

Montessori Community School



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2018-2019 Edition

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Montessori Community School

Family Handbook

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MONTESSORI COMMUNITY SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

We are a learning community of children and adults committed to excellence and optimal development of children's intellectual, social/emotional, physical, creative, and spiritual potential. Through an unparalleled Montessori education, children are well prepared to succeed in the 21st Century and to contribute to the betterment of our world.

OUR MISSION

Our purpose is to educate children two to twelve years old through a non-sectarian, Montessori program which nurtures a lifelong enthusiasm for learning, encourages a commitment to the community, and fosters a stewardship of the natural world.

CORE VALUES & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Love of Learning.

We are committed to the child-centered Montessori method of education where children are actively engaged, self-directed learners demonstrating critical thinking, scientific, cooperative, and problem-solving skills, and where the community of adults – teachers and parents – model these skills, engaging the children and one another in the same way.

Excellence.

We believe the truest form of excellence is being true to what you do and striving to do it to the best of your ability. We also recognize that our own excellence is enhanced when we support and encourage others' excellence.

Respect.

We believe respecting others means recognizing the individual spirit of every person, celebrating our differences and uniqueness, and encouraging freedom in the context of responsibility, self-discipline, and compassion. In this way, we recognize our interconnectedness and become stewards of our families, our community, and the world.

Notice of Non-Discriminatory Policy

Montessori Community School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and other school-administered programs.

MCS STUDENT LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Montessori Community School values and seeks to nurture in children:

Development of the spirit by promoting:

- * Caring and compassion
- * Respect and honesty
- * Independence, autonomy, and confidence
- * Liberty with limits
- * Self-direction, self-discipline, and personal responsibility
- * Intrinsic motivation
- * Ability to cope with changes
- * Curiosity and wonder for life

Academic preparedness by facilitating:

- * Use of concrete experiences that lead to abstract thought
- * Competency in reading, writing, and mathematics
- * Physical development and healthful practices
- * Effective communication skills
- * Joy in learning
- * An understanding of and appreciation for the natural world
- * An appreciation of the commonalities and uniqueness of people and cultures
- * An understanding of cycles and systems, and the interconnectedness of life
- * Imaginative, creative, and critical thinking
- * The process of abstract thought
- * Goal-setting and problem-solving
- * Appreciation of and participation in the arts

Social responsibility by encouraging:

- * Care for others and the environment
- * Positive contribution to the community
- * Peaceful solutions to conflict

PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCHOOL

The educational philosophy of Maria Montessori, M.D. is the basis for the school's programs. In *The Absorbent Mind*, Dr. Montessori wrote, "The most important period of life is . . . the period from birth to the age of six. For, that is the time when man's intelligence itself . . . is being formed."

Dr. Montessori believed that a truly educated individual continues learning long after the hours and years he spends in the classroom because he is motivated from within by a natural curiosity and love for knowledge. Therefore, the goal of early childhood education should be to cultivate the child's natural desire to learn.

In the Montessori classroom, this objective is approached in two ways. First, by empowering children to make choices among the classroom activities and secondly, by helping the child to perfect all his natural tools for learning so that his ability will be at a maximum in future learning situations.

Dr. Montessori emphasized the importance of sensitive periods for early learning. These are transitory periods of intense fascination for learning a particular characteristic or skill, such as going up and down steps, putting things in order, counting, or reading. It is easier for the child to acquire a particular skill or characteristic during the corresponding sensitive periods than at any other time in his life. The Montessori classroom takes advantage of this fact by allowing the child freedom to select individual activities which correspond to his interests.

Montessori education is a unique cycle of learning designed to complement the child's sensitive periods and developmental stages. A child who acquires the basic skills of reading and arithmetic in this natural way has the advantage of beginning his education without drudgery, boredom, or discouragement. With opportunities to pursue his interest, he retains his enthusiasm for learning, which is the key to his becoming a truly educated person.

The Montessori classroom promotes cooperation among children. Each child is encouraged to do his best and to help one another. Dr. Montessori believed that competition in education should be introduced only after the child has gained confidence in the use of the basic skills. "Never let a child risk failure," she wrote, "until he has a reasonable chance of success."

Children mature at different rates and their periods of readiness for academic subjects vary. Because interest is stimulated and the materials are at hand whenever a child is ready, some youngsters in a Montessori class begin to read and calculate at an unusually early age. However, very early learning is not the norm, nor was it ever Dr. Montessori's objective. Her ideal was only that the learning experience should occur naturally and joyfully at the proper moment for each individual child. "It is true we cannot make a genius," Dr. Montessori wrote, "we can only give each individual the chance to fulfill his potential possibilities to become an independent, secure, and balanced human being."

The role of the adult in a Montessori school is to facilitate children's learning by carefully preparing a suitable learning environment and by modeling for children the values of independence, respect, responsibility, and joy in learning. (Source material from *A Parent's Guide to the Montessori Classroom*.)

SCHOOL HISTORY

Montessori Community School was founded as Katrice Montessori School in 1972, on the grounds of the First Christian Church on Liholiho Street in Makiki. Started as a preschool to accommodate the special needs of Patricia Weber, a child with Down Syndrome, the school grew to include children from around the island with wide-ranging abilities and backgrounds. In 1982, the school name was changed to Montessori Community School to emphasize our vision of an educational experience that involves people and resources in the community as well as the community of children, parents, and teachers. The individual classrooms can be viewed as a model community of growing citizens.

The Elementary program originated with one 6-9 year-old class (grades 1-3) which grew in numbers until the commitment to create a 9-12 year-old class (grades 4-6) was made in 1981. In the fall of 1987, MCS expanded its programs again to meet the increasing demand for quality child care at the toddler ages with our first toddler class, consisting of two year-olds. Our growing programs found a home on our Nehoa Street campus, which opened in the spring of 1988.

In 1988, Montessori Community School was proud to have two of its teachers recognized by the Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children (HAEYC) for their outstanding accomplishments and abilities in their respective fields of teaching. Former MCS teacher Yvette Perreira Lewis was awarded the Excellence in Teaching Award in the Toddler Division. Jerry Mueller received the Excellence in Teaching Award at the Primary (grades 1-3) level, and retired in 2018.

In 1990, Susan Siebert, who had served as the Executive Director of MCS for 13 years, moved to the mainland. Patsy Tom, then the Assistant Director, took over the leadership role and served as Head of School for 27 years. Following Patsy's retirement in 2017, Marjie Carroll was appointed MCS Head of School.

In 1993, the informal network of parents was formally organized into the Parent Faculty Association (PFA). MCS is proud to be fully accredited by both HAIS (since 2001) and AMS (since 2008), and is also the first Montessori school on Oahu to be accredited by AMS. MCS celebrated its 45th anniversary during the 2017-2018 school year.

Montessori Community School continues its search for its own permanent campus. The consolidation of our campuses in 1999 to the present site was a step towards that goal. As the success and recognition of the staff and programs earn more prominence in the community, the staff feels closer than ever to that goal.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Montessori Community School is a not-for-profit organization as defined under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and is governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board has a fiduciary responsibility to the school and holds in trust the school's future. It is also the guardian of the school's integrity or reputation within the community.

The Board selects the Head of School and delegates the administration of the school to the Head of School. In collaboration with the Head of School, the Board establishes the school's mission and general policies. The Board manages the school's assets and ensures there are sufficient resources to support the school's programs. Finally, the Board organizes and manages itself to fulfill its duties to the school. Members of the school community may nominate prospective candidates to the Board's Committee on Trustees. The Board elects its own members.

ACCREDITATIONS, MEMBERSHIPS, AND LICENSES

Montessori Community School is fully accredited by the American Montessori Society (AMS) and the Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), a member of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools, and a member of the Hawaii Council of Private Schools (HCPS). In addition, the school is licensed by the Hawaii Department of Human Services (Two Year-Old, Preschool, and Elementary After-School Care programs) and the HCPS (Elementary programs).

Montessori Community School is accredited with AMS nationally and works cooperatively with Chaminade University's Montessori Teacher Education Division in training AMS interns. We recognize teaching credentials from AMS and AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) as prerequisites to teach in our school as a Montessori teacher.

Our AMS accreditation signifies the highest standards in the profession. As an accredited school, we maintain AMS standards and abide by the Code of Ethics adopted by the AMS Board of Directors in October, 1969 and expanded in June, 1975. In Hawaii, we support the AMS teacher training programs at Chaminade University.

"As American Montessori Society members, we do pledge to conduct ourselves professionally and personally in ways that will reflect our respect for each other and for the children we serve. We will do whatever is within our talents and capacity to protect the rights of each child to have the freedom and opportunity to develop his full potential."

American Montessori Society Code of Ethics

The American Montessori Society (AMS) requires that all member schools and affiliated teacher education programs agree to comply with the AMS Code of Ethics. AMS relies on self-compliance of this Code.

In pledging to accept the Code of Ethics, heads of schools and program directors agree that the educators in their institutions will strive to conduct themselves professionally and personally in ways that reflect their respect for one other and for the children they serve; and that they will do whatever is within their talents and capacity to protect the right of each child to have the freedom and opportunity to develop his or her full potential.

Principle I - Commitment to the Student

In fulfillment of the obligation to the children, the educator—

1. shall encourage independent action in the pursuit of learning;
2. shall protect the opportunity to provide for participation in educational programs without regard to race, sex, color, creed, or national origin;
3. shall protect the health and safety of students;
4. shall honor professional commitments and maintain obligations and contracts while never soliciting nor involving students or their parents in schemes for commercial gain;
5. shall keep in confidence information that has been secured in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

Principle II - Commitment to the Public

The Montessori educator shares in the responsibility for developing policy relating to the extension of educational opportunity for all and for interpreting educational programs and policies to the public.

In fulfilling these goals, the educator—

1. shall support the American Montessori Society and not misrepresent its policies in public discussion. Whenever speaking or writing about policies, the educator should take the precaution of distinguishing private views from the official position of the Society.
2. shall not interfere with nor exploit the rights and responsibilities of colleagues within the teaching profession.

