forms at the Early Education entrance during drop off/pick up times. Staff members will assist young children in and out of vehicles. Families arriving after the program start time should walk their child into his/her studio. **Please, only let children cross at the crosswalks for safety and consistency. We encourage all families to turn off your vehicle’s motor while waiting to reduce pollution and potentially harmful inhalants.** Please park in designated spaces when picking up or dropping off your child.

Drop off and pick up times are as follows for Early Education.

	AM	PM	Full Day/Double Session
Drop Off	8:50 am	12:55 pm	8:50 am
Pick Up	11:45 am	3:45 pm	3:45 pm

Consistency in attendance is key to a learner’s school success. Families are responsible for ensuring learners make it to school on time each day. A timely arrival makes the home-to-school transition much easier and avoids disrupting both your child and his/her studio with a late arrival.

Children should only be picked up after their scheduled pickup time if they are enrolled in the Extended Learning Program. Families who pick up children late will incur a \$5 fee for every 15 minutes they are late, payable directly to the staff member.

Note: We encourage families of young children to show confidence with their children during drop-off times and give loving yet short good-byes. Families can work with staff members on drop-off routines to ease your child into this process. Children who walk into the school rather than being carried and who take care of their own belongings show a greater ease in the transition process. Parents are always welcome to pull around, park and come inside to view their child in his/her studio through the observation window.

Lunch

Early Education children in full day programs (Double Session or Kindergarten) need to bring a lunch to school daily. Lunch is between 11:50 am-12:45 pm, depending on the studio. Family members are encouraged and welcome to volunteer during lunch. Each studio also works with families to have a parent lunch support daily. If you are interested in this hour-a-day support please let your studio teacher know. Please note that in order to support during the lunch hour, you need to attend or watch the Volunteer/Substitute Workshop and have a limited background check from the Curved Desk

Children do have access to microwaves for warming lunches, although we ask that you limit the number of days each week that you send a heatable lunch with your child. Also, please make sure the meal is being reheated, not cooked from frozen. This helps ensure enough time for all children to both warm and eat their lunch.

We strive to be as environmentally friendly as possible. To help cut down on waste, we ask that learners bring their own reusable utensils, cloth napkins and food packaged in reusable/resealable containers. This also assists parents who wish to see what their child has eaten for lunch, as uneaten portions can be returned home.

Reusable containers help us cut down on the amount of waste in the studio. They also foster independence, as reusable containers are often easier to open without assistance. If you want to continue with items that come prepackaged, like squeezable yogurt, please put in a reusable container that your child is able to open independently

***“One Small Dessert”:** As a school community we have a strong belief in and commitment to health and wellness education. In support of this belief, we ask that a healthy and well-balanced lunch be packed by you or your child. Sodas and excessive desserts or candy will be sent home if packed for lunch. If a dessert is packed, please limit it to one small piece.*

***“Fast Food”:** Although we understand that family planning time is sometimes hectic, we ask that families do not bring in “fast food” wrapped products when a lunch has been forgotten or not available. The Curved Desk can provide bags to support re-wrapping food items during rare circumstances, if necessary. Please notify studio teachers, per the studio guidelines, if you will be removing your child during lunch time to eat off campus.*

Studio Celebrations

Community Montessori works hard to respect a wide array of philosophies on celebrations. We talk in class about many different kinds of celebrations without giving priority to one over the other. We start most conversations on celebrations with “Some people believe...”, and try to encourage many different views. We do not have studio Christmas, Halloween, or Easter celebrations but may have more general celebrations like harvest, winter, or spring. We welcome families to share their special celebrations (or lack of) with the studio/school to increase all children’s perspectives.

In the Early Education program, we enjoy celebrating your child’s birthday by reading a short summary that you prepare of your child’s years leading up to their birthday. If you wish to bring a special snack, please notify one of your child’s teachers and bring enough snacks for each child in the studio. This can be a simple cookie or other snack. **Please no cakes, cupcakes, or icing.**

Celebrations Outside of School: Invitations to birthdays and other celebrations outside school hours should be mailed/emailed instead of distributed at school.

Belongings

All learners should wear clothing appropriate for the various materials and activities. All learners should remember, when choosing the day’s attire, that they may be required to sit or do work on the floor. Because we encourage independence, pants or shorts with elastic waistbands are best when having to use the restroom. Parents should send in a spare set of clothes in a zip-lock bag (including socks and underwear) to keep in their studios.

Children’s shoes should also be appropriate for all activities. Children are welcome to wear slippers during their inside work time and are given a place in the room to store them when they are not using them. Slippers should be functional and non-distracting (no lights or characters, please). We encourage that all clothing items are marked with your child’s name.

No items for barter or bribe should be brought to school. Items of interest, which relate to school work (books, music, fossils, etc.) may be brought to share with the class if discussed with a teacher first. Any item brought in by your child that becomes a distraction should be left at home.

Please help your child keep their materials neat and orderly. Children are given a place for their belongings; bags and backpacks should be left at home.

Each studio has a lost and found and there is a school-wide lost and found located near the Cupola. Please check the lost and found areas frequently to claim any lost items as items will be donated to charity throughout the school year.

ELEMENTARY SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

The Elementary Program generally includes learners ages 6 through 12 (“1st – 6th grade”).

Drop Off and Pick Up

The Elementary program meets from 8:40am-3:10pm with drop-off beginning at 8:30am and pick up beginning at 3:10pm.

Consistency in attendance is crucial to a learner’s school success. Families are responsible for ensuring learners make it to school on time each day. A timely arrival makes the home-to-school transition much easier, and avoids disrupting both your child and his/her studio with a late arrival. Learners arriving later than 8:40 am (or when the staff has re-entered the building from carline) must stop at the Curved Desk to receive an Admit One slip before proceeding to their studio.

Learners entering the building prior to their drop off time should be supervised by an adult until their start time, unless they are enrolled in Extended Learning. At drop off, please do not send your child into the building until elementary level staff members are present outside, indicating we are ready to receive them inside. At pick up, staff members will assist learners in finding and getting to the appropriate vehicle. **Please only let children cross at the crosswalks for safety and consistency. We encourage all families to turn off your vehicle's motor while waiting to reduce pollution and potentially harmful inhalants.**

As part of your family commitment, all families are expected to spend 10 minutes with their child in their studio each week to further understand their current work and projects. This can be done before or after class time only, unless a plan has been made with the studio teachers during class time.

Children should only be picked up after their scheduled pickup time if they are enrolled in the Extended Learning Program. Families who pick up children late will incur a \$5 fee for every 15 minutes they are late, payable directly to the staff member.

Lunch

All children should bring a healthy and well-balanced lunch each day. We expect all children to plan their meals and pack their own lunches with the support of their family.

Children do have access to microwaves for warming lunches, although we ask that you limit the number of days each week that your child brings a heatable lunch. Also, please make sure the meal is being **reheated**, not cooked from frozen. This helps ensure enough time for all children to both warm and eat their lunch.

We strive to be as environmentally friendly as possible. To cut down on waste, we ask that learners bring their own reusable eating utensils, cloth napkins, and food packaged in reusable/resealable containers.

“One Small Dessert”: As a school community we have a strong belief in and commitment to health and wellness education. In support of this belief, we ask that a healthy and well-balanced lunch be packed by you or your child. Sodas and excessive desserts or candy will be sent home if packed for lunch. If a dessert is packed, please limit it to one small piece.

“Fast Food”: Although we understand that family planning time is sometimes hectic, we ask that families do not bring in “fast food” wrapped products when a lunch has been forgotten or not available. The Curved Desk can provide bags to support re-wrapping food items on rare circumstances, if necessary. Please notify studio teachers, per the studio guidelines, if you will be removing your child during lunch time to eat off campus.

Going Out Trips

This age level frequently goes out into the community as part of the overall curriculum and to engage in real learning adventures. A consent form was completed by families at enrollment and further information will be communicated through email when trips are planned. Bus transportation will be provided for trips that are not within walking distance.

We welcome parents/family members to join us on these learning adventures if they are on file as a volunteer/sub – by attending or watching the Volunteer/Substitute Workshop and having a completed limited background check from the Curved Desk. Please ensure to complete these steps ten days in advance. A sign-up process for going-out trips will be communicated by the studio and volunteers should sign up at least 2 weeks before. Unfortunately, siblings are not able to attend school trips. We have certain expectations of volunteers on going out trips to ensure a safe and fun atmosphere for all learners. Staff will review these guidelines with volunteers prior to leaving on any trips.

We encourage all learners to attend all going out trips and camping trips. All learners should leave and return on the bus unless prior, rare approval is granted by the Family Liaison. We assume that all learners will work out an Absence Waiver with the teachers/families if they do not attend a trip. If an exception is granted where a learner visits another studio during this time, teachers and families should work out this arrangement at least a week prior to the trip.

Any applicable charges for a going out trip will be billed on the FACTS system (online.factsmgt.com). Families are encouraged to make online payments by the due date mentioned on the bill.

Studio Celebrations

Community Montessori works hard to respect a wide array of philosophies on celebrations. We talk in class about many different kinds of celebrations without giving priority to one over the other. We start most conversations on celebrations by saying “Some people believe...”, and try to encourage many different views. We do not have studio Christmas, Halloween, or Easter celebrations but may do more general celebrations like harvest, winter, or spring. We welcome families to share their special celebrations (or the lack of) with the studio/school to increase all our perspectives.

