



Undercroft

Montessori School • est.1964

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2018-2019 PARENT HANDBOOK

"Education should no longer be mostly imparting knowledge, but must take a new path, seeking the release of human potentials."

-Dr. Maria Montessori

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Mission Statement

Undercroft was founded in 1964 by parents who wanted to bring Montessori education to Tulsa. Undercroft is the first and only accredited Montessori school in Oklahoma.

Our Mission:

Undercroft Montessori School provides an authentic Montessori education. We are committed to academic excellence; independence in thought and action; critical and collaborative thinking and; compassion and respect for self, community and the world.

Our Philosophy:

The Montessori approach to education takes its name from Italian physician and educator, Dr. Maria Montessori. Developed over a century ago, her discoveries regarding how children develop and learn are supported by modern scientific research. Undercroft Montessori School is among thousands of Montessori schools around the world.

Dr. Montessori discovered:

- Students' education and development largely result from their own efforts
- Students possess a deep desire to explore their environment with all of their senses
- Students require freedom to move and choose their own activities
- Students have innate desire for purposeful work
- Students' environment plays a significant role in providing information and opportunities for exploration

Our Values:

Members of the Undercroft community value and are committed to:

- Nurture the spirit of the child
- Foster personal responsibility for learning and life choices
- Provide a prepared environment supporting individual students' developmental needs at each level
- Demonstrate community and global awareness, global citizenship and social responsibility
- Promote peace
- Celebrate and honor diversity
- Recognize and cultivate the whole child; physical, emotional, social and intellectual
- Respect our staff and fully trained guides; dedicated, compassionate and committed to ongoing professional development
- Build strong and active partnerships among students, parents and staff
- Thrive as a mutually respectful and supportive community

Nondiscrimination Policy

Undercroft Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national or ethnic origin, genetic information, disability, age or any other class protected by law, in administration of its policies, practices or procedures, including admission of students, tuition assistance, and educational services.

School Hours

Arrival Carpool Time¹:

Primary	8:00 a.m.
Elementary & Middle School	8:00 a.m.

Please try to arrive promptly at 8:00 a.m. to assure your child will arrive to school on time. Guides will leave carpool and return to their classrooms no later than 8:20 a.m.

Hours in Classrooms:

Half Day Primary Classes	8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Full Day and Full Day with Nap Primary Classes	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Elementary Classes	8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
Middle School Classes	8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Departure Carpool Times²:

Half Day Primary Classes	11:30 a.m.
Primary Full Day Sessions	3:00 p.m.
Elementary	3:15 p.m.
Middle School	3:15 p.m.

Please try to arrive promptly for carpool at the time your scheduled program ends. Guides will leave carpool and return to their classroom duties no later than 11:45 a.m. for morning primary carpool; 3:15 p.m. for primary full day carpool; and 3:30 p.m. for elementary and middle school carpool. Morning primary students not picked up by 11:45 will be brought to the office to wait. Full day primary students not picked up by 3:15 will be brought to after care. Elementary and middle school students not picked up by 3:30 will be brought to after care.

Before School Program	7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.
After School Program	3:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
School Office Hours	8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Messages and Phone Calls

To reduce interruptions to the classrooms, all phone calls for teaching staff during office hours must be made through the Main Office number (918) 622-2890. The receptionist will convey urgent messages immediately upon receipt to teaching staff; all non-urgent calls for teaching staff will be directed to their voice mail. Calls will be returned after school and within 24 hours.

Messages may be left (via voice mail) at this number when the office is closed or when the staff is temporarily away from the office.

The Before & After School Care programs can be reached through the main office number until 4:00 p.m., then through the auto attendant directory extension.

The office FAX number is (918) 622-3203. The school office can be reached by e-mail. The general address is administration@undercroft.org. Other addresses are included in the school's Parent Directory.

After Hours Emergency Phone Calls

Emergency phone calls (after hours emergencies) can be made to the Head of School's cell phone at 847-331-0767.

¹ Please see policies concerning tardiness in Section VIII.

² Please see policies concerning late pick up in Section VIII.

I. Undercroft Montessori School

History and Current Background of the School

Montessori education is based on principles established a century ago by the Italian physician Dr. Maria Montessori. It found broad acceptance in the developed nations of the world and has been practiced in the United States for over 100 years. The Montessori approach is based on sound foundations in the behavioral and biological sciences. It is receiving increased recognition as a highly successful alternative to conventional educational methods. Montessorians have no common religious or political orientation. They are bound together only by their commitment to an educational philosophy based on natural human development that fosters a love of learning, self-reliance and self-respect.

Undercroft Montessori School was founded in 1964 as a nonprofit corporation by a group of Tulsa parents seeking the advantages of this unique approach for their own children. Today, there is every reason for optimism about the future of Undercroft and that of Montessori education in general.

Originally housed in the undercroft (basement) at Trinity Episcopal Church, Undercroft has expanded and improved. In 1967 the School purchased a building and land, establishing its home at its present location. In the fall of 1998 Undercroft elementary classes moved into a new building. In 2008, new construction replaced the 1967 "temporary" west building. With these expanded facilities, Undercroft quickly grew from its opening enrollment of 30 preschool children to its present enrollment of around 210 from age three through eighth grade.

Under the direction of the specially trained Montessori teaching staff, the students of Undercroft Montessori School are offered the full range of programs in Practical Life and Sensorial Development, Language Development, Mathematics, Geometry, Science, Geography, History, Spanish, Music, Creative Arts, and Physical Fitness.

The Organization of the School

Undercroft Montessori School is a nonprofit corporation owned by all parents of students presently enrolled in the School. The Board of Directors is the policy making body of the School corporation. Board members are elected at the Annual Corporation Meeting each April to serve the School for a two-year term of office. Members of the Board of Directors may or may not be parents of students enrolled at the School.