Principle III - Commitment to the Profession

The Montessori educator makes efforts to raise professional standards and conditions to attract persons worthy of trust to careers in Montessori education.

In fulfilling these goals, the educator—

1. shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the Montessori education profession;
2. shall represent his or her own professional qualification with clarity and true intent;
3. shall apply for, accept, offer, recommend, and assign professional positions and responsibilities on the basis of professional preparation and legal qualifications;
4. shall use honest and effective methods of administering duties, use of time, and conducting business.

(Adopted 1969, AMS Board of Directors. Expanded 1975. Updated 2008 and 2010.)

PROGRAMS

EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Two Year-Old and Preschool/Kindergarten

It is important for parents to understand that the Montessori programs provide a unique cycle of learning. Both the Two Year-Old and Preschool/Kindergarten classrooms are carefully equipped with a broad array of materials which help the child to discover knowledge and develop his independence. The five general areas of the classroom are: **Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Mathematics, and Cultural Studies.**

Children are allowed to choose activities based on their interest and ability. A child who acquires the basic skills of reading and arithmetic in this natural way has the advantage of beginning his education without drudgery, boredom, or discouragement. By pursuing his individual interest in a Montessori classroom, he gains an early enthusiasm for learning, which is the key to becoming an educated person. While independence is the main focus, children are also part of the community, and through their daily interactions with others, they learn what is required to be part of a group.

The success of the child in school is dependent upon a number of factors, including the child himself. The relationship between the parent, school, and child is of prime importance. Parents are the child's primary role models, and our faculty and staff provide support to the family. Confusion for the child is minimized when the school and family work together.

In *The Absorbent Mind*, Maria Montessori wrote, "The most important period of life is not the age of university studies, but the first one, the period from birth to the age of six. For that is the time when man's intelligence itself, his greatest implement, is being formed. But not only his intelligence, the full totality of his psychic powers. . . at no other age has the child greater need of an intelligent help, and any obstacle that impedes his creative work will lessen the chance he has of achieving perfection."

Dr. Montessori believed that competition in education should be introduced only after the child has gained confidence in the use of basic skills. "Never let a child risk failure," she wrote, "until he has a reasonable chance of success." Since each child works individually with the materials, he relies only on his own previous work and his progress is not compared to the achievements of other youngsters.

It is a well-established fact that young children mature at very different rates and their periods of readiness for academic subjects vary a great deal. Because interest is stimulated and the materials are at hand whenever a child is ready, some youngsters in a Montessori class begin to read and calculate at an unusually early age. However, very early learning is not the norm, nor was it ever Dr. Montessori's objective. Her ideal was only that the learning experience should occur naturally and joyfully at the proper moment for each individual child. "It is true we cannot make a genius," Dr. Montessori once wrote. "We can only give each individual the chance to fulfill his potential possibilities to become an independent, secure, and balanced human being."

TWO YEAR-OLD PROGRAM

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- * Provide children with a safe environment for physical movement, exploration, and discovery, while encouraging curiosity.
- * Promote healthy social development.
- * Promote the child's trust by providing an orderly and predictable environment, as well as caregivers that understand and cherish the children in their care.
- * Provide activities and opportunities which foster the development of order, concentration, coordination, and independence ("OCCI").
- * Assist children in acquiring language.

THE SEPARATION PROCESS

The Separation Process is an important element in the family's successful transition from home or sitter to the group care environment. We recognize that both child and parents need time to establish trust in the environment and caregivers. Accordingly, our Separation Process is designed to allow the child to gradually build that trust while in the parent's presence so that he or she can receive reassurance as needed. This process also allows the parents to watch their child's adjustment in the program and to feel reassured that he or she will be well cared for in their absence.

During the first week of school, parent and child will attend the program for approximately an hour on the first day, with the time gradually increasing. At this time, the child is free to explore the classroom on his own while his parent remains seated in a designated area of the room, within the child's sight. The parent's presence serves to reassure the child as he or she ventures into the environment.

As the child begins to feel more comfortable in the classroom and begins to trust the caregivers, he or she will explore for longer periods of time and turn to the caregivers with questions and comments. The next step in the process is to have the parent leave for a short time, returning to take the child home. Parents may want to alternate the days to accommodate busy schedules.

Each child will respond differently to the adventure of "going to school," so the teaching staff is trained to observe and facilitate the process. The average separation time is one week, but it may be longer or shorter, depending on the individual child.

CHECK LIST FOR THE FIRST FULL DAY OF SCHOOL

Two Year-Old Program

Forms

See the section on **ENROLLMENT** for required paperwork.

Personal Articles

At this age, children often need a change of clothes. Supplies that will be needed include extra underwear or training pants, an extra set of clothing, plastic bags, disposable diapers and wipes, etc. for those who need them. Please **clearly label all personal items** with your child's name.

Clothing

Children should wear comfortable clothing in which they can safely work and play without fear of getting dirty or messy. Clothing should be easy for the child to remove independently. Overalls, snug elastic waistbands, tights for girls, tight snaps, etc. can be difficult for young children to remove by themselves and can make trips to the bathroom a problem. Children should not wear clothing which contradicts the values of Montessori education. Footwear is required daily for safety, but high heels can present a safety hazard and should not be worn to school.

Please label both slippers, both shoes, jackets, sweaters, and all other personal items.

Snacks and Lunch

Children bring their own lunch or may order lunch (on a monthly basis) from the catering company. Please see the section on **FOOD** for helpful hints. **Be sure the child's name is labeled visibly on the lunch box or bag, food containers, and beverage bottle.**

Soda, gum, and candy are not permitted in school and should not be included in lunches or snacks.

Sharing of food from lunches and snacks is not permitted for sanitary reasons, and because some children have allergies to certain foods.

Snacks provided by the school follow nutrition guidelines set by the Department of Human Services. A morning snack is provided for the children, and an afternoon snack is provided for children who remain after 2:30 p.m. It includes fruit or vegetables, whole grain products, and dairy products, such as milk or cheese. Children with identified allergies to dairy products will be offered juice or water as an alternative.

Children are encouraged to feed themselves and to consume as much of their lunch as they wish. Children eat their snacks and lunches seated at a table so as to incorporate grace and courtesy into the activity, as well as to safeguard against choking.

Bedding

Children need a blanket, beach towel, or some kind of clean covering to lie upon. Be sure it is labeled and placed in a plastic bag for hygienic purposes. Parents are asked to take it home each Friday for laundering in hot water.

Naps

Children who remain in the program after 12 noon take naps. The length of nap time varies with each child's individual needs. If a child is unable to sleep, he may do quiet activities after resting.

Children may bring a special nap time object, e.g. a stuffed animal or blanket. Please be sure it is labeled.

Toileting

Toilet learning is a collaborative effort involving the child, the teachers, and the parents. Usually when a child remains dry for an hour or two, indicates to an adult that he or she is wet or soiled, shows an interest in using the toilet, or is willing to sit on the toilet or to use training pants, the child is ready for toilet learning.

Once toileting has begun, it is expected that the process will be supported at home as well as in school. Close communication between parents and teachers is encouraged.

Children who are going through toilet learning for the first time, as well as others not completely trained, should bring a sufficient amount of training pants and plastic bags. Training pants should be loose enough for the child to be able to manage by him- or herself.

All children are diapered or toileted before and after their naps as well as throughout the day.

NOTE: State health regulations restrict the staff from rinsing or washing soiled underpants. The regulations were enacted to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. It is essential that the soiled clothing be taken home daily for laundering. Also, only disposable diapers are used in our school.

Accidents

Teachers supervise the children closely and work to safeguard the environment. Even so, it is normal for children to have accidents. Toddler-aged children are in the process of developing their gross motor coordination and are often unsteady. In addition, toddlers are impulsive and are just beginning to learn to use words as a substitute for biting or hitting when angry.

When a child is injured, first aid is administered by the staff and an Accident Report form, which describes the injury and treatment, is completed by a teacher and sent home. A copy of the Accident Report is kept on file in the office. The staff treats minor injuries, such as cuts and scrapes, by cleansing with soap and water and applying a bandage. In case of a serious accident, the parents will be notified and the teachers will refer to the child's Family, Emergency, and Release Information form for instructions. It is, therefore, essential that the Family, Emergency, and Release form contain accurate and current information. The majority of our staff members have successfully completed certified First Aid and Child CPR courses.

Please refer to the **HEALTH & SAFETY** section on **Accidents** for school policies regarding serious injuries.

After-School Care

After-School Care is available until 5:30 p.m. on a regular or occasional basis and is charged accordingly. Different activities and a snack are provided for the children who remain later in the day. MCS is licensed by the State of Hawaii to enroll children 2 years of age and under 7 years of age for a maximum enrollment of 126 in our preschool after-school program.

NOTE: School closes at 5:30 p.m. Should any child be picked up after 5:30 p.m., a late fee will be assessed, due upon presentation of statement by the teacher. The late fee is to encourage families to pick up their children on time. Repeated late pick-up or failure to pay late charges may result in the termination of after-school care services to your family.

CHECK LIST FOR EVERY DAY

Two Year-Old Program

1. **Prompt arrival.** Arrive at school on time! For the Two Year-Old program, families should arrive no later than 8:30 a.m., to establish a regular schedule. Predictable routines help children feel secure and can aid in their adjustment.
2. **Acknowledgment of arrival.** When dropping off your child, make certain that the supervising staff member in attendance is informed of your child's arrival.
3. **Absences.** When absence is necessary, parents should inform the school by calling the office by 8:30 a.m.
4. **Dismissal & pick-up authorization.** Check out with the supervising teacher at pick-up time and be sure to sign out on the attendance sheet with the time of pick-up and your initials. Children will be released only to their parents or legal guardians, or those so authorized by the child's parents or legal guardians. Authorization to release a child can only be given by the child's parents or legal guardians. If the person picking up your child is unfamiliar to our staff, we will require government-issued photo identification (such as a driver's license or state i.d.) for verification before releasing your child.
5. **Dismissal time routines.** Please pick up your child promptly at dismissal time. The very young child gains security through being picked up at the same time every day.