Learners wishing to celebrate their birthday are asked to prepare their own account of their life, as developmentally appropriate. Some ideas may be: a Powerpoint presentation, labeled poster, family tree, etc. Celebrations should be scheduled with their teacher(s), and presentation formats approved at that time. If you wish to bring a special snack, please notify one of your child’s teachers and bring enough snacks for each child in the studio. This can be a simple cookie or other snack. **Please no cakes, cupcakes, or icing.**

Celebrations Outside of School: Party invitations to birthdays and other celebrations outside school hours should be emailed/mailed instead of being distributed at school. Addresses for your studio are available at the Curved Desk.

Belongings

Learners will be given a “work bag” in which any belongings can be transported to and from school. We encourage learners to re-use their work bags over the years and ask for a new one when needed. Notebooks, pencils, and other supplies are provided. Please leave any other items at home.

Children’s shoes should also be appropriate for all activities. Children are welcome to wear slippers during their inside work time and are given a place in the room to store them when they are not using them. Slippers should be functional and non-distracting (no lights or characters, please). We encourage that you support your child in marking all clothing items with his/her name. We donate numerous pieces of clothing/lunch bags/etc. from the lost-and-found to charity each month.

Each studio has a lost and found and there is a school-wide lost and found located near the Cupola. Please check the lost and found areas frequently to claim any lost items.

No items for barter or bribe should be brought to school. Items of interest, which relate to school work (books, music, fossils, etc.) may be brought to share with the class if discussed with a teacher first. Any item brought in by your child that becomes a distraction should be left at home. If a cell phone is brought to school at this age level, it should be turned off and be left in the work bag while at school.

TEEN'S PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

The Teens Program generally includes learners ages 12 through 18 ("7th – 12th grade").

Drop Off and Pick Up

The program meets from 8:20 am-2:50 pm with drop-off beginning at 8:10 am and pick up beginning at 2:50 pm.

Consistency in attendance is crucial to a learner's school success. Families are responsible for ensuring learners make it to school on time each day. A timely arrival makes the home-to-school transition much easier, and avoids disrupting both your teen and his/her studio with a late arrival. Learners arriving later than 8:20 (or when the staff has re-entered the building from carline) must stop at the Curved Desk to receive an Admit One Slip before proceeding to their studio.

Families are encouraged to come into the building frequently with their teen to establish ongoing dialogue and understanding. Teens can be dropped off at the Main Entrance in carline, or they can walk into the Teen Entrance with their family (located at the North end of the building). Please only let teens cross at the crosswalks for safety and consistency. **We encourage all families to turn off your vehicle's motor while waiting to reduce pollution and potentially harmful inhalants.**

Teens should only be picked up after their scheduled pickup time if they are enrolled in the Extended Learning Program. For safety and consistency, it is not appropriate for them to wander around the building or outside without an adult. Families who pick up children late will incur a \$5 fee for every 15 minutes they are late, payable directly to the staff member.

Teen Drivers

Teens wishing to drive themselves to school must register for a parking pass each year. There is no fee for the pass. Registration will take place on the first two days of school. Teens becoming eligible to drive later in the year may register with Administrative Services in the Cupola at any time. They must sign up EACH YEAR for a parking permit for that year and complete and adhere to the expectations on the Teen Parking Permit Commitment Form. They are also subject to the applicable attendance guidelines which can be found in the Attendance section of this handbook. For those teens driving to school, they should only park in the designated parking area.

Lunch

Teens are expected to prepare and pack their lunch daily. We encourage families to set appropriate parameters for health and wellness. To cut down on waste, we ask that learners bring their own eating utensils, cloth napkins, and package food in re-sealable containers or follow the studio parameters established.

Teens have access to microwaves for warming lunches, although we ask that they make sure the meal is being reheated, not cooked from frozen.

"One Small Dessert": As a school community we have a strong belief in and commitment to health and wellness education. In support of this belief, we ask that a healthy and well-balanced lunch be packed by you or your teen. Sodas and excessive desserts or candy will be sent home if packed for lunch. If a dessert is packed, please limit it to one small piece.

"Fast Food": Although we understand that family planning time is sometimes hectic, we ask that families do not bring in "fast food" wrapped products when a lunch has been forgotten or not available. The Curved Desk can provide bags to support re-wrapping food items if necessary. Please notify a studio teacher, per the studio guidelines, if you will be removing your teen during the lunch time to eat off campus. Teens are permitted to eat lunch off campus with a parent, grandparent or other approved adult. *Teens' drinks are to be in a cup/water bottle from home with a lid. There should be no outside food containers. Studios may have mugs for tea made in the studio or water.*

Going Out Trips

The Teens Program will schedule Going Out trips and/or camping trips throughout the year. A consent form was completed by families at enrollment and further information will be communicated through email when trips are planned. Bus transportation will be provided for trips that are not within walking distance.

We welcome parents/family members to join us on these learning adventures if they are on file as a volunteer/sub – by attending or watching the Volunteer/Substitute Workshop and having a completed limited background check from the Curved Desk. Please ensure to complete these steps 10 days in advance. A sign-up process for going-out trips will be communicated by the studio and volunteers should sign up at least 2 weeks before. Unfortunately, siblings (not in the same studio) are not able to attend school trips. We have certain expectations of volunteers on going out trips to ensure a safe and fun atmosphere for all learners. Staff will review these guidelines with volunteers prior to leaving on any trips.

We expect all learners to attend all going-out/camping trips. All learners should leave and return on the bus unless prior approval is granted by the Family Liaison. We assume that all learners will work out an Absence Waiver with the teachers/families if they do not attend a trip. If an exception is granted where a learner visits another studio during this time, teachers and families should work out this arrangement at least a week prior to the trip.

Any applicable charges for a going out trip will be billed on the FACTS system (online.factsmgt.com). Families are encouraged to make online payments by the due date mentioned on the bill.

Work @ Home

As stated in the Teen Program Commitment (**See Attachment C3**), learners in the Teens Program are expected to engage in at least five to seven hours of Work@Home weekly. If a teen falls short on their daily weekly work expectations, they may be asked to work after school or in a different environment during the school day. Parents are expected to support consistency with learning at home.

Dress Conduct

Learners enrolled in the Teen's Programs have the right to dress casually and comfortably, so long as it is not in a manner that poses safety concerns or is distracting to the learning process. Teens are also expected to wear sensible, comfortable footwear that is appropriate for the day's activities. A teen may be asked to put on alternate clothing if a staff member finds the clothing not appropriate for school. CM staff reserves the right to use their best judgment regarding what types of dress qualify as inappropriate or distracting. We encourage families to start that conversation at home with their teen prior to wearing questionable attire.

Belongings

Teens are encouraged to bring items related to their educational goals and interests. Any questionable items should be reviewed with their Teen Advisor. Teens are welcome to bring electronics devices if the use is consistent with the guidelines outlined on the Electronics Etiquette Form. (**See Attachment H**). ALL medications should be checked in at the Curved Desk by a parent daily unless a health plan is in place.

Extended Campus/Off Campus plans

Teens may be eligible to participate in Extended Campus or Off Campus plans. Extended Campus allows the teen to attend on a shortened day or week schedule, utilizing their time outside of school for activities toward college and career readiness. Eligible teens must have strong attendance and timeliness, have demonstrated leadership ability, and present no academic concerns. Teens must put a strong timeline in place for completion of the remainder of their required work and have an approved Extended Campus Plan. Teens can also plan off campus learning where they can take classes and/or complete certifications and travel to and from school for the advisor approved schedule.

Courses for College Credit

We do partner with College professors to provide a variety of courses to teens for “dual credit”(both high school and college credit). These courses may differ annually, do require a fee be paid to register, and are currently conducted at Community Montessori by a “Professor-on-loan”, online courses and off-campus courses. Teens pay for all textbook/supply fees for these courses. There are required assessment scores to be eligible to enroll in specific courses. If a teen does not qualify for a course, they may be eligible to audit the course for a lesser fee. More information will be sent home with your teen regarding registration during the beginning of the school year.

Prosser: Community Montessori DOES NOT participate in a school partnership with Prosser School of Technology. Participation by teens wanting to enroll independent of Community Montessori and pay all applicable fees, will be decided on a case by case basis.

College Scholarship Determination/Ranking of Teens/etc.

To support our ongoing community atmosphere, Community Montessori does not rank our teens, identify a Valedictorian or choose specific teens for college scholarships. After specific scholarship eligibility has been determined and the teen has followed all guidelines and turned in the application within the allotted time, a random drawing of the eligible teens will take place at a monthly Board of Directors meeting. A Board Meeting schedule can be found by the Curved Desk information board.

THE COMMUNITY NURTURY – 0-3 Program

The Community Nurtury (CN) is located in the house at the front of Community Montessori's campus and is a Class II Licensed Home daycare in the State of Indiana for 16 children. The address is 4120 St. Joseph Road and parents of enrolled children are permitted unscheduled visits between 8:00am-5:30pm. The Nurtury is a learning environment for children birth to three years old and is based on the Resources for Infant Educators (RIE) philosophy.

Families interested in enrolling their child at The Community Nurtury may download an application from the Community Montessori website, www.shiningminds.com under "Programs." Often this program is on a wait list, so please apply early. An application fee must be paid when applying to be added to the waitlist.

Pick Up and Drop Off

Designated parking spaces are available at the Community Nurtury for families to walk their child in the building or pick them up. All day parking should take place in the parking lot of Community Montessori.

Materials and Supplies

The following items are provided for learners by CN: home food container, dishes, flatware, bedding, materials for children, and references and resource materials for families.

Families will need to provide the following for their learners: two full changes of clothing (changed out seasonally to be weather appropriate), daily food and snacks packed in food container provided, bottles and formula if applicable, diapers, wipes, diaper cream and sunscreen if applicable.

Families with more than one learner at the Nurtury will be allowed a discount of 10% on the tuition for all the siblings enrolled.