See organization chart on page 4.

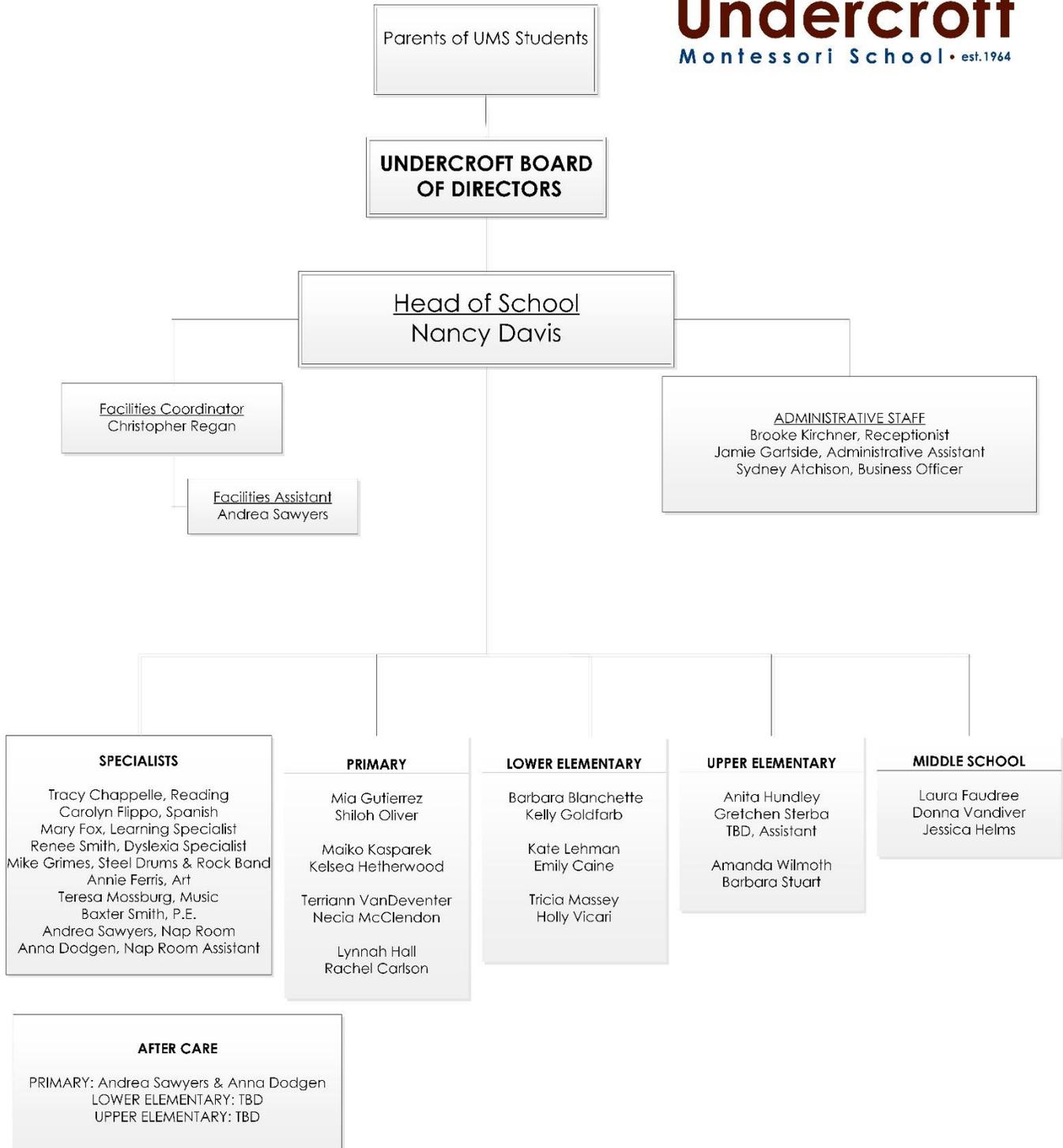
Accreditation

Undercroft Montessori School is accredited through the American Montessori Society [AMS] and AdvancED. This dual accreditation affirms our school meets a standard of excellence recognized by educators and Montessorians worldwide.





Undercroft
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Functions of the Board of Directors

The functions of the Board of Directors include, but are not limited to, the following:

Hold in trust the past foundational beginnings of the School, the present daily provision of the School, and the future development of programs as well as the School's physical plant;

Formulate the general policies for the School's operation in accordance with the School's Statement of Mission;

Hire, evaluate, and lend organizational support to the Head of School chosen to lead the School and Board educationally, organizationally and philosophically;

Provide the necessary facilities and educational and administrative equipment for the operation of the School;

Oversee the sound financial management of the School;

Provide a financial assistance program;

Conduct fundraising efforts to assist the growth and development of the School;

Assist the School's public relations program to help inform the community of the School's unique educational character.

The School strives to function at a high level of achievement; therefore, it depends on the mutual efforts of all its volunteering members. Parents and staff are encouraged to volunteer their services to board committees.

Filling the role of a Parent Teacher Organization, the Community Building Committee (CBC) is led by a member(s) of the Board of Directors and includes the Head of School, Staff members, Room Parents and all parents, and friends of Undercroft. The CBC is charged with the task of building and supporting the sense of community among the families attending Undercroft Montessori School. Through CBC activities we hope to foster a sense of belonging and comradeship throughout the school.

Non-voting attendees at Board meetings include staff representatives to the Board, the Head of School, and others who may be invited to share their expertise.

The Board of Directors typically meets monthly on the 2nd Tuesday. Board meetings are open and parents are always welcome to attend. If parents want to address the Board, contact the Board Secretary in writing prior to the 1st Monday of each month. The Board will not consider concerns and appeals without going through the Concerns and Appeals process.