When picking up your child, we ask that you leave with your child promptly. When children remain with their parents on the playground after their dismissal time, it creates a confusing situation for the teachers who are supervising the playground or classroom and makes it difficult for After-School Care teachers to close the program at 5:30 p.m. If you remain on the playground with your child after the pick-up time, you will be assessed the occasional care fee.
6. **Occasional care.** Children who are not picked up from campus by 2:40 p.m. are automatically enrolled in the After-School Care program for the day, and occasional child care rates will be assessed.
7. **Secure gates.** When you enter or exit the playground, be absolutely certain that the gate is secured! We don't want any children to slip into the parking lot. Only adults should open and close all gate latches.
8. **Drive with caution.** Please drive slowly (5 mph or less) and carefully through our parking lot, keeping the drive-through lane unobstructed, and entering and exiting only through designated points. (See Campus Map, p. 29)
9. **Parking lot safety.** When parking, turn off the vehicle's engine, lock all doors, and remove the keys from the ignition. Safety is our priority. Always accompany your child to or from the car to the gate. Do not leave children (e.g. younger siblings) unattended in the car.

10. **Personal articles.** Make sure your child does not bring toys, candy, gum, money, inflated balloons, jewelry, purses or wallets, or any articles of value onto the school grounds. We have many interesting materials and constructive activities in school. If your child feels he or she has a book, music CD, or something of interest to share, discuss this with the teacher before bringing it into the classroom. Children at the ages represented in the Two Year-Old Program are not developmentally ready for sharing their possessions with others.
11. **Lost and Found.** Check the “Lost and Found” regularly for missing items.
12. **Check mail folders.** Check your child’s mail folder daily for communications from the office or teacher, accident reports, child’s work, or other information.
13. **Discussing concerns with teachers.** When you have a concern regarding your child, please schedule a mutually convenient time to meet with the teacher. It is important that such discussions be held at a time when everyone’s full attention is possible. Lengthy conversations at morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times distract teachers from their primary responsibility of supervising the children.

PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Montessori curriculum provides the child with concrete experiences and information about his world. The child is allowed to progress through the curriculum at his or her own pace and interest level. The 3-6 year-old preschool/kindergarten program addresses the whole child – intellectual, social and emotional, and physical development. Activities are provided which foster the development of order, concentration, coordination, and independence (“OCCI”).

The program strives to foster and facilitate the development of patterns of behavior that will serve as the foundation for future learning. These include:

- * **Intrinsic motivation:** The child is working and learning through his/her own choices and direction.
- * **Independence in work:** Each child enjoys “working” and selects one task at a time tirelessly and independently.
- * **Completed work cycles:** Whatever activity is initiated by the child is carried out to its natural end, signified by the return of the material to its proper space.
- * **Respect:** The child respects the work of others and does not interrupt or attempt to make it his own. Materials are returned in a manner showing respect for the environment as well as for the child who will use it next. The child is kind to him- or herself and to others, and works cooperatively with the group.
- * **Responsibility:** The child takes responsibility for his or her behavior with the materials. If he or she spills, for example, the child will independently remedy the problem. The child also takes responsibility for words and actions towards him- or herself and others. For example, he or she knows that it is his or her choice to be kind or hurtful, and each choice brings certain consequences.

PHASE-IN PROGRAM

Montessori Community School has been successful in making the first days of school more comfortable by employing the Phase-In Program. This procedure staggers the first day of school for different groups of students over a period of several days.

On the first day of school, the returning and kindergarten children will be alone with the teachers. They will receive personal attention and reminders of how the Montessori program works. On the second day, another group of the oldest new students will join the first and receive similar personal attention and direction. The days will progress with the daily addition of groups of new students. By the time the youngest children enter the program, the others will be comfortably adjusted and will be setting examples for the young ones who will also be receiving individual attention from the staff.

The Phase-In begins with the first day of the academic school year. Families will be notified of the specific starting date in July and the classroom assignment in August. For some working parents it may be inconvenient to follow the phase-in plan, but making child-care arrangements will certainly be to the child’s benefit. Our intention is to make the transition to school as pleasant and smooth as possible.

CHECK LIST FOR THE FIRST FULL DAY OF SCHOOL

Preschool/Kindergarten Programs

Forms

See the section on **ENROLLMENT** for required paperwork.

Preparation for School

These suggestions are offered to help you in preparing your child for his first day at school. When a child begins the Montessori experience, it is a big step in his young life, and he needs the interest and support of his family. It is best to talk about the beginning of school only a day or two before the actual date. Explain the situation briefly and calmly. Talking about specific activities could lead to disappointments, so speak in general terms.

On his first day, when you arrive at the classroom entrance, give him a friendly good-bye and leave your child in the care of the teacher. The teachers will comfort a disappointed or tearful student. It works best for the child if the parents do not linger. It is not unusual for parents whose child is coming to school for the first time to also be feeling anxiety. We encourage you to share your feelings and concerns with the teachers.

Do not be discouraged if your child does not relate many specifics about his school experience. Usually the child has been working with many different activities throughout the day, and specific recall can be difficult. Another thing to keep in mind is that we are concerned with process rather than product so that much of what a child has accomplished is being internalized and will prepare them for the elementary years. You will notice that he may bring home very few papers and other “product” evidence of his school work. Please be patient as your child gradually reveals his newly-acquired skills and knowledge.

Personal Articles

Children in the 3-6 year-old preschool programs should bring an extra set of labeled clothing to school in a resealable plastic bag. In the case of an accident, the soiled clothes will be sent home that day, and the child will wear their set of extra clothes. Parents should take soiled clothing home that day. Please return the next day with another set of clean clothing in a clean plastic bag.

NOTE: State health regulations restrict the staff from rinsing or washing soiled underpants. The regulations were enacted to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. It is therefore essential that soiled clothing be taken home that day for laundering.

Clothing

Children should wear comfortable clothing in which they can safely work and play without fear of getting dirty or messy. Clothing should be easy for the child to remove independently. Overalls, snug elastic waistbands, tights for girls, tight snaps, etc. can be difficult for young children to remove by themselves and can make trips to the bathroom a problem. Children should not wear clothing which contradicts the values of Montessori education, such as t-shirts with violent themes. Footwear is required daily for safety, but high heels can present a safety hazard and should not be worn to school.

Please label both slippers, both shoes, jackets, sweaters, and all other personal items.

Snacks and Lunch

Children bring their own lunch or may order lunch (on a monthly basis) from the catering company. Please see the section on **FOOD** for helpful hints. **Be sure your child's name is labeled visibly on the lunch box or bag, food containers, and beverage bottle.** Due to the number of children in the programs, refrigeration and reheating is not available for lunch.

Soda, gum, and candy are not permitted in school and should not be included in lunches or snacks.

Sharing of food from lunches and snacks is not permitted for sanitary reasons, and because some children have allergies to certain foods.

Snacks provided by the school follow nutrition guidelines set by the Department of Human Services. A morning snack is provided for the children, and an afternoon snack is provided for children who remain after 2:30 p.m. It includes fruit or vegetables, whole grain products, and dairy products, such as milk or cheese. Children with identified allergies to dairy products will be offered water or juice as an alternative.

Bedding

All children will have a rest time after lunch. They should bring a blanket or beach towel, or some kind of clean covering to lie upon. Be sure it is labeled and placed in a plastic bag for hygienic purposes. Parents are asked to take it home each Friday for laundering in hot water.

Naps

Following lunch, the children have a rest period. Generally, the youngest children have a formal nap time. Another group, who no longer need naps on a regular basis, rests for a short time, and then participates in an afternoon activity period. The kindergarten children rest and then begin their afternoon kindergarten program.

After-School Care

After-School Care is available until 5:30 p.m. on a regular or occasional basis and is charged accordingly. Different activities and a snack are provided for the children who remain later in the day. MCS is licensed by the State of Hawaii to enroll children 2 years of age and under 7 years of age for a maximum enrollment of 126 in our preschool after-school program.

NOTE: School closes at 5:30 p.m. Should any child be picked up after 5:30 p.m., a late fee will be assessed, due upon presentation of statement by the teacher. The late fee is to encourage families to pick up their children on time. Repeated late pick-up or failure to pay late charges may result in the termination of after-school care services to your family.

CHECK LIST FOR EVERY DAY

Preschool/Kindergarten Program

1. **Prompt arrival.** Arrive at school on time! The 3-6 preschool programs begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. each day. Children who come late miss being greeted by the teachers and the opening lesson at 8:30 a.m. Predictable routines help children feel secure and can aid in their adjustment. The concentration of their classmates is interrupted when someone arrives late.
2. **Acknowledgment of arrival.** When dropping off your child, make certain that the supervising staff member in attendance is informed of your child's arrival.
3. **Absences.** When absence is necessary, parents should inform the school by calling the office by 8:30 a.m.
4. **Dismissal & pick-up authorization.** Check out with the supervising teacher at pick-up time and be sure to sign out on the attendance sheet with the time of pick-up and your initials. Children will be released only to their parents, legal guardians, or those so authorized by the child's parents or legal guardians. Authorization to release a child can only be given by the child's parents or legal guardians. If the person picking up your child is unfamiliar to our staff, we will require government-issued photo identification (such as a driver's license or state i.d.) for verification before releasing your child.
5. **Dismissal time routines.** Please pick up your child promptly at dismissal time. The very young child gains security through being picked up at the same time every day.