Calendar

The Community Nurtury follows the Community Montessori Family Calendar with some exceptions. A calendar can be found on our website as noted above.

Behavior Management

Children are naturally curious and creative, which in turn, leads them to learn and explore. Our philosophy works within the boundaries of respecting all children and valuing their individuality and capabilities. The foundation of our behavior management plan is the idea of selective intervention based upon sensitive observation of children. For example, when experiencing a conflict over a toy, we give children the room and support to solve it themselves before intervening. By impartially reflecting back to them what we see happening, a process called sports casting, such as "You both really want that doll." Rather than solving the issue, we present a chance for them to learn problem-solving skills and to develop confidence in themselves as capable individuals. When intervention is necessary, we avoid labeling a child by talking about a specific action rather than criticizing their character.

We promote the principles of our philosophy through careful use of language. We use normal tone of voice and sentences with even the youngest of children. We make use of active listening techniques to accept emotions, and to acknowledge the importance and the validity of their play. We develop predictability by talking to children about what is going to be done or is happening and giving them time to respond.

We are careful to use language that makes it clear which situations that the child has a true choice and in which situations they do not. Giving children choices in a variety of situations demonstrates to the child that they have some power in their lives. Because autonomy is such an important developmental step for toddlers, we offer them as many small but true choices as possible within the boundaries that are set for them. This helps them to develop a sense of

positive self esteem. By offering appropriate choices whenever possible, it makes it easier for the child to accept that they do not have choices in every situation.

Consistency is very important for young children. Regular routines (although not on an adult timetable), responsive care, and clearly defined boundaries and expectations help children to develop an internal sense of discipline. Toddlers are active, curious people that often act on impulse. Through the testing of boundaries and conflicts with others, toddlers are learning. During these situations, toddlers are gaining a sense of personal power as well as developing social skills and learning reasonable limits. Our goal is to show children alternative, appropriate behavior, while avoiding labeling or judgmental language. Children at times are moved away from other children briefly if they seem to be asking for space or if they need help stopping themselves from hurting others. Physical punishment is never used.

The expression of feelings is important to the healthy growth of individuals. We work with the children, even those that can't yet speak, to accept, acknowledge and express their feelings. We strive to accept all emotions, even ones that are called negative such as anger or grief, and help children to accept their emotions as OK for them to feel. We are not trying to distract children who are experiencing sadness but assist the child by offering comfort and support while they work through the emotion at their own pace. Even as we are imposing limits, we use language that acknowledges feelings but provides an alternative action, for example, "I can see that you are angry but I can't let you hit someone. You can say 'No'".

Food procedure

To further ensure the food labeling and safety of all our children, the following procedures will be followed:

- Families and children should not use the refrigerators, please only let the staff members use the refrigerators;
- All breast milk should be handed to a staff member;
- All other food products can be placed on the kitchen counter if they are properly labeled;
- Staff members will ensure proper labeling prior to putting any food items in the refrigerator;
- In addition to proper labeling for breast milk; it will also be color coded for each child.

ATTENDANCE AND CONDUCT

Reporting Absences and Late Arrivals

Learners enrolled in the Charter program, ***without exception***, must have absences or late arrivals reported by 8:00 am daily. If a learner will be late or absent, families should report this by emailing your learner's teachers by 8:00am. Please send the email to both the studio teachers/advisors and give your learner's name and the reason for the absence or late arrival.

Late Arrivals/Admit One Slips

In order to hold families and children/teens accountable for their attendance, all learners arriving past their program start time must stop in the Cupola to receive an Admit One slip. For consistency in each class, learners should arrive on time each day. Again, if your learner will be late or absent please notify the school by 8 am.

If we do not receive notice of your child/teen's absence or late arrival, we will notify you via email/phone that your child is not in attendance that day. This is a courtesy email to families to help make you aware of your learner's attendance. Our goal is to work with families to ensure the consistent attendance of their child/teen. We apologize if you receive this email/call and you did notify someone. While we do our best to communicate all notifications to the appropriate parties, there are times when the message does not get to everyone in a timely manner.

Attendance Guidelines

Ongoing communication and partnership with families and staff is pertinent to the success of each child/teen. Our goal is to support each learner in creating appropriate timeliness and participation for life. Excessive absences affect overall learning and instruction as well as attendance accountability to the Indiana Department of Education. We encourage families to set goals of 95% attendance or higher to support consistency and set teens up for success that may need to utilize a waiver for graduation. **Planned, approved Absence Waivers do not affect attendance.** (See page 11 for more information on Absence Waivers.)

We take attendance very seriously and expect every family to adhere to the following:

- All learners are expected to be on time, every day, according to their program's start time.
- Families are expected to communicate with school staff regarding any absence or tardy. Parent/guardians should email their learner's teacher by 8:00 am.
- An absence or tardy is only **excused** if a call or email is received from the parent/guardian or if a physician's statement is received.
- An absence is **unexcused** when neither notification from the family nor a physician's statement are received.

Excessive Absences or Late Arrivals

When a child/teen has accumulated **8 excused or 4 unexcused** absences, a conference will be scheduled with the family and a plan will be put into place to ensure consistent attendance. A physician's statement will be required for the remainder of the school year.

When a teen that drives to school incurs **5 late arrivals**, his/her driving privilege will be revoked for at least one week. If late arrivals continue, additional parameters will be enforced.

When absences or late arrivals become excessive, equating to 20 late arrivals or 18 total absences, a learner is considered habitually truant (unless otherwise noted) and one or more of the following will occur:

- Any work permit will be revoked;
- Any driver's license or permit will be revoked or denied (after 10 unexcused absences)
- A referral will be submitted to Juvenile Probation or the Clark County Review Panel;
- A referral will be submitted to the Department of Children's Services;
- A request for expulsion will be filed.

Absence Waivers

Because Community Montessori believes that learning happens all the time and everywhere, we understand there are times when you would like to remove your learner for a particular family trip, event or educational learning opportunity. We recognize planned Absence Waivers for out-of-the-building learning.

Absence Waivers (**See Attachment B**) are a form that is completed with your learner's teacher or advisor outlining planned learning or work that will be completed to make-up the time the learner was absent. The waiver should be planned in advance of the absence and returned within two weeks of the absence. If the absence is approved by the teacher/advisor, the absence or a portion thereof will be waived from your learner's record.

The work involved must be adequate to cover the length of the absence, as determined by your learner's teacher/advisor. If Absence Waivers are not planned in advance with the teacher/advisor, absences will be waived at his/her discretion. Absence Waivers must be submitted to the teacher/advisor within two weeks in order to be recognized. Any exception will need to be approved by the Family Liaison. Absence Waivers should be filled out [here](#) on our website. **The Absence Waiver process should ONLY be used if you have communicated to the teachers in advance about a plan for the absence - preferably two weeks in advance. This should be submitted on the website with any documentation to be reviewed by your child's teachers.**

Conduct

(This section is in accordance with PL 285-2013 and follows the definition of a non-peaceful learner in which the Indiana Department of Education defines as a "Bully". To view this definition visit [this link](#) to the language from the state law or visit the Curved Desk/front desk for a hard copy.) For the purposes of this law, we will use the wording "non-peaceful" learner throughout our process on Conduct.

Our goal is to help each learner attain the independence and self-confidence needed to become self-disciplined. In so doing, we provide a community with structure and order that aids them in the development of self-discipline. Behavior is based on cooperation, logical and natural consequences, personal fairness, consistency, and the belief that we all have the ability to look at ourselves honestly, change and grow. Our common goal is the creation of a supportive educational environment where an enthusiasm for learning is fostered. There are certain rights, responsibilities, and consequences that contribute to that environment.

In order to support learners that are being non-peaceful (as defined in PL 285-2013 which defines "bullying") in the way they speak with or treat other learners(electronically or in person), CM will do the following:

1. We will speak directly to the child/teen and ensure they know that this behavior is not acceptable in our community - involving other learners and the child/teen's family as necessary.
2. All teachers will review the process of choices that we have to support conflict - the child/teen can: Ask a child to stop (by setting appropriate/clear boundaries, the child can choose to walk away if they don't like what is happening, or the child can ask an adult for support.
3. If the teachers have helped a child with the decisions above, involved parents, and put forth interventions for the child/teen, then a Record of Disciplinary Action may be written to further the support of the incident.
4. Children/teens are reminded regularly to involve an adult if another child/teen is not being peaceful or making them feel unsafe. They can do this personally or anonymously. Parents are also reminded regularly to walk in with their child to help their child communicate if the child shared a situation about a child at home but not at school. Learners that are not truthful about another learners action can be subject to suspension.
5. If an incident occurs at school where a child feels unsafe from another child, parents will be notified of the incident by the end of the day.
6. If the incident cannot be resolved with the support of a teacher, the teacher will notify the Director that day and determine next steps which could involve a Record of Disciplinary Action, involve the parents, involving law enforcement, etc. If the unresolved incident is not reported to the Director, teacher suspension can occur.
7. Support services are available in the lending library of the School in the Cupola.

Community Montessori takes a progressive educational approach for a safe and peaceful learning environment. Starting at the earliest ages and whenever a learner first enters the school, we nurture the skills necessary not only to learn basic safety rules but to interact with classmates, teachers, families, and the larger school community in positive and constructive ways. The intention of this education is to foster the development of inner discipline in the child/teen.

Inner discipline consists of four components:

- A distinct knowledge of safety rules;
- A clear awareness of responsibility;
- A respectful attitude towards the members of the studio community and the larger global learning environment;
- An understanding and preparedness of the proper way of acting under different circumstances in different places.