Parent Concerns and Appeals

Any parent (or legal guardian) who has a concern about the school or classroom practices shall follow the procedures below:

- Step 1. Contact the appropriate guide directly via e-mail to schedule a meeting with the guide. Provide in writing your concerns and discuss them with the guide at the scheduled meeting. The guide will respond in writing within one week.
- Step 2. If the concerns persist or remain unresolved, contact the office to schedule a meeting with the Head of School. Provide in writing the concerns and discuss these concerns at the scheduled meeting. The Head of School will respond in writing within one week.
- Step 3. If the matter is unresolved to the parent's satisfaction, the parent may contact the President of the Board of Directors in writing. The Board will respond in writing to the parent within 30 days.

Remember, as stated in the "Financial Information," any requests for withdrawals or refunds must be sent to the school office.

II. Admission

Procedures

Admission to Undercroft Montessori School is open to children who are three through fourteen years old. These ages are approximate as they depend on the individual child's readiness and development. Parents desiring to apply for the admission of their child are required to:

- Visit and observe the school's learning environments and study the school's information packet to familiarize themselves with the philosophy and nature of the school;
- Complete the *Application for Admission* form and the *Authorization for Release of Information* form and return them to the school office along with a nonrefundable application fee as described on the form. Transferring students must provide Undercroft with records and recommendations from previous schools;
- Schedule an introduction to the classroom environment through the office for their child with one of the Montessori guides (teachers).

The Head of School will, after consultation with the interviewing guide(s), notify parents of a student's acceptance.

Decisions are based on the child's apparent readiness, recommendations and records from previous schools and the availability of space within the learning environments. Also considered is the balance of ages and genders in each classroom as well as the date of the application. Prior Montessori experience is also a consideration. Siblings of children currently or previously enrolled at Undercroft will receive limited preference for acceptance. Siblings will not be automatically placed with the guide of an older child or in the same class as a sibling.

Prior Montessori experience is preferred for students entering the elementary or middle school program. Please note our program is progressive, built on successive three-year spirals of curriculum. Children who begin their Montessori education early in life (age 3) receive the most benefit; therefore, placement of an older child occurs less frequently. We encourage commitment to the entire program, from primary through middle school, to reap the full benefits of the Montessori curriculum.

Due to limitations to our space and resources, and our desire to offer the best possible Montessori experience at each level, we cannot guarantee we will always be able to offer a position to currently enrolled students at the next level. The Head of School will carefully weigh the best interests of the entire classroom and the needs of the individual child before placing a new or current student at a particular level.

Student Placement

The Head of School determines student placement within the learning environments at Undercroft. Students are placed in classrooms according to the best interests of the individual student and the class. A balance of ages and genders within each class is sought.

Parents with placement concerns should bring them directly to the attention of the Head of School. Although input is welcomed requests cannot be guaranteed. Contracts cannot be cancelled based on classroom placement or staffing decisions.

III. Financial Information

Tuition costs and fees are listed in the School Tuition Contract and are posted on the website. Application and tuition information is also listed on the tuition information sheet included in the packet sent to all prospective parents.

Supply Fee

The Supply Fee is due with the return of a signed contract. The supply fee is non-refundable after a date stipulated in the tuition contract. If the full year is not attended, the supply fee will be forfeited to the school.

Tuition Payments

Tuition payment for the Plan A or Plan B payment options must be made by cash or check, and should be mailed or brought directly to the office. When paying by check, please include the student's name(s) on the check in the memo section. All checks are to be written in blue or black ink only. Please do not send tuition payments to school with the student.

ACH Debit is required for the Plan C payment option. Debits will be made on the 1st of each month. If the 1st falls on a holiday or weekend, the debit will be made on the next banking day. If the first installment of tuition is not received on or before August 1, 2018, the school retains the right to cancel the pupil's enrollment

Late Fees

There will be a \$35.00 late fee for late tuition payments. Past due balances will be subject to the late fee each month. A \$35.00 fee will be assessed to any check or ACH payment returned due to insufficient funds. Cash payment may be required for the remainder of the year. There will be a \$5.00 late fee for late payments for Before and After Care. **Please notify the Business Officer as soon as possible if you are having difficulty making a payment.**

Delinquent Accounts

The pupil may be, at the sole discretion of the school, deemed to have withdrawn when an account is past due. If there have been late payment problems in the past, a 20-day contingency is added to the contract, which will result in immediate withdrawal. Under no circumstances, without prior payment arrangements, will the pupil be permitted to remain should the account become 60 days past due. At the discretion of the Business Officer, Head of School, and/or treasurer of the Board of Directors, any account more than 60 days past due may be turned over to a third party for collection. In the event the contract is not paid when due and is collected by a third party, the parents are responsible for any collection and court fees incurred. Additionally, the school reserves the right to withhold student records until tuition accounts are paid in full.

Student Withdrawal

Cancellation of a tuition contract for the upcoming (2018-2019) school year must have been made in writing prior to May 1, 2018. After May 2, 2018, the tuition contract is binding and tuition is due for the entire school year unless a request for withdrawal is granted by the Head of School.

Parental requests to withdraw a student from enrollment must be submitted in the form of a written notification to the Head of School. The unused balance of tuition paid or due will be refunded or forgiven *only* if enrollment remains at or above 204 after the student's actual removal. If the school removes a student because it believes the child is not suited to the school (this does not include behavior or disciplinary issues which are disruptive to the school), parents may be relieved of any further obligation to pay future tuition or fees under the contract in the sole discretion of the school.

No enrollment contract may be voided due to class placement. Application fees and deposit fees are nonrefundable. Furthermore, no refunds will be made for extended absences.