When picking up your child, we ask that you leave with your child promptly. When children remain with their parents on the playground after their dismissal time, it creates a confusing situation for the teachers who are supervising the playground or classroom and makes it difficult for After-School Care teachers to close the program at 5:30 p.m. If you remain on the playground with your child after the pick-up time, you will be assessed the occasional care fee.
6. **Occasional care.** Children who are not picked up from campus by 2:40 p.m. are automatically enrolled in the After-School Care program for the day, and occasional child care rates will be assessed. If you remain on the playground with your child after the pick-up time, you will be assessed the occasional care fee.
7. **Secure gates.** When you enter or exit the playground, be absolutely certain that the gate is secured! We don't want any children to slip into the parking lot. Only adults should open and close all gate latches.
8. **Drive with caution.** Please drive slowly (5 mph or less) and carefully through our parking lot, keeping the drive-through lane unobstructed, and entering and exiting only through designated points. (See Campus Map, p. 29)

9. **Parking lot safety.** When parking, turn off the vehicle's engine, lock all doors, and remove the keys from the ignition. Safety is our priority. Always accompany your child to or from the car to the gate. Do not leave children (e.g. younger siblings) unattended in the car.
10. **Personal articles.** Make sure your child does not bring toys, candy, gum, money, inflated balloons, jewelry, purses or wallets, or any articles of value onto the school grounds. We have many interesting materials and constructive activities in school. If your child feels he or she has a book, tape, or something of interest to share, discuss this with the teacher before bringing it into the classroom.
11. **Lost and Found.** Check the "Lost and Found" regularly for missing items.
12. **Check mail folders.** Check your child's mail folder daily for communications from the office or teacher, accident reports, child's work, or other information.
13. **Discussing concerns with teachers.** When you have a concern regarding your child, please schedule a mutually convenient time to meet with the teacher. It is important that such discussions be held at a time when everyone's full attention is possible. Lengthy conversations at morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times distract teachers from their primary responsibility of supervising the children.

ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS

6-9 and 9-12 Year-Old Classes

Montessori elementary classrooms continue the mixed-age groupings as seen in the Early Education Programs. Students in grades 1, 2, and 3 form the 6-9 year-old class while grades 4, 5, and 6 form the 9-12 year-old class. The goal of the Montessori elementary teachers over the span of the six years is to assist the student in learning as much as possible about the cultures, inventions, and knowledge developed and acquired by human beings since humans first appeared on earth as well as prehistory and current issues facing humans. The scope of information integrated in the curriculum units includes math, geometry, language arts, history, geography, cultural studies, botany, zoology, geology, physics, anatomy, health and nutrition, and environmental studies, as well as music, art, and physical education.

In contrast to the preschool child, the elementary student is a more conscious and intentional learner. Building on the wealth of information internalized during the preschool years, the elementary student is eager to relate new facts with prior information. The ongoing process of mastering the “3 Rs,” i.e. reading, writing, and arithmetic, enables the student to discover the why, how, and wherefore about his world.

Students take an active responsibility for their learning by organizing their work, choosing research projects and essay themes, creating their own vocabulary lists, engaging in peer teaching, and being accountable for the completion of assignments. They learn strategies to seek out answers and problem-solve creatively. In an open classroom, the students develop initiative, self-direction, and self-discipline.

Within the classroom, the students and teachers form a social unit. They share a responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment and atmosphere in which each person can thrive intellectually, emotionally, and physically. Students make choices and are accountable for the consequences of their decisions. As students develop inner controls over their behavior they also engage in conflict resolution and creative problem-solving with their peers. We encourage students to consider the viewpoints of others, to accommodate, to assert, to negotiate, and to work together toward common goals. They learn what it means to be a member of a pluralistic and democratic society.

GOALS OF THE MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

We are committed to the Montessori approach to learning. Our goals are for each child to learn:

- **To study independently in a program of individualized instruction.**
Individualized instruction does not mean one-on-one instruction. Some lessons occur in small groups. Each child receives individual attention from the teacher from the on-going evaluations of his work. The child gains guidance and direction in this personal time with the teacher. The teacher determines what needs to be done in more depth or what additional work should follow.
- **To work cooperatively with others in a multi-age setting that develops a community spirit.**
Children are free to work in groups of their own choosing for special projects or to accomplish their regular daily work. They practice problem-solving methods within their small groups. They become effective community members.
- **To think abstractly and to use his imagination through a variety of approaches and open-ended exploration.**
The imagination develops intensely in the elementary child. “To strike the imagination” is to get the child’s interest. It leads to work, which leads to imagining, which leads to abstract thinking.
- **To master concepts through work with three-dimensional materials which put abstract ideas into concrete form.**
The Montessori materials assist the child in reaching abstraction. Spatial time lines, pictorial zoology, fractional insets, and botany charts are a few of the many materials designed to move the child toward abstract thinking. They are a means to an end.
- **To apply the “basics” in order to answer the why, the how, and the wherefore within his world.**
The “3 Rs” serve as tools enabling the child to move forward and pursue a wider curriculum. Math and language skills progress on an on-going basis, with the child practicing math problems and language arts lessons as developmentally-appropriate. The student uses his basic skills to reach more deeply into other studies in Montessori’s cultural curriculum. Math is used to determine the distance between two cities on a map or to weigh specimens collected for studies in geology. Language arts skills come together as a child researches and reports on how the earth was formed, or how people live in another country, or which plants belong to the heliconia family. Children see how music (rhythm, notation, etc.) relates to mathematics. They develop an understanding of cycles and systems and the interconnectedness of life.
- **To be self-disciplined and self-directed.**
The Montessori approach aids the child in developing the ability to master his or her own thoughts and actions to gain control over one’s own being. The emphasis is on inner discipline. The child learns to take responsibility for his or her behavior, to make good choices, to work responsibly and independently, and how to set goals.

- **To solve problems creatively.**

The world is experiencing an accelerated rate of change. The education of the future must prepare students to cope with changes and to find solutions through means other than traditional educational methods and advice from experts. Imaginative, creative, critical thinkers contribute to the community at large.

Montessori children learn to look to many sources for their answers. They research different points of view. They look toward the community for possible solutions. They learn to adapt to change, and recognize their potential for shaping their own lives.

“Education should no longer be mostly imparting knowledge, but must take a new path, seeking the release of human potentialities. The teacher . . . works in the service of the complete human being, able to exercise in freedom a self-disciplined will and judgment, unperturbed by prejudice and undistorted by fear.”

-- Dr. Maria Montessori

ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

I. Language Arts (6-9 year-old program)

Reading: *Phonemic awareness; phonics; sight words; word attack; comprehension; vocabulary; fluency; poetry*

Writing: *Mechanics; process of writing; exposure to different types of writing*

Grammar: *Parts of speech; parts of a sentence*

Spelling

Handwriting

Literature

Dictionary skills

Language Arts (9-12 year-old program)

Reading: *Comprehension; vocabulary*

Writing: *Writing techniques and structure; basic editing; exposure to different genres of writing; mechanics*

Grammar: *Advanced parts of speech; advanced parts of a sentence*

Oral Communication: *Public speaking; personal expression*

Spelling

Handwriting

Literature

Drama

Latin and Greek word roots

II. Mathematics (6-9 year-old program)

Whole number operations: *addition, subtraction, multiplication, division*

Recognition and writing of symbols

Recognition of quantity

Place Value

Memorization of facts

Word Problems

Fractions

Plane Geometry

Passage to decanomial

Life skills: *Telling time; knowledge of money; measurement; estimation*

Mathematics (9-12 year-old program)

Whole number operations: *addition, subtraction, multiplication, division*

Memorization of facts

Word problems; group problem-solving

Fractions

Decimals

Signed numbers

Ratio & proportion

Mathematics (9-12 year-old program) (continued)

Square roots; cube roots

Squaring and cubing sequences

Pre-algebra

Plane geometry; surface area and volume

Passage to decanomial

Powers of numbers

Graphing

Life skills: Measurement; knowledge of money

III. Cultural Curriculum (6-9 year-old program)

History: *Study of the universe; timeline of life*

Concept of time: *Clocks; calendars; personal timeline*

Five kingdoms of life

Fundamental needs of people

Earth science

Science: *Experiments supporting various themes (e.g. DNA and genetics, etc.); physical science*

Geography: *Physical; political; biomes*

Zoology: *External parts; vital functions; classification of invertebrates and vertebrates*

Botany: *External parts; vital functions; classification*

Peace education

Cultural Curriculum (9-12 year-old program)

History: *Ancient civilizations; early humans; U.S. history*

Fundamental needs of people

Study of systems and relationships with scientific principles

Science: *Human body; zoology; botany; physical science; chemistry; simple machines; astronomy; weather; earth studies-geology*

Geography: *Physical and political geography*

Peace education

IV. Personal and Social Development

Goal-setting

Time management

Personal responsibility

Peaceful conflict resolution

Problem-solving

Cooperative learning

Care of the natural world and the environment; responsibility to the community; multi-cultural awareness and appreciation

V. Physical Education

Development and maintenance of physical fitness and good sportsmanship

Awareness and management of the body

Acquisition of useful physical skills, safety skills, and personal fitness habits

Enjoyment of wholesome recreation

V. Physical Education (cont'd.)

6-9 year-old program: Non-competitive skill-building games, leading to participation in sports

9-12 year-old program: Skills incorporated into non-competitive organized games and physical fitness

VI. Health

General hygiene, nutrition, physical maintenance

VII. Music

Performing/reading music; creating music; listening to, describing, and valuing music

VIII. Art

6-9 year-old program: Appreciation of the arts; imaginative, creative, and critical thinking; an understanding and appreciation for the natural world

9-12 year-old program: Exposure to a variety of media and mediums through an open lab, experimentation set-up

IX. Spanish

An immersion-style learning environment with an emphasis on vocabulary building, grammatical precision, and use of the target language through conversation.

6-9 year-old elementary students focus on movement, music, and art.

9-12 year-old elementary students focus on writing, reading, and project-based learning.

X. Computer Science and Coding

6-9 year-old program: All students are introduced to coding with hands-on exploration of basic programming concepts using block-based visual programming applications on iPad. Students are also introduced to robotics with Wonder Workshop's Dot Robot.

9-12 year-old program: All students are introduced to core concepts of computer science, such as the binary language, the inner working of a computer, current technology terms, companies, and leaders and their impact on society.