Teachers at all age levels provide lessons in suitable studio, school, and community behaviors through direct instruction, drama, studio guidelines and repetition. Teachers support children/teens in solving difficulties among themselves and encourage a learner-led approach to conflict resolution. Clear guidelines, based on three major propositions, are communicated in each room: Respect for Self, Respect for Others, and Respect for the Environment. Staff at Community Montessori model appropriate behavior to further provide examples of how people act in social settings. Older children/teens also model proper behaviors for the younger learners, providing even more examples of appropriate behaviors. This happens specifically in studios throughout the building within the first six weeks of the school year. These studio created ground rules that are specified through professional development training annually all include the three R's above. (These go above and beyond PL 285-2013)

Because of the open and respectful nature of this approach, learners understand that mutual respect, care and consideration for others and an empathetic interest in the environment are important in school and all other places. Any issues that arise are handled individually (or by group) with that person first. Out of respect for each child/teen, these conversations are done privately, and it is not unusual for one learner to be unaware of the consequences of another. We don't use parents or family as a threat, but rather as a partner in this growth process. We strongly encourage families to support this method and support their learner in his/her total growth, not just in being "good for the teacher". We care very much about your child/teen and want this partnership to be useful, with continuous dialogue. On minor incidents, it is not uncommon for staff members to request that a learner talk to his/her family about a decision or action so that they can brainstorm other ways to handle a situation, or for a parent to explain to their learner how they handled those situations when they were younger. (Children/teens love to hear our stories and struggles and it makes them feel like they are not alone in this growth process.)

In some cases, learners may be issued a Record of Disciplinary Action Form. This form is a formal notice of the consequences applied as the result of a behavior or incident and families will be given a copy. A blank form can be obtained at the Curved Desk and any questions regarding this form or the use of this form should be directed to the Director or Family Liaison.

The staff of Community Montessori has the responsibility to:

- Develop reasonable studio ground rules consistent with the mission and beliefs of Community Montessori;
- Explain through group meetings, drama, and dialogue what the values for behavior are for both the studio and school;
- Maintain appropriate behavior in the studio and school through redirection and dialogue with the learner and their family;
- Report and record school discipline situations to the Family Liaison and family using the Record of Disciplinary Action Form, as deemed necessary.

"Making good choices, even when others are not watching" is an important belief at Community Montessori. We strongly suggest that families keep an open dialogue with their child/teen about "making choices" which directly influences moral development. Our learners don't get "in trouble" and we don't recognize a "bad day" as an excuse for inappropriate behavior. However, we are very empathetic to their issues and concerns and validate them whenever appropriate. We remind and encourage all learners that "only you make your choices" and we initiate problem solving whenever possible. Inner discipline is a continuum and we desire to be strong partners in this process.

When situations do arise, each incident is assessed individually. We recognize all children/teens as diverse individuals who have different needs and life experiences. We encourage all learners to “use their words” when a situation arises. A child/teen can use firm language to redirect an unwanted behavior, walk away or get help. Retaliation is not an option and the adult supporting the situation will not be concerned with “who started it”. Instead we will support each child/teen in peaceful conflict resolution and taking responsibility for his/her own actions.

On occasion there are some children/teens that need more formal direction. Therefore, Community Montessori will provide consequences consistent with the Indiana State Code **20-33-8-16/19/21/22**. (A complete copy is available in the Cupola for further information.) Some belief statements are as follows:

- Community Montessori will take actions deemed necessary for an orderly and effective educational system.
- Appropriate Conduct is defined as Respect for Self, Respect for Others, and Respect for the Environment.
- All learners using computers on our wireless campus agree to abide by the Internet Acceptable Use Policy (**See Attachment D**).
- Learners or families can request a hearing from the Disciplinary Committee on issues of suspension and expulsion which includes the Director or Assistant Director, one developmental specialist, and one additional staff member from the age level of the child/teen, in which further action may be continued or ceased. The Disciplinary Committee will be assigned and schedule a meeting within two weeks of the request.

Disciplinary Action applies to a learner enrolled at Community Montessori that is:

- On school grounds before, after or during school hours;
- Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;
- Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event.

As a part of the emergency procedures in place in our school, no learner will be restrained by school staff unless the learner’s behavior poses an imminent risk of injury to him/herself or others. However, significant violations of the law, including assaults on learners and staff, will be reported to the Floyd County Sheriff. As soon as possible after any such use of restraint, the parents or guardians will be informed when any of these actions have occurred and will be provided with a detailed account of the incident, including the circumstances that led to the use of restraint.

The following are examples of situations that are considered grounds for Disciplinary Action:

- Learners showing disrespect for self, others or environment (misconduct or substantive disobedience) may be suspended immediately.
- Any time misconduct results in physical injury to another person, immediate suspension could occur.
- Suspension or expulsion may occur if an **unlawful** (ex. illegal drugs, smoking products, etc.) activity occurs on or off school grounds.
- A learner that brings a firearm, deadly weapon, or destructive device to school or on school property or is in possession of any of the above on school property may be expelled for a period of at least one (1) calendar year.
- A learner may be expelled from school if they are not a legal resident of Indiana.
- An expulsion may take place only after the learner and their parent are given notice of their right to appear at an expulsion meeting.
- Teenage learners who have received two or more suspensions may be subject to having their driver’s license or driver’s permit revoked or denied.

Drug and alcohol use in any school is a threat to the safety and health of the school community. When there is reasonable suspicion of drug and/or alcohol use (i) on school grounds, (ii) off school grounds at a school activity, function, event, or any other school sponsored activity, (iii) when traveling to or from school by bus or other transportation; individualized responsible suspicion shall include the following:

- A learner’s behavior, in conjunction with physical appearance, actions, and/or odor, indicating the possibility that the learner has used or is in possession of alcohol, marijuana, any other controlled substance, or un-prescribed prescription drug;
- The learner possess drug paraphernalia, alcohol, marijuana, any other controlled substance, or an unprescribed prescription drug;

- Information communicated to an administrator by a teacher, parent, law enforcement officer or other reliable adult and/or learner that a learner has used/is under the influence/or has provided to others - of alcohol, an illegal drug, or an unprescribed prescription drug.

A law enforcement officer, administrator, health services personnel, or contracted drug testing agency trained to obtain a valid specimen for drug or alcohol tests may obtain a specimen of their choosing - breath, saliva, or urine. A positive test will be expected to be paid for by the family or learner. A parent/guardian may have their child retested at a health facility at their own expense with date/time/location agreed upon by an administrator. The learner may be suspended from school until the retest results are provided to the administration and evaluated.

A learner that attempts to alter the results of a drug/alcohol test or refuses to take the test, will be deemed a positive test and disciplinary action will be taken.

The following will be afforded to a learner prior to suspension unless misconduct requires immediate removal, in which case the following will take place upon the learners return:

- A written or verbal statement of the misconduct of the learner;
- If the learner denies the charges, a summary of the evidence of the charge;
- An opportunity for the learner to explain the misconduct.

If you have any questions about Indiana State Code 20-33-8-16/19/21/22, please contact the School Director.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

We respect that health and safety are important parts of the learning process. We maintain that all learners' health information is confidential and will be shared only with parent/guardian permission and only with necessary staff on an as-needed basis. Information shared on the health form may be used when needed to form a plan of care to support your child/teen. Teens with a health plan should discuss any pertinent information with their internship site supervisor.

Smoke and Tobacco Free Campus

We believe in the right of all people to breathe clean air. To help protect the health of our learners, families, staff and our global community, we are a Smoke and Tobacco Free Campus. This extends to e-cigarettes and other forms of smokeless or chewable products. Adults are expected to follow these parameters to be able to visit our school campus. (Children and/or teens with any of these products will face disciplinary consequences.)

Emergency/Disaster Plan and Preparedness

Community Montessori annually reviews our preparedness plans to ensure the safety of all learners and staff. Because of the secure nature of this information, it cannot be shared with learners or families. Staff are trained each year on this information and Glenn Fondren, our Safety Director is trained by the state annually.

School Commitment to Health & Safety

- There will be First Aid and CPR certified staff in the building at all times during school hours. We strive to have staff members at all age levels who are First Aid and CPR certified.
- Learners will be under adult supervision at all times.
- Fire drills will be conducted throughout the school year, per state requirements.
- Windstorm/earthquake drills will also be conducted per state requirements.
- Evidence of any type of abuse or neglect will not be tolerated and will be reported to local authorities.
- The school will provide vision and hearing screenings as required by state law. Families can request to have their learners exempted, provided they do so in writing to Health Services at Community Montessori.

Family Commitment to Health & Safety

- All health records on the child/teen will be updated before the learner enters school or returns to school in the fall of the year. This includes a current immunization record or having on file a waiver stating a parental objection based on religious grounds or a medical exemption from a healthcare provider for each vaccine not given.
- If there is a physician's verification of a communicable disease, the school is to be informed so that other parents can be notified.
- If your child/teen exhibits any of the following symptoms, they should not attend school and/or may be sent home from school:
 - Diarrhea, vomiting or stomach cramps;
 - Severe coughing, causing them to become red or blue in the face or make a whooping sound;
 - Difficult or rapid breathing;
 - Yellowish skin or eyes;
 - Conjunctivitis (pink eye);
 - Temperature of 100 degrees or higher;
 - Any skin rash or patch, (exp. Poison Ivy or Poison Oak) must be treated before returning to school and the exposed area must be covered by clothing or a bandage;
 - Stiff neck;
 - Head lice;
 - Any other abnormal symptoms that would adversely affect their ability to concentrate/participate in the day's activities.

A learner with any of the above symptoms should not return to school until they are clear of symptoms for at least 24 hours without the use of fever/pain reducing medications, unless under the communication of a physician. Children/teens sent home with head lice must be viewed at the Cupola before returning to class. We do not have a “no nit” policy – each case will be looked at individually.