Tuition Assistance

Tuition Assistance in the form of tuition reduction is available on a limited basis to families who have been enrolled at Undercroft for at least one year. Applications are available in the business office, and must be submitted to the school, usually in April, each year for awards made the following year. A committee consisting of members of the Board of Directors and the Head of School is responsible for awarding all tuition assistance. Decisions for tuition assistance for the 2018-2019 school year were made in April 2018.

Fundraising

As an independent, nonprofit educational corporation, Undercroft's primary source of revenue is tuition, which covers the majority of operating costs for the school, each year. However, tuition, alone, is not sufficient to fund major projects and initiatives that enhance the quality of our programs and facilities. For these, we rely on two major fundraising initiatives, each year; Annual Giving in the fall and fUNDERraiser in the spring.

Annual Giving campaigns in recent years have enabled us to develop our natural Playscape, adding new features like an irrigation system; electricity and lighting; play structures, shade sails and plantings, an LED sign, information technology for students and staff, a campus wide PA system and new school buses.

Each fall, Annual Giving is launched with the publication of our annual report. The board of directors establishes a financial goal and reiterates the primary goal of 100% participation from board, staff and enrolled families. 100% participation by families, staff and board in Annual Giving shows community solidarity and a continuing commitment to the strength and financial health of our school. All contributions, no matter the size, help to accomplish the goal of full community support of the Annual Giving campaign.

For questions about Annual Giving and how you can become involved, please contact Nancy Davis, Head of School, at Nancy.Davis@Undercroft.org.

fUNDERraiser is a community celebration and fundraising event for parents and friends of Undercroft. Sponsored by our Community Building Committee, fUNDERraiser features a themed costume party, dinner, student art auction, silent auction and online auction. Parents are

encouraged to support the auction by soliciting donations of services and items from favorite businesses and vendors. Funds raised are used to purchase classroom materials, technology and furniture, directly benefiting our students.

Other Fundraising Activities:

- **AmazonSmile** Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible [AmazonSmile](#) purchases to Undercroft Montessori School whenever you shop on [AmazonSmile](#). [AmazonSmile](#) is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service. Name Undercroft Montessori School as your [AmazonSmile](#) charity today! <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/73-6099978>
- **Bake Sales** are hosted by the Community Building Committee on Folks' Day and Earth Day.
- **Book Fairs** in the spring and fall are hosted by our middle school students. Funds raised go to support the middle school and the student managed middle school business accounts.
- **Earth Day Flower Sale** in April affords families a great opportunity to beautify their homes and raise funds for the Playscape.
- **Pizza Movie Nights** are hosted throughout the year to raise funds for individual classes or specific school-wide projects. Students love to spend an evening in their PJs at school with classmates, guides, games, and a movie. Parents love a night out, knowing their children are in good hands.
- **Peace, Love and Honey** is our middle school business program. Pure raw honey from Tulsa bees is sold by our middle school students. Funds raised go to support the middle school and the student managed middle school business accounts. The business program raises money for middle school adventure trips as part of their curriculum. Honey forms are available in the office or you may order online at <http://undercroft.org/honeystore>.

IV. Parent Information

Communication

Parent/faculty relations are very important. Outside of regularly scheduled reporting times, parents are encouraged to communicate with the staff and administration as needed. Appointments for in-person meetings are easily scheduled through your child's guide. E-mail correspondence is also welcome.

Additional methods used for parent information and communication regarding the Montessori philosophy and childhood learning include:

- Lectures, parent meetings, open houses, and parent workshops. The quarterly school newsletter, *UNDERcurrents*, and website will provide the dates, places, and times.
- The school website, www.undercroft.org, is a great source of information, including the calendar, news and upcoming events, feature stories and individual classroom updates on the secure 'For Parents' page.
- Facebook
- *UNDERcurrents*, our quarterly school newsletter, contains information regarding school activities. The newsletter is sent home with the students and emailed. The office also sends weekly email updates on Friday afternoons with information about important upcoming

activities.

- The school's parent and professional library includes books, magazines, and articles on the Montessori philosophy and current educational research. These may be checked out from the office.
- Other notices are sent home with the students during the school year or placed in the U.S. Mail as necessary. Parents should check their children's papers to be certain they have received all school messages. When in doubt, parents are encouraged to call the school office.

Visitor Policy

Parents are welcome to visit the observation rooms in the west building without scheduling an appointment. Parents wishing to visit their child's class should schedule an appointment with their child's guide. Visits by parents or other guests to the campus or classrooms (other than their own child's classroom) require prior approval by the Head of School or a designated representative. Approval to visit one part of the campus does not imply approval to visit other parts of the campus. An authorized member of the school's staff will accompany persons touring the campus.

Visitors (excluding carpool participants during regularly scheduled times) must check in at the school office, sign the visitor's log, and obtain a visitor's badge to wear. If no prior arrangement has been made, approval to visit may be granted by the Head of School or a designated representative at that time.

Custody

Any special arrangements regarding custody and/or visitation restrictions should be made between the parents and the Head of School with legal documentation. It is the responsibility of the parents to keep the student's file current with the most recent court decrees. Action by the school is limited by the current document we have on file.

Parent Observations

Parent observations are encouraged. It is hoped parents and others interested in Undercroft Montessori School will find time spent observing the Montessori and specialists' classrooms both enjoyable and enlightening.

- Upon arriving for either a scheduled in-class observation or for an unscheduled observation through the observation window; visitors, including parents, must register in the visitor's log in the office and pick up a "Visitor" identification badge.
- Guidelines apply to any observation setting, whether in Montessori or specials classes, or observing outside at "free play".
- Checked-in visitors are welcome to observe through the viewing window of any classroom at any time with no appointment necessary.
- A handout detailing observation instructions is available to all visitors.
- In-class parent observations may be scheduled from the first week of October through the second Friday in May by calling the office. Make your appointment at least 48 hours in advance because only two adults may visit in a classroom at any given time.
- After signing in, in-class observers will be escorted to the classroom.
- After quietly entering, observers should take a seat in the adult chairs provided.
- Observers are invited to make written notes and record any questions they may have.