4th year students: Introduction to computers using Microsoft Surface Pro computers; Microsoft Windows; Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Continued coding and robotics with Wonder Workshop's Dot robot and code.org resources

5th year students: Use of Apple computers with MacBook Air laptops; Pages, Keynote, and Numbers. Reinforcement of coding and robotics fundamentals using Wonder Workshop's Dash robot and code.org resources.

6th year students: Tablet computing using Apple iPad, with emphasis on research, communication, project design, and presentation. Reinforcement of fundamental coding concepts using real Swift code on the iPad. Robotics and team building with Lego EV3 Mindstorms.

XI. Campouts

Development and implementation of practical life skills, independence, personal responsibilities, and an appreciation for the natural world

CHECK LIST FOR THE FIRST FULL DAY OF SCHOOL

Elementary Programs

1. **Forms.** See the section on **ENROLLMENT** for required paperwork.
2. **School supplies.** A list for each elementary classroom is distributed in the Fall Packet, which is sent in the summer.

CHECK LIST FOR EVERY DAY

Elementary Programs

1. **Prompt arrival/tardiness.** Elementary programs begin promptly at **8:00 a.m.** each day. Children who arrive after 8:00 a.m. must report to the classroom, with their parent or accompanying adult, to obtain and sign a tardy slip.
2. **Morning supervision.** Supervision for children is not provided prior to 7:30 a.m. Parents (or accompanying adults) who arrive before 7:30 a.m. to drop off their child should stay with their child for safety until the arrival of the teacher on duty.
3. **Acknowledgment of arrival.** When dropping off your child, make certain that the supervising staff member in attendance is informed of your child's arrival.
4. **Absences.** When absence is necessary, parents should inform the school by calling the office by 8:30 a.m.
5. **Dismissal & pick-up authorization.** Check out with the supervising teacher at the 2:30 p.m. pick-up time and if your child joins the elementary after-school program, be sure that a supervising staff member signs out your child on the attendance sheet. Children will be released only to their parents, legal guardians, or those so authorized by the child's parents or legal guardians. Authorization to release a child can only be given by the child's parents or legal guardians.

If the person picking up your child is unfamiliar to our staff, we will require government-issued photo identification (such as a driver's license or state i.d.) for verification before releasing your child.

Elementary students who will be walking or taking the bus home must give the office a written note with the parent or legal guardian's signature authorizing the student to leave campus on their own at dismissal time.

6. **Dismissal time routines.** Please pick up your child promptly at dismissal time.

When picking up your child, we ask that you leave with your child promptly. When children remain with their parents on the playground after their dismissal time, it creates a confusing situation for the teachers who are supervising the playground or classroom and makes it difficult for After-School Care teachers to close the program at 5:30 p.m.

7. **After-School Care.** After-School Care is available until 5:30 p.m. on a regular or occasional basis and is charged accordingly. Different activities and a snack are provided for the children who remain later in the day. MCS is licensed by the State of Hawaii to enroll a maximum of 80 children, ages 5 years, 6 months old and under 13 years of age, in our elementary after-school program.
NOTE: School closes at 5:30 p.m. Should any child be picked up after 5:30 p.m., a late fee will be assessed, due upon presentation of statement by the teacher. The late fee is to encourage families to pick up their children on time. Repeated late pick-up or failure to pay late charges may result in the termination of after-school care services to your family.
8. **Occasional care.** Children who are not picked up from campus by 2:40 p.m. are automatically enrolled in the After-School Care program for the day, and occasional child care rates will be assessed. Students may not remain on campus unsupervised after the 2:30 p.m. dismissal time.
9. **Lunch.** Children bring their own lunch or may order lunch (on a monthly basis) from the catering company. Refrigeration is not available. Sodas, candy, and gum should not be included in lunches. See the section on **FOOD** for additional information.
10. **Snack.** Snacks are optional, but there is time provided during the school day for children to have a small snack if they bring one. MCS strongly encourages nutritious snacks. A snack is provided to children who remain in the Elementary After-School Care program
11. **Closed shoes.** Closed shoes, such as athletic shoes, are required daily for safety. Fully enclosed athletic shoes are required for P.E. and field trips.
12. **Backpack or book bag.** Please **label** your child's backpack or book bag, as the styles are often very similar.
13. **Personal articles.** Articles that can distract students from the business of learning and articles of value should not be brought to school. Cell phones should be turned off during the school day. Check with the teacher prior to bringing in an item if you are unsure.
14. **Clothing and Grooming.** Children should come to school in neat clothing and hair of a natural color so as not to call attention to themselves and distract themselves or others. Personal grooming should not call attention to the student or distract the student or others. Students should not wear clothing or other items of apparel or adornment which contradict the values of Montessori education. Students should wear an MCS school t-shirt on field trips. Refer to the "Dress for Success" handout distributed in the Fall Packet for additional information about clothing and grooming guidelines for 9-12 students.
15. **Drive with caution.** Please drive slowly (5 mph or less) and carefully through our parking lot, keeping the drive-through lane unobstructed, and entering and exiting only through designated points. (See Campus Map.)
16. **Parking lot safety.** When parking, turn off the vehicle's engine, lock all doors, and remove the keys from the ignition. Safety is our priority. Always accompany your child to or from the car to the gate. Do not leave children (e.g. younger siblings) unattended in the car.

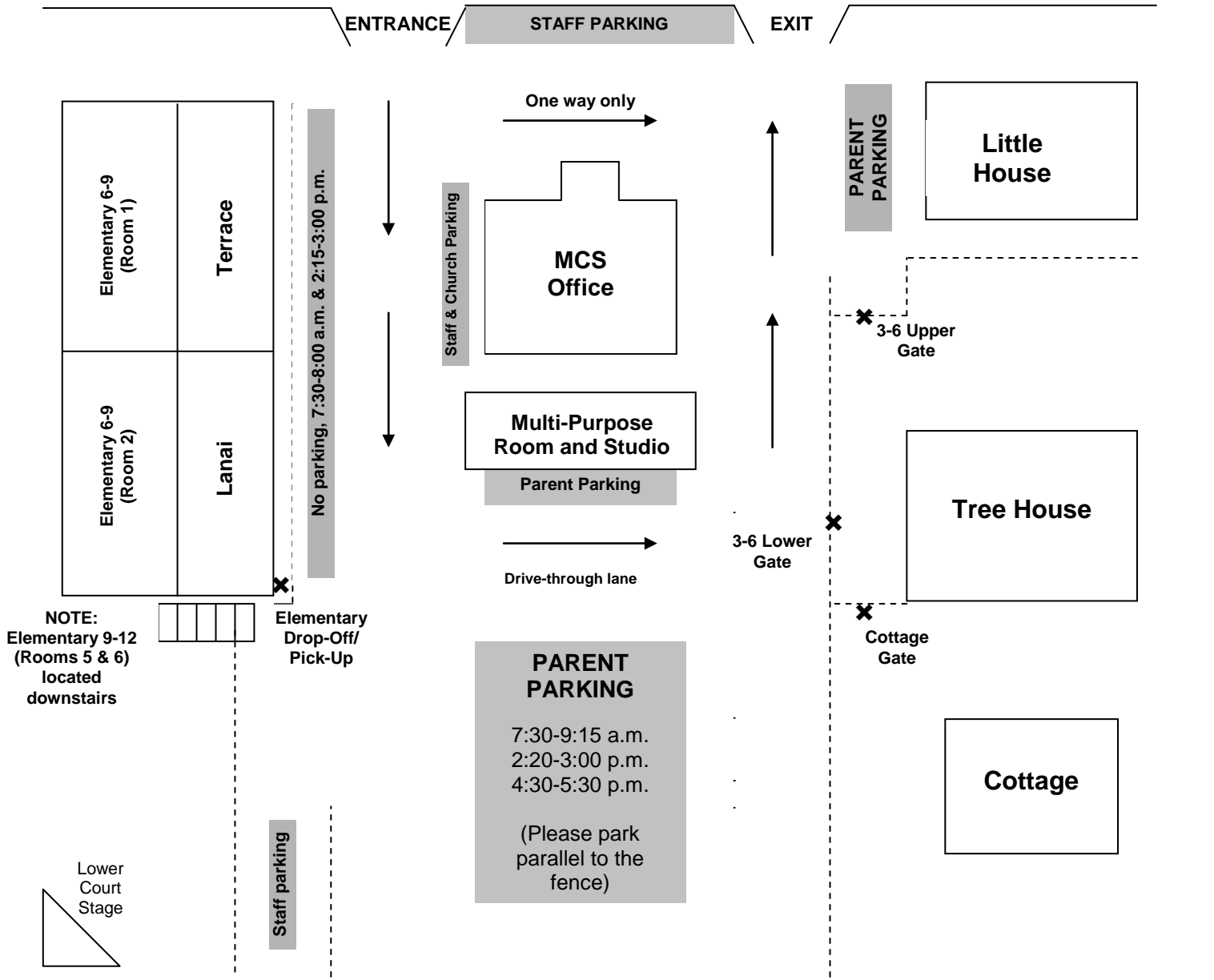
17. **Secure gates.** When you enter or exit through any campus gates, be absolutely certain that the gate is secured! We don't want any of the preschool children to slip into the parking lot. Preschool-aged children are not allowed to open and close gate latches.
18. **Checking mail folders.** Elementary students are responsible for checking their mail folders daily for homework, student's work, communication from the office or teacher, accident reports, or other information, and taking these items home to their parents.
19. **Discussing concerns with teachers.** When parents have a concern they would like to discuss at length, please arrange a mutually convenient time with the teacher. Lengthy conversations at morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times distract teachers from their primary responsibility of supervising the children.

**SCHOOL
POLICIES, PROCEDURES,
AND PRACTICES**

Campus Map

← **NEHOA STREET** →

(Street parking on Nehoa Street is available on the makai side from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and on the mauka side from 8:30 a.m. in the designated parking zones.)