In-patient/Outpatient Mental Health Care

Part of our care of the whole child sometimes includes assessing situations or conversations to determine if there is cause for mental health intervention with a specific learner. The school will keep all information confidential and only shared on a need-to-know basis.

If we believe that a child is potentially a danger to themselves or others, staff will ask that the family complete a risk assessment with their pediatrician or other mental health professional. The school can often provide this service in-house through a third-party care provider. When a learner is hospitalized, plans will be put in place for missed work when appropriate.

There are times when the family initiates the assessment and hospitalization of their learner. In this case, we ask that you communicate openly with school administration and your child’s teachers/advisors so that the school can be aware of the reason for any absences and also help support the learner with a plan for any missed work.

When a child/teen has been released from inpatient care, the family should meet with the director or studio teacher prior to the learner’s return and bring with them the withdrawal paperwork from the hospital or facility as well as any transition information. The child’s teacher/advisor will work with the learner on a transition plan for returning to the studio environment.

Administration of Medication

It is recognized that at times it may be necessary for learners to take either prescription or non-prescription medication during the school day. Medication will be administered once during the school day, at midday, unless there are written orders from a healthcare professional stating that the medication needs to be administered more often. Medication requiring a one time of day dose should be given outside of school hours. Families are welcome to come in and administer any additional medication their child/teen may need. We are not able to administer eye medication. Should your learner need eye medication during the school day, families may come in to administer it or it may be self-administered by a willing and able child or teen. Over the counter medication should be administered only if really needed and should be given outside of school if at all possible.

Following are more detailed guidelines for the administration of medications:

Prescription Medication

- A “Permission to Administer” form, completed and signed by the parent/legal guardian, must be brought or faxed to the school before any medication is given. These forms are available in the Cupola.
- All prescription medication must include a written order from a licensed healthcare professional with prescriptive rights. This can be the pharmacy label on the medication.
- Medication must be in the original container labeled with the name of the learner, date, directions for administration and the prescriber’s name.
- Staff will administer medication as stated on the label directions, or as per written, signed and dated instructions from the doctor/prescriber.
- No prescription will be administered after its expiration date.
- Any change in medication (such as time or amount given) will require a new order by the prescribing healthcare professional and a new “Permission to Administer” form must be completed and signed by the parent/legal guardian.
- Determination of a learner’s ability to self possess and administer medication will be determined on an individual basis, and will require a Health Plan Meeting.

Non-Prescription Medication

- A “Permission to Administer” form, completed and signed by the parent/legal guardian, must be brought or faxed to the school before any medication is administered. These forms are available in the Cupola.
- Non-prescription medication must be in its original container that includes administration directions, learner’s name and date, and should only be given at school if absolutely necessary.
- Tylenol or Ibuprofen will be available for learners age six (6) and older. Permission to administer form was included during enrollment - the permission provided in the form will be used to administer any age-appropriate OTC medications as applicable. For any changes, parent/legal guardian must notify the staff in writing or over the phone.
- Cough drops are considered an OTC medication and will need to be administered by Health Services. A “Permission to Administer” form will need to be filled out at the time the cough drops are brought to the Curved Desk. Teens may carry and self-administer cough drops once the appropriate form has been completed by a parent/legal guardian.

General Medication Procedures

- All medication must be taken in the presence of at least one school employee and documented by staff in the Medication Log in the first aid area.
- All medication will be kept and administered in the first aid area. Any exceptions will be determined on an individual basis.
- Medication not retrieved by the parent/legal guardian, will be disposed on the last day of the current school year.
- All camping/going out trips medication administration should follow the guidelines above.

Administered or Self-administered over the Counter Medication

- Learners may be administered the following at school when necessary: antiseptic wipes, antibiotic ointments, anti-itch lotion, or deodorant (for bee stings.)
- Learners can carry and self-administer: Bug spray and sunscreen on school sponsored overnight camping trips. Otherwise, when developmentally appropriate, a permission form should be kept on file to self-administer at school.

Meningococcal Immunization Notification

Current Indiana law (IC-20-30-5-18) requires that each year parents/legal guardians be informed about Meningococcal disease and the vaccine.

Meningococcal disease is a bacterial infection. “Symptoms of Meningococcal disease often resemble the flu and can include a fever, headache, nausea, and a stiff neck making the disease difficult to diagnose. The bacteria that cause Meningococcal disease are transmitted through air droplets and by direct contact with an infected person. There is an immunization available (Menactra) as of 2010-11 school year, one dose is required for learners in “grades 6-11” and a second dose or booster is required for all learners entering grade 12. Indiana Administrative Code 410-IAC 1-1-1 requires all learners entering “grades 6-12” to have a record of this immunization or exemption from this immunization. Please talk to your child/teen’s Health Care Provider about Meningococcal disease and immunization.

Immunizations

Being a Public Charter School, we report immunization data yearly to the Indiana State Department of Health through the Children and Hoosiers Immunization Registry Program (CHIRP). This information may include names, immunization data and other information such as date of birth or other identifying information. More information may be obtained at isdh.in.gov or doe.state.in.gov, or from the Curved Desk. Any family who does not want their information entered into CHIRP must do so in writing to the Health Services at Community Montessori.

In the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease learners with a **medical/religious waiver to vaccination** or who have an incomplete immunization record/not fully immunized, may be excluded from school to protect his/her health and the health of all our students and staff. It is important to understand that with some diseases such as measles, one infected child is an outbreak. The length of time your child will be kept out of school depends on the disease. Your child's exclusion may be as long as 3-4 weeks.

If your child is excluded from school, your child will also be excluded from school sponsored activities, such as enrichments and other after school activities.

Incompletely vaccinated children and children with medical/religious exemptions can be excluded from school due to cases of measles, chickenpox, pertussis, mumps, or any other vaccine preventable disease.

Confidentiality (FERPA): Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of learner education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the learner when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Learners to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible learners."

Parents or eligible learners have the right to inspect and review the learner's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible learners to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible learners have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible learner then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible learner has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible learner in order to release any information from a learner's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a learner is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a learner;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a learner's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible learners about directory information and allow parents and eligible learners a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible learners annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, family handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

Waiver of Liability

Unless proven negligent, Community Montessori and Community Montessori personnel assume no financial responsibility for medical expenses, treatment or damages resulting from injuries sustained by learners while participating in any school-sponsored educational program or activity on or off of school grounds.

- *We believe that education should be an active process of gaining and adapting new information involving many learners.*
- *We believe that we should support all children in developing strong moral values that reflect empathy, respect, honesty, compassion, integrity, and trust – while keeping personal dignity intact.*
- *We believe that enthusiasm and curiosity should be cultivated in each child's learning.*
- *We believe that the curriculum should reflect life-long learning by expanding the traditional subjects and make all learning relevant.*
- *We believe that children learn best in a safe, nurturing, respectful environment that promotes independence and a positive sense of self-esteem.*
- *We believe that children should have the freedom to develop goals that encourage internal motivation and nurture inner harmony.*
- *We believe learning is a natural process that develops spontaneously in the learner.*
- *We believe that the teachers in the environment are “child development specialists” that guide the learner through the learning process by keeping extensive records through keen observations.*
- *We believe children should be encouraged to teach, collaborate, and assist each other in their journey to attain and effectively use new or existing information.*
- *We believe children should use self-teaching, self-corrective material to set their own learning pace to internalize information.*
- *We believe children should be free to use repetition to gain mastery of new materials or information and be encouraged to use critical thinking skills to come up with their own answers.*
- *We believe children should have the freedom to be themselves and develop individual and group identities within the community.*
- *We believe that the school community shares the love of each child and that we respect and encourage each child to develop his/her own uniqueness and individuality.*
- *We believe that learning is driven internally and should take place in a non-competitive environment.*
- *We believe that we all have a direct responsibility to our self, our family, our school, our community, our nation, and our world and we instill this responsibility as a continuing part of the curriculum.*



Teen Belief Statements (12-18 yrs)

We believe:

- *Education should be an active process of gaining and adapting new information involving many learners.*
- *We should support all teens in developing strong moral values that reflect empathy, respect, honesty, compassion, integrity, and trust while keeping personal dignity intact.*
- *The curriculum should reflect lifelong learning by expanding the traditional subjects and making all learning relative.*
- *Teens learn best in a safe, nurturing, respectful environment that promotes independence and a positive sense of self-esteem.*
- *Teens should have the freedom to develop personal goals that encourage internal motivation and nurture inner harmony.*
- *Learning is a natural process that develops spontaneously in the learner.*
- *Teens should be encouraged to teach, collaborate with, and assist each other in their endeavors to attain and effectively use new and existing information.*
- *Teens should have the freedom to be themselves and develop individual identities within the community.*
- *Teens should be encouraged to question and look at situations from multiple viewpoints.*
- *The school community shares the love and respect of each learner and encourages each teen to develop his/her own uniqueness and individuality.*
- *Ownership, Empowerment (including Valorization), Accountability, and Respect are the four main components of the overall program.*
- *Listening, without judging, is crucial to the trust partnership with each teen.*
- *We all have a direct responsibility to our self, our family, our school, our community, our nation, and our world to question the foundation of our beliefs.*
- *Learning should take place in a non-competitive environment where learning is driven internally to better ourselves and each other.*
- *Learning is not about what is taught by the adult but how a learner takes new information, connects it to existing information, and changes a perception or expands an idea or concept.*
- *Teens are directly responsible for their own actions, and adults are expected to hold them accountable for their actions while maintaining dignity and respect.*
- *Understanding the developmental needs of teens (such as economic independence and a sense of social justice) is crucial to their overall support and learning.*

Rev. 5.16.2016



Parent Partner Commitment Form

Early Education (3-6) and Elementary (6-12)

We, the family community of Community Montessori, will be consistent with this commitment form to heighten the experience of our child(ren). The intent of this form is to help us all organize and take advantage of our commitment to communication and the education of our school family.