In order that visitors may observe a normal classroom day, the following requests are respectfully made:

- Try to avoid engaging students through eye contact or conversation.
- If a student engages the visitor in conversation, be as brief as possible.
- Of course, if their child shows a need, observing parents may talk with their own child and acknowledge the child's work.
- For an optimal observation, one should avoid engaging one's own child in conversation just as one would with any other student.

Observe the class as a whole.

- Note the variety of activities.
- Observe the social interaction among the students.
- Are students working alone, or with other students?
- How does the mood of the classroom vary from time to time?

Focus on one or two students.

- Is the student independent in choosing work and in using his/her work?
- Does the student concentrate on one piece of work for a long time?
- Is the student orderly in using the materials?
- Note the cycle of work from beginning to end.

Observe the guide and assistant.

- When and in what way do they teach?
- When do they act as a resource, as a link between student and materials?
- How is order maintained in the classroom?

Although the guide or teacher may be unable to talk with the visitor or parent during class time, she will be happy to confer later at a mutually agreed upon time. A visit with the Head of School with questions is always welcomed.

Parent Conferences

Conferences with your child's guide are an important part of the total educational process. Please see the school calendar for conference dates. In addition to regularly scheduled conferences, parents are encouraged to call and schedule informal conferences with their child's guide if needed.

Each primary and lower elementary conference is generally scheduled for a thirty-minute period. If additional time is needed, it can be requested at the time the appointment is made. Upper elementary and middle school students will usually join their parents for conferences.

Field Trips

Field trips and in-school demonstrations are scheduled when appropriate for the students during the school year. At the primary level, field trips are infrequent because emphasis is placed on creating regularity, security and normalization in the classroom. As the student matures, field trip frequency increases with the elementary and middle school levels. The students develop initiative and independence while learning about life in their community.

State law requires a permission slip be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the school office before a student can accompany his/her class on a field trip.

The school will notify parents of the plans and details for each field trip in advance.

If a student forgets the permission slip, he/she will visit another classroom for the duration of the trip. If parents do not want their child to participate in a specific trip, arrangements must be made. The parents can either arrange for the student's care away from school or request that the guide make alternate arrangements on campus for the duration of the field trip.

Field trips provide an opportunity for additional involvement for parents wishing to volunteer. Parents wishing to volunteer to assist with a field trip shall follow the Volunteer Guidelines provided with the permission slip.

Motor Vehicle Record/Background Check

Undercroft Montessori School requires any volunteer who will have close, potentially unsupervised contact with a student to submit to and clear a background check. Volunteers who will be driving for field trips must submit to and clear both a background check *and* a Motor Vehicles Record search prior to transporting students to or from a school sponsored event.

Background and MVR search waiver forms are available in the office and must be completed at least one week before transporting children to a school sponsored event.

Personal Belongings/Lost and Found

Personal belongings such as toys and special treasures from home must not be brought to school, except as special items for "show and tell" (with the guide's consent).

Any unfamiliar items brought home from school by a child should be returned. They may be part of the school equipment or belong to another student.

Label all personal items to increase the chances they will be returned to the proper owner.

Parents may check Lost and Found at any time. "Lost and Found" items not claimed are distributed to charitable organizations or others who can use them at the end of each semester.

Clothing

Clothing should be washable, durable, comfortable, and appropriate to the season. Even the youngest of students are encouraged to dress and undress themselves. Clothing with fastenings the child can open and close is a big help. Self-care is an important Montessori principle.

The students often work on the floor and at "messy" activities and they regularly spend time outside when the weather permits. The student who is unduly concerned about wear and tear to clothing doesn't feel free to participate fully in all school activities.

Shorts under dresses and rubber-soled shoes are required. Shoes with wheels (such as "Heelys") are not permitted. The school reserves the right to prohibit certain articles of clothing or shoes if it finds such articles pose a risk to the safety of the children or cause excessive distraction from the learning environment.

Sneakers or rubber-soled shoes are encouraged to increase student safety on the playground. Close toed shoes with rubber soles provide necessary traction on the playground equipment and pea gravel. For this reason, sandals are discouraged and cowboy boots and flip flops are not permitted for primary students. Shoes *with light up features, which can be distracting in the*

learning environment, will not be permitted for primary students. Primary students who arrive with shoes that are not permitted will be provided slippers to use while in the classroom.

Students, especially those attending primary classes, are discouraged from wearing clothing displaying prominent characters or designs due to the unnecessary distractions that can be caused. To reduce student distraction from the learning environment, clothing determined to be distracting will be turned "inside-out" upon arrival at school.

It is recommended that primary children not wear jewelry to school.

Hats and sunscreen are suggested as protection for outdoor activities and field trips. Sunscreen should be applied at home before school. A labeled bottle can be sent to the classroom for reapplication as needed. A Medication Form must be completed and can be found in the office or requested via email.

All items of clothing that can be removed at school should be clearly labeled with the student's name. Placing a distinctive mark, such as a flower, beside a child's name will help the younger student recognize his or her own clothing.

Each primary level student needs to have a complete change of clothing at school, including underwear and socks. More than one change is recommended for those children who may require them. The clothing should be packed in a large zip-lock bag with the student's name on it. This should be brought to class during the first week of school. Students in After Care will require a second set of extra clothing. Clothing should be exchanged as the seasons change or a child has a significant growth spurt.

We encourage parents to always make certain their children are appropriately dressed for weather and to remember how quickly it can change in Oklahoma.