CAMPUS SAFETY

1. **DRIVE SLOWLY**, 5 mph or less, following designated traffic flow pattern.
2. Enter and exit the campus with caution. Watch for pedestrians, both on and off campus.
3. Please be sure to always **turn off your car's engine** and remove the keys from the ignition.
4. Children should walk close to adults while on the parking lot.
5. Secure your vehicle. Roll up your windows, **lock your doors**, and remove valuables or keep them out of plain sight in your vehicle.
6. Do not leave infants or younger siblings unattended in your vehicle, even for one minute.
7. Only adults may open gates. Be sure to latch ALL gates securely behind you.
8. Be sure a supervising staff member knows that your child has arrived on campus in the morning and is leaving the campus in the afternoon.
9. Please leave the area closest to the planter box open as a drive-through lane, 7:30-8:00 a.m., during the morning drop-off time.
10. If you need to stay on campus for any reason, please park alongside the Music Room, or somewhere on campus where you are not obstructing other cars. Field trip chaperones must park off-campus.

ENROLLMENT

Upon acceptance into the school, a tuition deposit or tuition payment is due. Payment is necessary to hold the space for the student. Information regarding our financial policies is enclosed with the acceptance letter and is available through the Business Office.

Requirements for All New Students

New students entering MCS must supply the following prior to the first day of school:

1. Pupil's Health Form (Form 14). See section on **Health Requirements** for more information.
2. A completed Family, Emergency, and Release Information form (provided by MCS).
3. A copy of the student's birth certificate or passport. Souvenir hospital certificates are not acceptable official documents.
4. A signed Reservation and Tuition Agreement form (provided by MCS).
5. Student's Certificate of Release for elementary students transferring from another local elementary school, and any prior school records.

Requirements for All Continuing Students

Continuing MCS students must supply the following prior to the first day of school:

1. Updated health information on the Pupil's Health Form (Form 14), as required by the State Department of Health. See section on Health Requirements for more information.
2. A new Family, Emergency, and Release Information form, completed annually (provided by MCS).
3. A signed Reservation and Tuition Agreement form, completed annually (provided by MCS).

Health Requirements for the First Day of School

A completed health form (Form 14) for each child entering school must be on file in the office before the first day of school. The Form 14 can be obtained from your physician. The following information should be recorded on this form:

1. A negative Tuberculosis (TB) Clearance is required for all students new to Montessori Community School. The clearance must be performed by a U.S. licensed health practitioner (MD, DO, APRN, or PA) **on or after the student's first birthday (12 months of age or older), and must consist of one of the following acceptable clearance methods:**
 - a) Negative Risk Screen.
 - b) Negative TB test (TB Mantoux skin test for any age **or** QuantiFERON Gold-in-Tube (QFT-GIT)/ T-SPOT blood test for 2 years and older).
 - c) Positive TB test **and** negative chest x-ray.
 - Parents who do not want skin tests for children under 5 years of age need a physician letter stating the skin test is medically contraindicated.
 - No exemptions to the TB clearance requirement are allowed.
 - **Without a tuberculosis clearance, children are not permitted to start school.**
2. A physical examination within one year prior to date of Hawai'i school entry (or a doctor's appointment slip for provisional entrance). The physical examination must be performed by a U.S. licensed health practitioner (MD, DO, APRN, or PA).
3. The complete series of required immunizations. Immunizations must be updated following the Department of Health's immunization schedule.

Family, Emergency, and Release Information Form Requirement for All Students

In addition to the completed Form 14, each child must have a completed Family, Emergency, and Release Information form on file in the office prior to the start of school in order to be admitted to the classroom. All students returning to MCS are required to complete a new Family, Emergency, and Release Information form prior to the start of each school year. **If the school office does not have the Family, Emergency, and Release Information form on the first day of school, the child will not be allowed to start until the form is completed.**

Students with identified allergies or other health conditions must also complete the Allergy, Asthma, & Medical Condition Information form. If an Epi-Pen is required, parents are asked to provide at least two Epi-Pens to the school.

Continued Enrollment

All current MCS students are expected to confirm their continued enrollment at MCS annually by:

- * Submitting a signed Reservation and Tuition Agreement form;
- * Paying all required fees;
- * Completing all required forms;
- * Meeting all deadlines.

Failure to submit the signed Reservation and Tuition Agreement form in a timely manner may jeopardize the student's opportunity to continue in the school. Re-enrollment contracts are distributed to MCS students in January prior to applications becoming available to the public.

Students progressing from one program to another, i.e. Two Year-Old to Preschool, Preschool to Kindergarten, or Kindergarten to Elementary, are accepted based on the recommendation of their teacher. Parents are apprised of their children's progress through regularly-scheduled parent-teacher conferences. Parents' failure to respond to conference requests may jeopardize the continued enrollment of their child.

At MCS we believe that children succeed when the values espoused by the school are shared by the child's family. It is the school's expectation that parents or legal guardians will attend conferences with their child's teachers and work together to provide the optimum conditions for their child's educational benefit.

All continuing students must update their immunizations annually as required by the State of Hawaii's Department of Health.

Parents must meet any outstanding financial obligations to the school prior to re-enrollment.

On those rare occasions when the professional staff believes a child's best interests are not served by continuing in the school, MCS reserves the right to terminate enrollment. When such a situation arises, the school works closely with families in resolving the situation.

Custodial Arrangements

MCS acknowledges that parents or legal guardians have certain legal rights, and therefore both parents or legal guardians have access to the child. MCS will share information with both parents or legal guardians as permitted by law.

We recognize that some families may have specific child custody or other legal custodial arrangements. In order for MCS to comply with the arrangements, we will require a copy of the court order that pertains to the custody of the child. For parents who are working through a process of establishing child custody, any parental requests must be accompanied by a court order authorizing such arrangements.

The court order will be kept in the child's file in the school office so that the school can honor the arrangements. Parents are expected to notify the school of any changes.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Children are expected to be kind and respectful to themselves, to others, and to the physical environment. Children are also expected to take responsibility for their actions and to cooperate with their teachers and school personnel.

Unsatisfactory Conduct

When a child engages in dangerous or very disruptive behavior, the teacher may decide to remove the child from the classroom and have the child remain in the school office or other supervised designated area. If the behavior continues, a child may be suspended from school and the period of suspension may vary from one to several days. The objective of suspension is to impress upon the child the serious nature of his/her actions.

When the behavior is persistent and endangers the safety of the child or others, the child may be dismissed from the school. A “probationary” period may be warranted before a dismissal occurs.

Parents will be informed of their child’s removal from the classroom and suspension from school. It is expected that parents will work cooperatively with the school to help change and improve the child’s behavior. In the event that the school and family do not share the same priorities or values and it is in the best interest of all concerned, the school administration may decide to terminate enrollment.

Knowing the ages of the children we work with, our response to inappropriate behavior takes into consideration the developmental stage of the child. However, the school reserves the right to dismiss a child if, in our professional opinion, a reasonable level of safety cannot be maintained.

EXPECTATIONS OF ADULTS

Parent Involvement

There are many opportunities for parent involvement in the school. Parents find a number of benefits by participating in their child's school, such as social networking with other parents and staff, learning more about what their child does while at school, and gaining a greater understanding of the Montessori philosophy. The Parent-Faculty Association (PFA) provides direct support to classrooms and teachers, to the parents of the school, and to the Development Office in the organization and management of the fundraising activities of the school. Membership in the PFA is voluntary, and the annual fee covers the entire family. Opportunities for parent participation are publicized through the various communication outlets of the school.

Parent Conduct

In the Montessori philosophy, the adult is considered a role model to children. We therefore expect that parents and/or legal guardians follow the school's policies and procedures, and to behave in a manner consistent with Montessori values. When conflicts occur, effort will be made to resolve differences. However, if the differences are determined by the school administration to be irreconcilable, the school may terminate services to the child and the family.

Smoking, Alcohol, Illicit Drugs, or Illicit Substances

Smoking, drinking or possessing alcohol, or the use or possession of illicit drugs or other illicit substances are prohibited on the school campus and at any school event where children are present.

Campus Safety

Our primary concern is the safety of our children and other adults. Licensed drivers who do not drive with caution on campus may be prohibited from driving onto the campus.

Resolving Disagreements

When disagreements occur, it is expected that all adults involved will discuss matters in a reasonable manner. Abusive and/or threatening language or behavior is unacceptable and may result in the offending adult being barred from campus and/or the appropriate authorities contacted.

Abuse Reporting Law

The school is mandated by State law to report any suspected situations of child abuse. When the school has reason to believe there is evidence of abuse or neglect, or has reason to believe that abuse or neglect will occur in the reasonably foreseeable future, the matter will be reported to the State Child Welfare Services and to the Honolulu Police Department.

ABSENCES

When absence is necessary, parents should inform the school by calling the office by 8:30 a.m. Every effort should be made to schedule medical appointments and other commitments outside of school time.

A doctor's note is required for students to return to school following an absence due to contagious illness.

Parents are expected to schedule family vacations during school breaks. Since extended absences can seriously disrupt instruction and the learning process, parents should consult the child's teacher as to any effects an extended absence may have on the child's progress. Parents should understand that teachers will not be held responsible for loss of student learning opportunities caused by extended absences of choice.

TARDINESS

The school opens at 7:30 a.m. For their safety, unsupervised children are not permitted on campus prior to 7:30 a.m. **Elementary students** start school promptly at **8:00 a.m.** Children in the **Preschool/Kindergarten** program begin classes at **8:30 a.m.** **Two Year-Old** children should arrive no later than **8:30 a.m.**

If a child is unavoidably delayed and arrives after the class is in session, parents are expected to escort their children into class quietly so as not to disturb the ongoing class activity, and to inform a teacher of the child's arrival.

Elementary children who arrive after 8:00 a.m. must report directly to the classroom with their parent or accompanying adult to obtain a tardy slip.

Repeated tardiness jeopardizes a child's ability to do well in school. When children arrive late, they miss important information given by the teacher at the beginning of the day and miss the group time that is important in helping them feel part of the group.