1. We will read and abide by all guidelines and policies of the Community Montessori Family Handbook.
2. We will communicate with the staff any pertinent information pertaining to our child or family in a timely manner.
3. We will be consistent with our child's attendance and be on time daily or notify the Curved Desk of any absences by 8:00 am.
4. When our child must be absent, outside of illness, we will utilize the Absence Waiver by making a plan with the teachers about appropriate work during the absence at least two weeks in advance.
5. We will bring snack as scheduled throughout the year and bring only fresh fruits and vegetables (early education) or fruits, vegetables, eggs and cheese (elementary) based on the Handbook guidelines. We will involve our child in this activity from helping cutting the vegetables to giving them a budget to plan, prepare, and oversee the whole week.
6. We will support our child in bringing a "nutritious" lunch daily (children at least 6 years and up should be preparing/packing their own lunch). We will also support the "one small dessert" policy and talk to our child about "healthy" foods.
7. We will observe our child during "class time", or work with them before or after school, to further our understanding of the educational program of Community Montessori. We should spend at least 10 minutes a week either observing at the observation windows (3-6) or having our child give us a tour of the work in the studio before or after school.
8. If we wish to engage with learners in the studio we will attending/view the Volunteer/Substitute Workshop, and provide necessary information to be approved as a volunteer at the school.
9. We will attend at least two PIP (Parent Involvement Partnership) Workshops to further our growth as a parent family (most PIP Workshops are available online during and after the event for viewing by family members those who cannot attend).
10. We will attend at least one of the "Work Nights" offered throughout the school year.
11. We will make arrangements to attend all Parent Partner Conferences throughout the year and be a collaborative participant.
12. We will respect the staff at Community Montessori. Any studio questions, concerns, or comments should be directed to the studio teacher(s). Any school related questions, concerns, or comments should be communicated directly to Glenn Fondren, Family Liaison or Barbara Burke Fondren, Director of Community Montessori. Special conferences can be scheduled with the teacher(s) and Director both in attendance. If, after communication to our teacher and the administrative staff, we do not feel our concern was addressed, we know we can appeal to the Board of Directors by using the form that is on the website.
13. We will adhere to a Gossip Free campus and believe modeling this to our children is of the highest importance!
14. We will assist the school and studios by committing 10+ hours of our time and/or talent to the studio and/or the Parent Involvement Partnership throughout the year (a complete list of ideas is given at enrollment and by email throughout the year).
15. We will read to, read with, or listen to our child read daily based on the interests and learning style of our child.
16. We will work toward a non-corrective interaction with our child and try to utilize natural and logical consequences in discipline to be more consistent with the Community Montessori Philosophy.
17. We will use the ideas and guidance of the studio teachers to support and facilitate work-at-home activities with our child (all learners 6 years and up should engage in work-at-home activities daily and turn in these activities to their studio).

Parent/Guardian

Date

Parent/Guardian

Date

Family Commitment to Teens and Teen's Program

Our school endeavors to be more than the ordinary, to provide all of its learners with a valuable and life-long education that extends far beyond the confines of the school walls, with the belief that learning occurs all the time and everywhere. We believe education can be both theoretical and practical, and that it does encompass moral, emotional, and social learning in addition to standard academics. We endeavor to establish relationships between adults and teens based on mutual respect and understanding.

Following the Montessori philosophy, we set forth several goals:

- **Learning.** We define learning as a lifelong process and expect genuine commitment to each learning construct: intellectual, ethical, emotional, social, aesthetic, creative, wellness, and "school success."
- **Community.** We strive to build a strong school community, but also to prepare learners to be valuable citizens in the larger sense of the civic and political society beyond the school walls.
- **Best Work.** We appreciate the effort it takes to be successful in both school and life, and we expect learners to do their best work, even under difficult circumstances.
- **Respect.** Human beings have different lifestyles, opinions, and beliefs, and we endeavor to understand and respect these differences rather than passing judgment based on our own personal belief system.

*As family members of teens who are overwhelmed by so many possibilities, you have a long, tedious, yet rewarding, road ahead. In committing to the below promises, you also commit to helping your teen in reaching his/her full potential. **Please check the box next to each commitment you are fulfilling consistently.***

- **We will remain open-minded.** Our teen will at times return home with ideas that may challenge the values or concepts that are encouraged by the family. By being involved, we strive to remain open-minded and encourage big life questions as well as consider those questions from our teen's perspective. Our teen will challenge values or aspects of home life that have never been challenged before and may bring to his/her family ideas that may never have occurred before; we will allow our teen to bring these issues to the family for discussion in a respectful way. If we are concerned or have questions, we will go directly to his/her studio advisor and not adhere to gossip or hearsay.
- **We will encourage problem-solving.** Teens experience a variety of life situations as they grow. We will encourage our teen to try to solve those situations for him or herself. This is especially important in securing an Internship location. During this stage of growth in an adolescent's life, teens also tend to share their perception of situations at school; we will encourage our teen to direct any questions or concerns directly to his or her studio advisor before intervening on his or her behalf.
- **We will encourage consistent attendance and wellness.** Attendance and timeliness is crucial for each teen in fulfilling his/her learning objectives for the year and in being successful at school. We will assure that our teen is on time daily (by 8:20 am) and we will communicate any necessary absence due to illness by 8:00am each morning. Absence Waivers will be discussed and approved by Advisors prior to any absences. We will also assure that **our teen** prepares and packs a healthy lunch daily and budgets/plans the snack for his/her studio (adhering to the snack guidelines in the Family Handbook). Both of these activities should be completed independently.
- **We will set examples.** Many times through the year our teen will be asked to include family for work@home or to complete other activities. We will strive to help our teen complete those activities and encourage further discussion of school situations at home. As a family member, we will remain supportive of our teen and his/her commitment to learning (ie. attendance on camping trips, supporting internships.) We will assure work is completed consistently at home and we read all communications to support that process. We will support knowing our teen's goals and projects by reviewing these sheets at home or school **every week**. By committing **10+ hours** of time or talent to the school and advisors, we will show an example of leadership, consistency and caring to our teen.
- **We will participate in goal setting.** Teens are expected to set reasonable goals for both personal and intellectual growth. As his/her family, we will help to achieve these goals in any way that we can. We will support continual growth by reviewing these goals with our teen on a frequent basis. We will work toward a non-corrective interaction with our teen and try to utilize natural and logical consequences in discipline to be more consistent with the Community Montessori philosophy.
- **We will attend our teen's important events.** Teen level workshops designed for parents and teens should be attended annually as well as other valuable PIP workshops throughout the year. We will attend all **four** Parent Partner Conferences to collaborate and design plans and goals to assure our teen stays on track for graduation.
- **We will respect prepared work.** At this level of learning it is essential to nourish creativity and confidence. Therefore, we will respectfully refrain from changing (corrections and/or criticisms) any work presented to us by our teen and instead utilize collaborative conversation. By allowing creative freedom, we foster confidence within each teen seeing how truly powerful their work is. Teens commit to doing their best work; if they have in fact done their best work, their growth will become apparent.
- **We will honor Community Montessori's regular parent commitments.** We will read and abide by all guidelines and policies of Community Montessori. We will communicate to the staff any pertinent information pertaining to the teen or family.

By affixing my signature, I attest that I understand and agree to the aforementioned promises of this contract. We will strive to be a role model of responsibility and caring about learning so our teen can reach his/her full potential of a successful adult.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date



Teen Commitment

Our school endeavors to be more than ordinary, to provide all of its learners with a valuable and life-long education that extends far beyond the confines of the school walls, with the belief that learning occurs all the time and everywhere. We believe education can be both theoretical and practical, and that it does encompass moral, emotional, and social learning in addition to standard academics. We endeavor to establish relationships between adults and teens based on mutual respect and understanding. Following the Montessori philosophy, we set forth several goals:

- **Learning.** We define learning as a lifelong process and expect genuine commitment to each learning construct: intellectual, ethical, emotional, social, aesthetic, creative, wellness, and “school success.”
- **Community.** We strive to build a strong school community, but also to prepare learners to be valuable citizens in the larger sense of the civic and political society beyond the school walls.
- **Best Work.** We appreciate the effort it takes to be successful in both school and life, and we expect learners to do their best work, even under difficult circumstances.
- **Respect.** Human beings have different lifestyles, opinions, and beliefs, and we strive to understand and respect these differences rather than passing judgment based on our own personal belief system.