Requesting Records

The administrative office requires 1-week notice when requesting a child's records. Parents' signature must accompany paperwork requesting records.

V. Discipline Policy

Creating a positive, enjoyable learning experience of which a student wants to be a part provides true discipline. Each student is respected as an individual. Correcting of students is intended to develop self-direction and self-control with awareness of others. A student is redirected to more acceptable behaviors or activities. This policy provides a framework and guidance to the parents, guides and Head of School; however, final disciplinary action will be based on individual circumstances.

Discipline and an atmosphere of order are maintained in the learning environments. Students will not be subjected to discipline that is severe, humiliating, or frightening. Discipline will not be associated with food, rest, or toileting. Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited. Self-discipline is viewed as an aid to independence.

Parents will be notified in writing on the day of an incident or as soon as it is known. They will always receive verbal contact, but it may be during or after the inquiry, depending on what is appropriate to the situation. This discipline policy is included on the back of the Incident Report.

Students are guided to resolve conflicts by example, prompts, suggestion, discussion, and tactful intervention in order to help them learn to solve their own problems. The Montessori curriculum has an extensive set of tools for conflict resolution and peace making for the student as well as the classroom community. Basic rules and expectations are regularly discussed with the students. A child will be given the opportunity to take a break from a situation when needed. Or, a student may be asked to leave a situation for a brief period. Destruction of property, harming of self, or physical / psychological harm of others will not be allowed. In extreme circumstances, a student may be physically removed from an area or restrained by the staff. When this is necessary, it will be done as minimally as possible.

If a discipline or behavior problem of a PERSISTENT, BUT NOT DANGEROUS OR SERIOUSLY OUT-OF-CONTROL nature occurs, the guide will speak with the parents to discuss it. Possible causes for the problem and strategies to overcome it will be considered. Another conference with the student's parents to review the situation may be set at that time. The parents and guide will work together to solve the problem. If the parent or guide is still not satisfied, then the guide or the parents may request a conference with the Head of School. If, after the conference, further action is required, the Head of School may place the student on probation. The student will be placed on probation for an agreed upon time, depending on the seriousness of the problem. At the conclusion of the probationary period, the parents will once again meet with the guide, any other involved faculty members, and the Head of School to make a decision regarding any further action needed to best help the school meet the student's and his/her classmates' needs.

PSYCHOLOGICALLY/PHYSICALLY UNSAFE OR SERIOUSLY OUT-OF-CONTROL BEHAVIOR on the part of a student may necessitate immediate removal from the classroom or school until the problem can be resolved. SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS in these cases are entirely at the discretion of the Head of School. Since no appropriate place for in-house suspension exists, parents or their specified contacts in case of emergency will be notified to immediately pick up the student.

VI. Anti-Bullying Policy

Harassment, intimidation and bullying, whether through gestures, written or verbal expression, electronic communication or physical acts will not be permitted on school grounds, in school vehicles, at school-sponsored activities or at school-sanctioned events. Such harassment, intimidation and bullying should be reported immediately to a guide, staff member or Head of School. Any necessary action will be taken according to the Discipline Policy.

VII. Student Health and Safety

Health Forms

Current health forms are required each year for all students. Oklahoma law requires every student to have appropriate immunizations. It is the parent's responsibility to not only keep a student's immunizations current but to also keep that student's records current in the school office. Certificate of Exemption forms must be presented when immunizations are not elected. You can obtain a Certificate of Exemption from the school office.

It is the responsibility of the parent to keep all new health related information current in the school office. Information regarding new illnesses, allergies, or disorders and booster immunizations must be updated in the school office for the safety of the student.

Illnesses and Injuries at School

Students who complain of illness are made as comfortable as possible and kept under observation by supervising staff. If symptoms are obvious or persist, or if a fever is suspected, the student is brought to the office so the administration can notify the parents. Students with a fever above 100 degrees or with a suspected communicable disease will be brought to the office and parents will be notified. Students who are not able to function in a classroom need to be picked up from school even if they are not running a fever.

Mishaps resulting in injury will be treated immediately with basic first aid techniques. In the case of serious injury, the student's individual emergency information on file in the school office is consulted and the parents are called. In the case of a serious injury, an ambulance will be called at the discretion of staff, even if parents can be reached by phone. It is imperative that the office be kept up-to-date regarding emergency contact information. Minor injuries will be cleaned with soap and water. Ice will be applied if indicated. An accident form is filled out concerning each incident and sent home to the parents.

Communicable Disease Policy

Children should be given time to regain their strength and resistance before returning to school after an illness. To protect other students from possible infection, a child should be free of fever above 100 degrees without the aid of medication and/or vomiting for at least 24 hours before returning to school. **A student should not attend school if they are not well enough to participate in normal classroom and outside activities, including weekly swimming classes in upper elementary.** It is suggested that parents investigate choices for care for their sick child at a time when the child is not ill. There is usually little warning of impending illness, allowing scant time for making alternate arrangements.

All parents must inform the school immediately about the existence of any physical or mental condition, particularly communicable diseases, which might require special precautions be taken with respect to the student, his or her schoolmates and staff. These illnesses include, but are not limited to hepatitis, tuberculosis, AIDS, meningitis, and communicable diseases such as strep throat, measles, chicken pox, "pink eye," and lice infestation.

Medicines

- No medication can be administered without a completed Medication Form, available in the school office.
- All medications must be in the original container.

- Medicines, including inhalants, must be delivered directly to the office by the parent – never sent with the student.
- Over the counter pain medications, for dispensing on an as-needed basis, occasionally needed by older students, must be provided in the original container along with a signed Medication Form.

If an adult other than the parent delivers the medication to the school, a signed note from the parent stating the times and dosages prescribed and granting the school permission to administer the medicine must be provided.