END OF SCHOOL DAY

Children are released only to their parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Permission for others to pick up a child can be given by the parent or legal guardians through written authorization on the Family, Emergency, and Release Information form. In the event that someone other than those listed on the Family, Emergency, and Release Information form will be picking up a child, the parent or legal guardian should give written authorization or call the office with authorization. The office reserves the right to confirm phoned-in authorization by returning the parent's call.

If the person picking up your child is unfamiliar to our staff, we will require government-issued photo identification (such as a driver's license or state i.d.) for verification before releasing your child.

NOTE: Even if you are having another Montessori Community School student's parent or staff member pick up your child, you must notify the office to that effect.

Dismissal time varies for the different programs. Dismissal times in the Early Education programs are 12:00 p.m. and 2:30 p.m., with the after-school program ending at 5:30 p.m.

Elementary students are dismissed at 2:30 p.m., with the after-school program ending at 5:30 p.m. Students may not remain on campus unsupervised after the 2:30 p.m. dismissal time.

Elementary students who will be walking or taking the bus home must give the office a written note with the parent or legal guardian's signature authorizing the student to leave campus on their own at dismissal time.

On occasion, if a parent is unable to come at the specified time, arrangements can be made for "occasional care." Please notify the school office in the morning with written authorization, or call the office before 2:00 p.m. so that the child and teachers may be notified in time. The additional hours will be billed to the parents at the end of the month.

If you remain on the playground with your child after the pick-up time, you will be assessed the occasional care fee.

School closes at 5:30 p.m. and children should be picked up promptly by the time the after-school care programs end. Should any child be picked up after 5:30 p.m., a late fee will be assessed, due upon presentation of statement by the teacher. The late fee is to encourage families to pick up their children on time. Repeated late pick-up or failure to pay late charges may result in the termination of after-school care services to your family.

HEALTH & SAFETY

The health of all children is of prime importance to us. It is known that children in group care settings have an increased risk of infectious illnesses. We will encourage frequent handwashing during the day, which has been shown to limit the risk of the spread of illness in similar settings. Please safeguard your child and others by keeping him home if signs of illness are present. A child must be kept home for the following reasons:

- A temperature above normal for the child. Children should stay at home if they are unable to keep up with their usual daily activities or will require additional care.
- For children in diapers, diarrhea which is not contained by the diaper. Children must stay home until the condition improves.
- Any illness, disease, or condition which requires exclusion as per the Department of Health guidelines.

Children who arrive at school with symptoms of illness will be sent home. If you are unavailable during the day, we will contact the people whose names you have supplied on the Family, Emergency, and Release Information form.

A child who is not well enough to play outside should not come to school. Parents are asked not to medicate an ill child and then send him or her to school. Ill children should remain at home until their symptoms abate and their conditions improve. We do not have a sufficient number of staff to safely supervise children on the playground and a sick child indoors.

Should any child exhibit a rash, discharge from the eyes or ears, vomiting, or any other unusual condition, we will contact the child's parents and recommend they seek the advice of their physician or a medical professional. A doctor's statement verifying diagnosis of the child's condition may be required, at the discretion of the staff.

Contagious diseases must be reported to the office immediately. This way we can notify the other families whose children have been exposed so they can be on the alert for symptoms. ***Parents are asked to disclose any information regarding infections and/or communicable diseases which their child has had or been exposed to and are not reflected on the Form 14. This information will be treated in a confidential manner.*** MCS cannot disclose medical information on any child without written permission from that child's parent or guardian.

Upon returning to school following an illness, the school (at the discretion of the staff) may require a statement from a licensed medical professional (MD, DO, APRN, or PA) verifying that the child is healthy and non-contagious. A doctor's note is required for students to return to school following an absence due to contagious illness.

Medication

Please speak with your child's teacher or the office if medication needs to be administered during school hours. Parents must complete a Medication Release form (available from the teacher or office) and include it with the medicine. Medications must be sent in the original, labeled container. **NEVER** send medication with a child to keep in his lunch box, cubby, or back pack. This presents a serious danger to your own child and others. All medication, non-prescription as well as prescription, should be given to the teacher.

Accidents

When a child is injured, first aid is administered by the staff and an Accident Report form, which describes the injury and treatment, is completed by a teacher and sent home. A copy of the Accident Report is kept on file in the office. The staff treats minor injuries, such as cuts and scrapes, by cleansing with soap and water and applying a bandage.

In the event of a serious injury, the staff will contact a parent, or the designated alternate on the Emergency Form. If deemed necessary by the staff, the school will call 911 for assistance and arrange for ambulance transportation. The hospital nearest to MCS is Kapiolani Medical Center for Women and Children. However, the Emergency Medical Technicians of the ambulance team will make the decision about the nearest available hospital emergency room to which the child will be transported. The school will contact the parents (or authorized alternate) to inform them of the location of the emergency room at which to meet the ambulance. A school staff member will accompany the child in the ambulance, unless prohibited by the medical professionals. If school personnel are not permitted to accompany the child in the ambulance, a staff member will follow to meet the child at the emergency room.

The majority of our staff members have successfully completed certified First Aid and Child CPR courses.

Head Lice

A common problem among school children is head lice. While the head lice, or “ukus,” do not themselves spread disease, the itching they induce causes the child to scratch, and may cause an infection at the scalp sites. In some cases, children may develop swollen glands in the neck and/or under the arms.

Consequently, if a child is discovered to have head lice, the parent(s) will be asked to come get him from school. The child will be removed from the class until he is picked up. Children and all affected family members must be treated with a medically-approved head lice treatment and MCS students may not return to school until the application of the head lice treatment, in accordance with Department of Health guidelines. (Copies of the guidelines are available in the school office.) All family members should also be checked and treated as necessary.

In addition to the medically-approved head lice treatment, nits must be combed out and removed from the affected child and other family members on a daily basis, until there are no nits present.

The medically-approved treatment must be repeated one week after the initial treatment (or as directed on the package). In one week, there will be a follow-up head check. At that time, any child who had previously been treated must be free from lice and their nits (eggs).

Failure to take appropriate measures may result in the child’s suspension from school until the situation is resolved to the school’s satisfaction.

Personal Safety

Objects which pose a potential danger to the child or others are prohibited from school. If there is a question about the appropriateness of a specific item a child wishes to bring to school, check with the teacher first. Failure to cooperate with the school may lead to suspension or dismissal from the school.

Insurance Coverage

MCS carries general liability insurance, as required by State of Hawaii regulations.

Emergency Plans

It is important that all families are aware of the emergency procedures which Montessori Community School will initiate if an emergency situation arises. Of major importance is parental awareness and cooperation.

In the event of a school-wide emergency situation, such as a school closure or lockdown, the school will keep parents informed through various channels, as appropriate, including e-mails, text messaging, phone calls, and notifications to the media.

During an emergency situation, the Head of School will be in charge. In the absence of the Head of School, a delegated administrator will assume the responsibility. The staff will remain with the children until the situation is sufficiently stable.

Campus Emergency - Should there be a threat to the safety or security of the students and staff on campus, the school has a plan of action and will initiate those steps to keep everyone safe. The students and staff will be kept secured indoors. If deemed necessary, the school will go into lockdown, and the police will inform the school when it is safe for the lockdown to be over.

Fire - Fire escape routes are posted in each classroom, and fire extinguishers are present in every occupied room throughout the campus. Fire evacuation drills are held regularly. Children leave in an orderly fashion under teacher supervision to the basketball court at the back of the campus. In the event that our facility is not habitable, our off-campus evacuation sites include neighboring Catholic Charities and Roosevelt High School.

Tsunami - Montessori Community School is not in a tsunami evacuation zone, so we do not have to evacuate. The following procedures have been adopted in the event of a Tsunami Warning:

- a) If a warning is issued while we are in session, we will remain with the children until they can be safely picked up.
- b) If a warning is issued before our day normally begins, classes will be canceled and the school will be closed.

Hurricane/Tropical Storm - Hurricane or Tropical Storm **Watches** are issued by the National Weather Service 48 hours prior to the arrival of storm effects. Hurricane or Tropical Storm **Warnings** are issued when one of these storms will affect Oahu in 36 hours or less.

When a **Watch** is issued, we will monitor the storm and make decisions to cancel school if the Watch is upgraded to a Warning. The timing of closure will generally coincide with the end of the normal school day. In the case of evacuation, our off-campus evacuation sites include neighboring Catholic Charities and Roosevelt High School. In the event of a **Warning**, the school will close.

Earthquake - Should an earthquake of significant magnitude occur on Oahu, our school could be damaged. If it has been determined that our buildings are damaged, we will evacuate to a nearby open area or a safe off-campus site. Our off-campus evacuation sites include neighboring Catholic Charities and Roosevelt High School.

Flooding - Our school is not located in an identified flooding zone. However, if water begins to rise around our facilities, or in the event we are advised to evacuate, we will immediately move the children to higher ground. If we must evacuate to an off-campus site, our off-campus evacuation sites include neighboring Catholic Charities and Roosevelt High School.

In summary, please be assured that we will take good care of your children during any emergency or disaster. Several suggestions are appropriate:

- a) **A good rule of thumb for closures:** If it is announced over radio or television that all public schools on Oahu are closing, we will also, in all likelihood, be closing. Under no circumstance, however, will we close until all children have been picked up by their parents or authorized designee.
- b) It is essential that you **establish individual and family plans** for tsunami, hurricane, earthquake, and flooding. These plans should identify what preparatory actions should be taken for each hazard. They should include acquainting yourselves with shelter locations and how you will travel to them if evacuation advisories are issued, what you plan to do if the family is separated, what type of survival supplies you will need, etc.

Such preparedness information can be obtained from the following agencies:

- Department of Emergency Management
Phone: (808) 723-8960
Website: <http://www.honolulu.gov/dem.html>
- Hawaii Emergency Management Agency
(formerly Hawaii Civil Defense Agency)
Phone: (808) 733-4300
Website: <http://www.scd.hawaii.gov/>
- FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency)
Website: <http://www.fema.gov/>.