Each Community Montessori teen learner accepts more and more responsibility as he or she grows and matures. We cannot achieve our lofty goals without a solid and genuine commitment from each learner, and so, before beginning the school year, he or she makes these important promises:

1. **The promise to build community.** Teens agree not to form exclusive social groups. We strive to build a collaborative learning community in which everyone has something special to offer the group as a whole. This means that each teen must feel safe and welcome when communicating with any individual in the studio or with the entire group at large. Each teen promises to build an inclusive and open school community.
2. **The promise to abide by the principle of respect - self, others, and the environment.** Teens will agree to show respect for self in attitude, language, and personal appearance. We make a commitment to value, respect and understand one another as individuals. Learners at Community Montessori promise to resist the urge to pass judgment on others, and, on the contrary, promise to strive to act in such a way that demonstrates a genuine respect for the unique personal qualities and beliefs of others. Teens work diligently to bring any concerns/problems directly to the person they need to speak to without participating in gossip or hearsay. Teens are expected to treat all aspects of the environment with care, grace and courtesy. Teens will leave all materials and shared spaces beautiful and well prepared.
3. **The promise to allot time each week for the completion of meaningful work at home.** Each Community Montessori learner is expected to work hard at meeting (and possibly exceeding) educational and practical life challenges, which requires rigorous or intentional work inside and outside of school.
4. **The promise to participate in unique learning opportunities offered at Community Montessori with a positive and enthusiastic attitude.** Learners at Community Montessori understand that overnight trips and other community building activities, are examples of requirements unique to this school that serve to fulfill Maria Montessori’s vision of learning beyond the classroom. Community Montessori learners are expected to participate in preparation activities as well as actual events, which may extend beyond the regular school day into evenings and/or weekends.
5. **The promise to be on time and support wellness.** Teens are expected to be on time daily (8:20am), and ready for the day’s activities. That includes making your own lunches and caring for your own health needs. Teens should budget, plan, and prepare snack 1-2 times throughout the year that will adhere to the snack guidelines of the Family Handbook.

By affixing my signature, I attest that I understand and agree to the aforementioned promises of this contract.

Teen Signature

Date

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Community Montessori employs the use of a filtering program to minimize the availability of unacceptable sites for our computer users.

A. Acceptable Use Policies

The internet is a global information system that is logically linked together by a globally unique address space based on the Internet Protocol (IP) or its subsequent extensions.

There is no limit to the information that can be obtained via the internet, and we feel it is especially helpful to learners for various research and information gathering purposes. At Community Montessori we encourage our children/teens to find information 'online' for many different projects, not only helping them learn a particular subject, but enhancing their knowledge of the different ways to find information when necessary.

In today's world the Internet is a central point of communication and information in both business and home life. We feel our learners are gaining important real-life skills by utilizing this technology.

Community Montessori understands that there is much questionable and/or inappropriate content available on the internet, and strive to make it a 'safe' place for our children/teens. We make use of both internet browser controls, and the observations of staff members to support that the internet is used in a positive way. Please note that although we use methods of supervision when children are online, these methods are not foolproof, nor are there any foolproof methods for blocking inappropriate material.

Should a child/teen be discovered accessing inappropriate information on the internet, their privileges shall be suspended for a period not to exceed one school year.

Community Montessori prohibits the use of its internet accounts for the following reasons:

- access, upload, download or distribution of pornographic or sexually explicit material;
- the transmission of abusive or sexually explicit language;
- the violation of any local, state or federal laws;
- the vandalism, damage or disability of the property of another person;
- the accessing of another person's files without the permission of that person, unless such files are in a designated 'shared' folder;
- the use of copyrighted material without prior approval;
- the use of social media site or other site not approved for use by their studio.

Parents should note that it is possible for learners to purchase goods and services via the Internet, and that these could result in unwanted financial obligations to the family. Should the school's internet account be used for unauthorized financial transactions, the school shall not be held liable for payment of such transactions.

Community Montessori is a wireless access campus.

Community Montessori believes it is the responsibility of the staff, learner and family, working together, to guide the use of the internet by the learner for educational purposes, and lay the foundation for responsible use of the internet by the child/teen.

Internet Use Guidelines for Learners and Staff

Should any learner or staff member receive unsolicited contact from an individual online, that person should immediately contact the adult in the classroom or notify the school's administrator.

Learners and staff should also safeguard their personal information, not giving out information such as their name, address, phone number or other information to anyone online. If a learner encounters a site or a solicitation that asks for this information, they should, again, immediately contact the adult in their studio or the school's administrator.

Staff members are able to use the school's account for personal use, and the school trusts the judgment of staff members to use the internet responsibly. All guidelines outlined above for learners also apply to staff members.

Staff is expected to review this document with their learners, as age appropriate, and ask them to commit to these guidelines. This helps children/teen take ownership in their own responsible use of the internet.



Teen's Program Graduation Requirements

Core 40 Diploma Requirements

Other Diploma types - Academic Honors, Technical Honors, and General Diploma

Teens will develop course credit goals at the end/beginning of each academic year to support Core 40 and college admission requirements as well as career goals. Courses will be completed by approved academic sequences such as: seminars, lessons, distance learning, directed studies, online learning, college courses, and internship learning plans. Advisors (studio-specific teachers) in collaboration with Teen Transition support staff, will work with advisors/teens to craft personalized coursework that matches career college goals. A graduation pathway will also be determined and supported in this plan.

English/Language Arts—8 credits: Must include literature, composition, and speech.

Math—6 credits: Algebra 1, Algebra 2/Analytical Algebra 2, Geometry

Note: Learners must take a Quantitative Reasoning Course each year in "High School"

Science—6 credits: Earth Space, Biology 1, Chemistry 1 or Physics 1 or Integrated Chemistry-Physics,

Social Studies—6 credits: US History, US Government, Economics, World History/Civilization or Geography/History of the World

Directed Electives—5 credits: World Language, Fine Arts, CTE Concentrator courses including Foundations for Life Courses: Adult Roles and Responsibilities, Preparing for College and Careers, Interpersonal Relationships.

Physical Education—2 credits

Health and Wellness—1 credit

Electives—6 credits

Integrated Portfolio Requirements

To support teens in a comprehensive education, integrated portfolio projects allow teens to use personal interests/passions in community integrated opportunities within courses or through independent projects. Through collaboration with teen teaching staff, teen and family, teens will obtain real-life experience in adult-like situations to further build skills in transitioning to college and/or career.

Community Integration – Through Philanthropy and Governmental Exploration, teens will attain a deeper understanding of their community and their requirements as a citizen of their city, state, nation, and the world.

Career Investigations – Through Internships (beginning at age 16) and Entrepreneurial activities, teens will build career concepts and further explore who they want to be as an adult.

Personal Intensives – Through a Capstone project and a Second Language Inclusive or Wellness Initiative, teens will build knowledge and increase tolerance by developing projects that promote depth in learning.

Community Integration

Philanthropy — Give teens a broader concept of “giving back” to their community in a planned and purposeful way. After identifying community needs and reflecting on personal passions and interests, teens will create a group or independent project that makes an impact in our community. The project will be supported through the Adult Roles and Responsibilities course or through an advisor-approved independent project.

Governmental Exploration — Through an in-depth exploration of a particular governmental topic, teens will gain knowledge of their role in our local, state, or federal government. Teens will either complete a culminating project as a part of their government coursework or have an independent project approved by their advisor.

Career Investigations

Internships — This learning opportunity will support teens (16 years old and up) in gaining insight in career and interest-oriented fields. Teens will gain responsibilities in time management, work ethic, cooperation, and introspective career study. This real-world application will support purposeful learning and experiences through setting goals and participating in evaluations by their intern supervisor. With the support of advisors, support staff, and families, teens will complete four internships during their last two years at CM.

Entrepreneurial activity — Through either coursework in Economics or an independent project approved by their Advisor, teens will develop skills which apply to purposeful, realistic, and relevant components of running a business. By defining a need and developing and implementing a business plan, teens will develop an overall understanding of entrepreneurial activities.

Culminating Personal Intensive

Capstone — In their final year at CM, teens will plan a personal, comprehensive project related to their human growth that is approved by their advisor. They will present this project during the Spring exhibition of their senior year.

Personal Intensives

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

Second Language Inclusive — Teens that choose to study a second language at CM can either plan their final project within their coursework or complete an independent project approved by their advisory. After completing two years of a language, they will create a culminating project to share what they have learned.

Wellness Initiative — Teens will design a wellness initiative to further enhance life-long fitness, nutrition, or health.

- Teens will choose a topic of interest within the above framework to further track or research.
- Teens will lead lessons, seminars, or create learning tools from their Advisor-approved project.



Request for Presentation to the Board of Directors

It is the procedure of the Board of Directors to set in advance the agenda for each meeting. Any approved items will be added to the agenda if received three weeks prior to the next Board Meeting. If you wish to have an item added to the agenda or wish to address the Board, please complete the following and return your request to the address below. We will notify you if this item is appropriate for an agenda item or further direct your request.

Community Montessori
Attn: Board President
4102 St. Joseph Road
New Albany, IN 47150

Date: _____

Your Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Relation to the School: _____

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM - Please check the appropriate box and detail your item below. You may use an additional sheet of paper if necessary.

☐ I have already met with the Director regarding this item.

Meeting Date: _____

Brief Summary of Meeting:

☐ I have not met with the Director for the following reason:

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEM DETAIL (Please be specific):



Charter School Admission & Lottery Information

CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Receive an application and fill it out in its entirety.
2. Return your completed application by the first Friday in December. (A lottery number will be assigned to each application, in the case of a lottery admission.)
3. Attend an observation/orientation meeting September to November (Wednesdays at 9 am) to make sure our program is consistent with your family's beliefs and philosophy concerning education. Families that observe after the first Friday in December will be added to the waiting list in the order their application is received.
4. Complete the Family Communication Form and Parent Partner Commitment Form or Teen Commitment Forms.
5. Currently enrolled 4 year olds applying to "Kindergarten" will be given preference for "Kindergarten", but must still complete the application process with the exception of the observation, which was already completed upon their entrance into the Early Education program.
6. Applications received after the first Friday in December will be enrolled if spaces are available, or will be added to the waiting list after the lottery (when applicable) has taken place.
7. If your child is identified for enrollment, either if spaces are available or through the lottery process, you will receive an Enrollment Packet by mail prior to enrollment.
8. Complete the enrollment process by mid-April.