Consult your physician for recommendations on ways to avoid the dispensing of medicines at school. For instance, medication dispensed three times a day can be administered before school, after school, and bedtime.

Upon parent request, most pharmacies will provide an additional labeled container to be given to the school.

Playground/Playscape Safety Rules

Our Playscape is a unique asset that has enriched our children's experience. Following are general safety guidelines:

- At least two staff will supervise children on the Playscape/playground at all times, and will be stationed so they are able to supervise each child effectively. If the number of staff is too small to supervise the entire Playscape, children will be limited to using only the areas available staff is able to effectively supervise.
- Entry into the Sand Canyon is limited to the slide and climbing into the low end of the Canyon. Children may dig in the sand of the canyon, not in between the rocks in the walls of the canyon.
- Slide down the slides rather than walking up the slides. Sliding should be done on one's bottom.
- People slide down the slide, not rocks, sand or dirt.
- Balls are thrown instead of rocks, sand, or snow.
- Jungle gyms and climbing bars are for climbing, not fences or trees.
- Get on the swings from the back and take turns. One person to a swing. Swinging should be back and forth rather than sideways. No walking in front of a swing in use.
- Karate and other similar activities have an appropriate place to be performed. The playground/Playscape is not that place.
- Students may not carry other students.
- No imaginary weapon play is allowed.
- Elementary and middle school students may use their own skateboards and scooters for use on the skateboard rink on the Playscape only when parents have a signed waiver. Students must bring and wear their helmets when using scooters or skateboards

Animals on Campus

Care of classroom animals is part of a well-designed Montessori curriculum. The level of care required by the animals will be age appropriate.

A list of classroom pets will be provided to each family. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the child's guide of any allergies or particular concerns regarding the classroom animals.

There will be no dogs or cats on campus without administrative approval. Family pets cannot be brought on campus as "show and tell" visitors without prior approval of the guide. Animals visiting from organizations such as the city zoo must also have prior approval from administration.

Alcohol

No alcohol will be consumed at gatherings on campus when there are students under the age of 21 present.

Firearms

In keeping with federal law, guns are never allowed on the grounds of a school.

Tobacco Policy

In keeping with Undercroft's intent to provide a safe and healthy environment for students and staff, tobacco use is prohibited on school property, including in school vehicles, 24 hours a day, and seven days a week. This policy applies equally to all employees, vendors, visitors and students, and includes all forms of tobacco at all school sponsored events.

Cell Phone Policy

Student Cell Phone Use on Campus:

Upper elementary and middle school students may bring their personal cell phones to school subject to the classroom rules, which may include keeping the cell phone turned off during the school day or depositing the cell phone in a central location, among other rules. Students wishing to use their phones during the school day must seek permission from the guide or adult in charge.

VIII. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Procedures

When possible, parents must schedule all appointments after school. Students will not be dismissed earlier than the end of the session except in cases of emergency or with special arrangements.

Detailed carpool procedures will be distributed and discussed at Parent Orientations.

Attendance and Tardiness

The Montessori classroom follows a regular daily pattern that is disrupted by late arrivals. Good attendance ensures each student gets the full advantage of the highly enriched program at Undercroft.

To show proper respect to all adults and students in the classrooms and to develop the important life skill of reliability, students are expected to be at school on time by 8:15 a.m. In order to minimize interruptions to the classroom students arriving after 8:15 a.m. should report to the office, and will be escorted to class by a member of the office staff.

A tardy is given to any student entering the classroom after 8:25 a.m.

An absence is counted for any student not attending at least one-half of a given day.

The classroom guide will communicate with parents as concerns arise about attendance, particularly when excessive absence or tardiness is affecting the student's success in school. Parents should be aware that excessive absence or tardiness diminish the number of instructional days in a school year for a student, and can have an impact on decisions to advance a student to the next level at Undercroft as well as affect a student's acceptance into other schools.

Before and After School Care Programs

Before and After Care School Programs are available for enrollment on a monthly basis. In addition, spaces are available in Before Care & After Care with *prior arrangement only*. This drop-in space can be reserved up to one week in advance for a flat fee of \$5.00 per day for Before Care and \$14.00 per day for After Care. A monthly invoice will be sent by email. Further information on the programs can be obtained from the office.

Enrollment in an After School Enrichment Class does not entitle a student to attend After Care. A prior reservation, dependent upon availability of space, must be made as well as payment of \$14.00. Enrichment tuition is separate from After Care fees.

Late Pick-up Policy

It is essential for the well being of each student to be picked up promptly from school or after-school care. However, the school recognizes that due to traffic or other unexpected emergencies, a parent may arrive late. Primary half day children not picked up by 11:45 will be brought to the office to wait to be picked up; primary full day children not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will go to the After Care Program. Elementary students not picked up by 3:30 p.m. will go to the After Care Program. Middle school students not picked up by 3:30 p.m. will go to the upper elementary After Care program. Please notify the school, if possible, when a late situation arises.

In order to be reasonable and flexible, Undercroft allows each family two free late pick-ups (under 15 minutes) after regular school hours, per school year. A charge of \$14 per student will be added to the parents' account for a stay in After Care. After two free (less than 15 minutes) late pick-ups there will be a charge of \$14 per child.

STUDENTS MUST BE PICKED UP BY 5:30 p.m. from the After Care program. For each child not picked up by 5:30 p.m., a \$10.00 late pick-up fee will be charged for the first minute, with an additional \$1.00 per minute thereafter per student. Repeated late pick-ups after 5:30 will result in loss of After Care privileges.

IX. SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Vacations and Holidays

School closings for vacations and holidays are coordinated as closely as possible with Tulsa Public Schools and other local independent and public school calendars. Please see the school calendar for school closing dates.