COMMUNICATION

We cannot over-emphasize the importance of open communication between parents and staff. Communication between parents and teachers occurs through regular classroom newsletters, Goal-Setting and Parent-Teacher Conferences, progress reports, e-mail, and telephone. The best way to communicate is through face to face communication when problems occur. Changes in your child's life (e.g. house guests, new baby, parent(s) out of town, a move to a new home, separation of parents, a death in the family, etc.) can be very unsettling. If we are aware of the situation, we can be more responsive to a child's needs and understanding of behaviors which may arise at school. We can administer an extra dose of TLC (tender, loving care).

Sometimes children may voice concerns over something that happened at school, such as a broken friendship, misunderstanding, or altercation. If your child seems unusually bothered by an event, or if you have questions regarding what occurred, please discuss it with your child's teacher. The teacher will follow up with the situation at school. **Parents should not speak directly with the other child or children involved in the incident.** Please refrain from contacting the child's parents, and allow the appropriate school officials to mediate the situation with the children.

"Grapevines" can distort information and create misunderstanding. Seemingly trivial things can build up, so please do not hesitate to talk directly with the teacher or administration if something is troubling you. Likewise, if out-of-the-ordinary circumstances occur at the school, the teacher will communicate this to the parents. We welcome the opportunity to talk with you.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents are expected to attend Parent-Teacher Conferences and are invited to sign up for conference times during each of these assessment periods.

Two Year-Old conferences are held prior to the child's first day of school, in the fall (after the school year has begun), in the spring, and at school year's end. At the final conference, a written report of the child's progress is given to the parents.

Parents and teachers in the **preschool/kindergarten** program meet formally three times during the school year. A goal-setting conference is held at the end of September for all students in the Two Year-Old and preschool. Written reports are given to parents at the mid-year and final conferences.

At the elementary level, progress reports are issued three times a year: at the end of each trimester in November, in February, and at the end of the school year.

In addition, each of the elementary classes conducts goal-setting conferences in September for students new to the elementary program. This meeting includes the parent(s), child, and teacher. These initial meetings have proven to be very helpful in assisting the students in setting realistic goals for the school year.

Close communication between parents and teachers is strongly encouraged. Additional conferences may be scheduled by parents or teachers as the need arises.

Repeated failure by parents or legal guardians to respond to conference requests may jeopardize their child's continued enrollment in school.

The School Office

Messages regarding illness, a change in a child's schedule, appointments with administrators, messages for teachers, changes of family information, etc. are received through the office. When a child is out of school, please notify the office. Please notify us immediately of any changes of address, phone number, and/or transportation arrangements.

The Telephone

So as not to interrupt the children and teachers, please do not call directly to the classrooms or return calls from the school using the caller i.d. number shown on your phone (classroom phone numbers are unlisted). Call the office at (808) 522-0244 and your message will be relayed at an appropriate time in the program schedule. Emergency messages will be delivered immediately.

On rare occasions, the voice mail system may be on whenever the office staff is unavailable to answer the telephone. Please do leave a message, as the office voicemail is checked at frequent intervals for messages.

After the office is closed at 4:00 p.m., the answering machine will be on but is frequently checked for emergency calls to the after-school programs until the close of the school day. Leave a message on the answering machine and your message will be relayed to the after-school programs as necessary. All other messages will be returned the following business day.

Disclosure of Information

The school cannot disclose information pertaining to an individual child or parents/legal guardians of the child, to persons other than the school staff unless the parents or guardians of the child provide written permission for the disclosure of information, or as required by law. MCS will not disclose medical information on any child without written permission from that child's parent or guardian.

FOOD

Snacks

Our approach to the snack program attempts to balance the varying nutritional preferences of our school community by taking a moderate position on sugary treats and encouraging fresh fruits and vegetables and whole grains.

Rather than purchasing pre-packaged snacks for the class, the intent of the voluntary snack program is to provide opportunities for the children to actively participate in the process of the selecting a snack for their classmates, preparing it with their parents, and sharing the finished product with the other children in the class. Through this activity, the children practice everyday practical life skills and experience the joy of sharing.

When families prepare snacks to be shared among the child's classmates, as during birthday, holiday, or other celebrations, the snacks provided should be nutritious. Frosted cakes, frosted cookies, candies, or other highly sugared snacks cannot be served in school. The teachers will request that such items be returned home. We hope you will understand that our intent is to support good eating habits for the children.

When bringing in a snack to share with the class, please keep these guidelines in mind:

- * Check with your child's teacher first for allergies
- * The snack should be unfrosted
- * The portions should be age-appropriate, but should not be so large as to interfere with the children's appetite for lunch (e.g. 1/2 cup of fruit, 2-4 crackers at the preschool level, etc.)
- * The snack should be ready to serve: fruit, vegetables, or quick breads should be pre-cut
- * The treat does not have to be elaborate
- * Grapes should be cut in half, for the preschool programs
- * No popcorn at the preschool level

Some suggestions for the special snack days, birthdays, and other special occasions:

- * Fruit: fresh and dried fruit such as apple slices, bananas, orange slices, grapes (cut in half), cantaloupe, watermelon, strawberries, pineapple, raisins, etc.
- * Vegetables: carrots, celery sticks, cucumber slices, edamame, broccoli
- * Muffins or quick breads
- * Trail mix or energy bars
- * Whole-grain cereal (unfrosted, low sugar)
- * Cheese and whole-grain crackers
- * Whole-grain pretzels, bagels, rolls, buns

Home Lunches

Soda, gum, and candy are not permitted in school and should not be included in lunches or snacks. Sharing of food from lunches and snacks is not permitted for sanitary reasons, and because some children have allergies to certain foods. Refrigeration is not available for preschool and elementary home lunches.

CELEBRATIONS & SPECIAL DAYS

Birthdays

It is a tradition at MCS to commemorate the child's birthday with the addition of a book to the classroom library. The teachers have a selection of books which support the curriculum. If the parent and child choose to donate a book to the classroom library from the teacher's collection, a statement for the cost of the book is presented to the parent after the book is selected. The new addition to the class library is inscribed with the child's name and the occasion being celebrated; elementary children design their own book plate.

SPECIAL SNACKS. A special snack is optional. Please check with your child's teacher as to the appropriateness of the snack prior to the occasion (see the section on FOOD for guidelines and helpful hints). Regardless of whether a birthday book is donated or a special snack provided, the child's birthday is celebrated.

CELEBRATIONS. Each program celebrates the child's birthday in its own special way. The Two Year-Olds have a very simple commemoration, usually with parents bringing in a special snack to share with the class. In the 3-6 and 6-9 year-old programs, the "Sun Ceremony" helps children gain a sense of their personal history, growth, and accomplishments by recalling the special events of each year of the child's life. The elementary 9-12 year-old program celebrates the student's birthday by featuring and recognizing the child's unique personality, history, and special accomplishments.

PRIVATE PARTY INVITATIONS. Traditional birthday celebrations should take place outside of school. Invitations to private birthday parties may not be distributed at school unless every child in the class is invited. It can really hurt children's feelings when some classmates are invited to a party and others are not. If only a few are invited, please mail the invitations directly to the child's home rather than through the school.

The Parent Directory provides a listing of names and addresses of the families in each child's class. The Parent Directories are distributed early in the school year and are to be used for school-related purposes only. Please do not use them for business or other solicitations.

Gifts and Goody Bags

Favors and small gifts including, but not limited to, pencils, stickers, or goody bags for birthdays and holidays should be reserved for private celebrations at home. Please do not bring such items to school.

Balloons

No balloons are allowed at school. Latex balloons present a choking hazard to children and therefore are prohibited from school, along with any other object which poses a potential danger to the child or others.

Holidays

There will be class discussion and some degree of celebration of most of the traditional holidays. Parents may consult with the teacher if they have a special cultural occasion that they would like to share with the class.

Field Trips

Field trips are used to increase the child's awareness of his world. Permission from the child's parent or legal guardian to attend field trips must be indicated on the Family, Emergency, and Release Information form. Two year-olds and children enrolled in the after-school care programs do not go on off-campus field trips.

Children need to wear closed shoes and MCS T-shirts on field trips. Field trip transportation is provided by hired school buses.

Class letters provide information on upcoming field trips, including the destination, date, and time of each scheduled field trip. Please make sure that your child arrives promptly each day. On field trip days, children must arrive at school on time to leave with their class on the hired school bus. For accountability and legal reasons during field trips, children must depart and return with their class. Late arrivals are not permitted to meet the class at the field trip destination and may not join the field trip in progress.

Field Trips: *Preschool Program*

In the 3-6 year-old preschool program, parents are often invited to accompany the class as chaperones, but prior discussion with the head teacher is necessary, as there may be limitations regarding the number of accompanying adults allowed. Parents who serve as chaperones are expected to help supervise the group and should also be in good health. Siblings who are not members of that class are not permitted on field trips.

Field Trips: *Elementary Program*

In addition to field trips, the elementary children go on camping trips and neighbor island trips. These activities generate much enthusiasm and offer excellent learning opportunities for our students. In order to promote elementary students' growing independence, parents do not accompany the elementary classes on field trips or camp-outs.

Transportation

MCS provides transportation for preschool children only for field trips. Field trip transportation is provided by hired school buses. MCS does not transport children to or from school; parents provide the transportation for their children.

Supporting MCS

Most successful independent schools rely on fundraisers to broaden their base of income as a strategy of controlling tuition increases. With an expanded income base, we can offer better compensation to attract high-quality teachers while moderating tuition costs to our families.

Our goal is to provide families with a variety of opportunities to support the school. Participation in school fundraisers by staff, children, and parents is voluntary, but encouraged. Events such as the annual Fun Run and Spring Fling promote exercise and family fun, and the adults-only "Montessori Magic" silent and live auction develops parent camaraderie.