CHARTER SCHOOL LOTTERY PROCESS (when necessary)

1. The Lottery will be conducted in February, if applicable, at Community Montessori.
2. The lottery will be overseen by an independent accountant.
3. The lottery is a public meeting and you are welcome to attend. The date and time of the lottery will be posted at the school by January 28th.
4. If there are more applicants than spaces available in a given grade level, a lottery will be held for that grade level.
5. Any child who currently attends Community Montessori, as a charter school learner, will not be subject to the lottery, with the exception of "Kindergarteners", because there may potentially be more "kindergarteners" that apply than there are spaces available for "first grade". Current Community Montessori "Kindergarteners" will be given preference over outside applicants to "first grade".
6. Children of the school's founders, governing body members, charter school employees and siblings of CM alumni will be given preference in the lottery and for enrollment.
7. Currently enrolled Early Education children will get preference in the Kindergarten lottery
8. Children with a sibling already enrolled at Community Montessori will be automatically enrolled, unless there are more siblings than spaces available. In that event, siblings will lottery as a separate group.
9. If a sibling is chosen in the lottery, all other siblings will be given preference if spaces are available, or will have their position on the waitlist adjusted accordingly.
10. The lottery drawing will rotate in choosing applicants for each applicable grade level. When a lottery is warranted, names will be drawn one grade level at a time from "10th grade" to "Kindergarten", including Early Entry Kindergarten, as applicable. Besides the preferences above, each grade could potentially consist of 3 separate lottery rounds. They are as follows:
 - a. Siblings of learners who are enrolled at Community Montessori for the current school year.
 - b. Siblings of newly-accepted learners from a higher grade level.
 - c. Non-siblings.
11. Lottery results should be posted within 24 to 48 hours to our website: www.shiningminds.com.



Electronics Etiquette in the Teen's Program/Environment

If a teen chooses to bring any of these tools into school, we expect families to thoroughly discuss this responsibility with their child. It is not a right for a teen to bring or use these devices; it is a huge responsibility!

- Our goal with teens is to support self-regulated, integrated use of electronic devices.
- We support using cell phones for learning – ex. calculator, music, research, calendar, voice notes, apps etc.
- We support the use of electronic devices to facilitate concentration, as needed.
- If a teen chooses to bring these tools to Community Montessori, they also agree that an adult can look at any content on their device (including texting) at any time.
- Talking on the cell phone should only happen with permission from their advisor and within the studio boundaries during school time. Teens that use their phones to call or text families about illnesses or issues without first talking to their advisor could have their phone privileges suspended for a day to a year.
- Using electronic devices is only appropriate within the studio boundaries unless approved by an advisor.
- Streaming on Chromebooks is unacceptable unless it is approved by a teen advisor.
- Chromebooks need to be put away and plugged in when not in use.
- Chromebooks do NOT go outside.
- Games on electronic devices are for home, not at school.
- Use of cell phone should be limited to the studio boundaries and can be self-regulated under the following conditions:
 - Teen is showing balance;
 - Teen is consistently completing assignments/weekly goals and is completing rigorous work daily;
 - Teen can consistently sustain concentration on independent work without distraction.
- Any time personal electronic devices impedes learning or concentration (flow) of self or others, the use of that device or ability to bring that device to school can be suspended for a short period of time or indefinitely. Devices that have been confiscated can be retrieved with parental/guardian support at the end of the day.

Teen Signature

Date

Guardian Signature

Date

Rev. 6.6.2018



Community Montessori (CM) Social Media Etiquette

Introduction and Background:

Social Media can be defined as websites or applications that allow users (i.e. learners, teachers, administrators, and parents) to create and share content on networking websites. These can include, but are not limited to: Google Apps, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Vine, Snapchat, Kik, YouTube, and Twitter. These types of websites have optional levels of privacy that can be adjusted according to user preference.

Our school community exists in an era when technology is ever changing. It is a huge source for gathering information and informing others, an ideal that is a pointed part of the Montessori philosophy. Use of social media, at an appropriate age, can help foster deeper communication about classroom lessons between teacher and student. This occurs because this form of communication is relevant to learners today. With social networking tools teachers have the ability to make lessons both synchronous and asynchronous. Learning can be completely mobile and happening 24/7. This same idea can be applied to how Community Montessori communicates with our families. This could occur through daily announcements, photos of special school events, or even quotes from students and teachers. Overall, the integration of social media will allow for further collaboration and understanding between all groups in our school community.

Privacy

Concern for learners', families', and staff members' privacy is of the utmost importance to Community Montessori. Many learners are using social networking sites whether or not they are formally integrated in our school's environment. By making them a part of our school community we are creating an opportunity to inform our whole community about privacy options and ways to protect our digital footprints. This includes making sure our community understand they have the option to not have identifiable information published in regards to their child as given to them by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and that the staff of Community Montessori will continue to filter explicit content, which is a right of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Social networks have a huge amount of content including articles, spoken word, music, photos, videos, games, and virtual environments that can be used to successfully help guide learners. This content is ever changing and ever growing. It can also appear in a variety of shapes and sizes to appeal to the multitasking nature of learners today. Information can be provided in multiple bites that can be compiled to create key learning experiences.

Community Commitments

Comments to CM sponsored sites such as its website, blogs, online forums, or social media sites are welcome and encouraged.

We look forward to expanding our conversations to new medias! Though, please remember we value face-to-face conversations first and foremost and hope to keep the pillars of respect of self, others, and environments in our digital school as well as our dream school. To promote our values of peace, grace and courtesy within these forums, we request that comments are avoided that are profane, obscene, offensive, sexually explicit, inappropriate, inflammatory or otherwise disrespectful.

Social media often fosters debate of an issue; users are to engage in such exchanges with mutual respect for others' opinions just as we would respect one another in a person to person exchange.

T - Is it True?

H - Is it Helpful?

I - Is it Inspiring?

N - Is it Necessary?

K - Is it Kind?

For the privacy of all of our learners, families, and staff please assume that all postings to Community Montessori sponsored sites will be publicly available on the Internet and therefore publicly accessible without limitation. Please consider how much personal information is shared with the understanding that this information may be linked to your name and published on the Internet by users outside of the Community Montessori Family. Pictures of families, learners, or staff taken at school and school sponsored events will be used on social media platforms **unless it is expressly requested in writing that they not be used.**

By choosing to post a comment, article, meme, or other material to CM sponsored sites as outlined above, users give Community Montessori the right and license to exercise all copyright, marketing, and moral rights with respect to any content you provide. This includes using submissions for any purpose in any form and on any media we produce. This includes, but is not limited to sharing, displaying, modifying, reproducing, presenting in copy media, and publishing your submission.

Community Montessori reserves the right to review all comments as they are posted and to edit them to preserve readability for other users. Furthermore, Community Montessori reserves the right to reject or remove comments for any reason, including but not limited to our belief that the comments violate this policy.

By posting material on CM sponsored sites you agree not to:

- Post material that is threatening, harassing, illegal, obscene, defamatory, slanderous, or hostile towards any individual or entity. This includes information that could violate the privacy of others.
- Post phone numbers, email addresses or other confidential information of students, faculty, or any other person other than yourself. If you choose to post your own contact information for any reason please be aware that information will be available to the public and is therefore, subject to misuse.
- Post material that promotes or advertises a commercial product, solicits business, membership, financial, or other support in any business, group, or organization except those which are officially sponsored by Community Montessori.
- Post chain letters, post the same comment multiple times, or otherwise distribute "spam."
- Allow any other individual or entity to use your identification for posting or viewing comments.
- Post comments under multiple names or using another person's name.

Community Montessori Reserves the right to:

- Ban future posts from people who repeatedly violate these commitments.
- Remove or edit comments at anytime.

User agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Community Montessori, its affiliates, directors, employees, successors and assignment against any damages, losses, liabilities, judgments, causes of action, costs, or expenses arising out of any claim by a third party relating to any material a user has posted on Community Montessori sponsored sites.

By posting a comment or material of any kind to a Community Montessori site, the user hereby agrees to the policy set forth above.

All "official" Community Montessori social networking sites must be approved by the Technology Coordinators (TC@shiningminds.com)

Logos and graphics used on the site must be consistent with the branding standards and usage guidelines of the school.

- Sites that accept comments or postings by anyone other than the Technology Coordinators must be diligently monitored to ensure that information displayed fits within the CM guidelines and is appropriate to the subject matter of the page.
- Learners should not be expected to utilize the site as the only source of important information since learner access to social networking sites is restricted in the CM network.

McKinney Vento Homeless Act

McKinney-Vento Program

The McKinney-Vento Act is designed to address the challenges that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school.

State educational agencies (SEAs) must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as other children and youths.

Local educational agencies (LEAs) are required to review and undertake steps to revise laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as barriers to the identification, enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youths.

Definition of Homeless

- Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence:
 - "Double up" - Sharing the housing of others due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons.
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds, due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations.
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
 - Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live.
- Migratory children living in above circumstances
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
- Unaccompanied Youth - Children or youth who meets the definition of homeless and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian

- The right to enroll immediately, even if you don't have all the required paperwork.
- The right to school placement at the school in their best interest. This right lasts the entire duration of your homelessness or until the end of the school year after you achieve permanent housing.
- The right to access the same special programs and services provided to other children, including special education.
- The right to appeal decisions regarding enrollment and services. The right to attend school and school activities without the fear of being singled out.

How you can help your child?

- Make sure your child attends school every day
- Read to your child. Even a few minutes makes a difference.
- Make education a family priority.
- Meet with your child's teachers and other school personnel.

Additional Resources

[Mc-Kinney Vento Homeless](#)

Homeless Liaison Contact Information

Prerana Mehra

Administrative Services, Community Montessori
812-948-1000

Deepali Jani

Indiana State Coordinator
(317) 233-3372

Rights of Homeless Parents and their Children