Non-sectarian holidays are celebrated at school at the discretion of the classroom guides and in keeping with the anti-discrimination policy of the school.

Inclement Weather

When school is closed due to inclement weather, Undercroft will notify parents by the following means:

- Phone call and/or text message from Blackboard Connect call system. Please keep us informed throughout the year of any changes in your phone contact information
- Email
- Local news stations, channels 2, 6 & 8
- Undercroft's website, www.undercroft.org

If Undercroft is closed for the morning session, it will remain closed for the afternoon session, regardless of improved conditions by the afternoon. Road conditions in your town or particular neighborhood can be hazardous even on days the school is open. Parents should use their own discretion about bringing their children to school under potentially hazardous circumstances.

X. MEALS AND SNACKS

Peanut and Tree-Nut Policy

Undercroft Montessori School strives to maintain a tree nut free environment to protect students with severe allergies, and avoids purchasing snack items that contain peanuts or tree nuts. The school cannot guarantee purchases will be free of peanut oil or similar ingredients or processed in a plant that is totally nut-free.

Sensitive/allergic students' families may need to provide their own snacks, if Undercroft cannot fully meet their dietary restrictions.

All families are required to eliminate peanut and tree nut products from their students' lunches in deference to those endangered by allergic reactions to these products. Special dietary conflicts caused by this policy should be discussed on an individual basis with the administration and the guide.

An alternative lunch item, when available, is provided to students that mistakenly bring a lunch containing peanuts or nuts. If an alternative is not available or a child has special dietary considerations, the student will be asked to eat lunch away from allergic children and take special care to clean hands, tray and table well.

Staff Appreciation Lunches, Bake Sales and Potluck dinners must also meet the peanut and tree-nut free policy of Undercroft.

Lunches

Parents should inform the office and the student's guide in writing of any food or drink ALLERGIES or any SPECIAL DIETARY needs. Please indicate any allergies on the Student Information form.

A packed lunch should be sent in the morning with the students who stay all day. Students' names must be clearly marked on their lunch boxes. Please send items that require no refrigeration or use the type of lunch box that keeps food cold. Students need to pack eating utensils in their lunches when needed.

The study of nutrition is part of the curriculum. Students will learn how to choose a well-balanced diet with sufficient, but not excessive, caloric content that is low in sugar, salt, and fat with minimal preservatives and adequate fiber. Students should be encouraged to help shop for and prepare their own lunches and snack items with good nutrition in mind.

Candy, gum, caffeinated or carbonated beverages, and highly sweetened foods are not permitted in students' lunches or snacks.

All students eat lunch in their own classrooms, supervised by the classroom guides. Guides will communicate with parents when there is a concern about a student's eating habits or the contents of lunches. Younger students usually will be asked to take home any uneaten portions of their meals so parents will know what foods their children are not eating.

Beginning in October, parents may make arrangements to join their child for lunch at school. Such arrangements should be scheduled with the guide 24 hours in advance to prevent classroom overcrowding or possible scheduling conflicts, such as a field trip.

Participatory Snack Program

Primary Program

Parents are invited to provide snack items for their child's class for one week per semester. This is a voluntary program. The donation of snack is tax deductible as a non-cash gift. Room Parents will contact parents to schedule a convenient week to provide snacks. Snacks can be as simple as fresh fruits and vegetables. The children may also incorporate snack preparation and serving as a part of their Practical Life and Grace and Courtesy exercises. Suggestions for snacks will come from the classroom guides, and parents should feel free to speak with their child's guide if they wish to provide a recipe and ingredients. Parents may also share in the snack preparation and serving with their child by making arrangements with the classroom guide.

Elementary Program

Elementary students bring their own snacks with them to school. Please be sure to pack a nutritious snack in your child's lunch.

Middle School Program

Snacks are provided for middle school students, who often cook class snacks as part of their practical life/cooking curriculum.

Birthday Celebrations

If your child does not participate in the celebration of birthdays, please notify your child's guide.

Birthday celebrations at school are brief and low key. In the **PRIMARY** classrooms a short ceremony is held in which the birthday child receives a special badge and a birthday song. The students count "the number of times the earth has gone around the sun" since the child was born. A timeline that features a picture of the child at each age is shared with the class. Parents may provide birthday snacks for the class if they wish. Highly sweetened snacks are not allowed. Consult your child's guide about what would be considered an appropriate snack.

ELEMENTARY birthdays can be recognized at either lunch or morning/afternoon group meeting time. Parents may provide birthday snacks for the class if they wish. Again, highly sweetened snacks are discouraged. Consult your child's guide about what would be considered an appropriate snack.

A voluntary donation to the classroom of a gift certificate to a bookstore is always welcomed as a way to honor the birthday of a student as well as expanding our library collection.

Parents of children whose birthdates are outside of the school year may consult the student's guide to learn how that classroom celebrates summer and other out-of-session birthdays.

If a home party is planned for a student, invitations should not be handed out at school unless everyone is invited. Likewise, if a student is attending a party after school, gifts should not be sent to school with the student. In the past, these situations have proven upsetting for those who are not invited. Invitations mailed to the homes and weekend parties help avoid hurt feelings.

Montessori Curriculum: Primary Level

PRACTICAL LIFE

Activities developing **control of movement** (gross and fine motor), focus and concentration, including games like the 'silence game' and 'walking the line'

Care of the indoor environment – e.g.: squeezing a sponge, setting and washing a table, folding, sweeping, mopping, dusting, polishing, flower arranging, pouring, opening and closing (latches, bottles, jars, doors), cutting, rolling a rug, caring for plants and animals, preparing food (cutting, spreading, straining, etc.)

Care of the outdoor environment - (ecology) e.g.: planting and gardening, weeding, sweeping

Care of the person – e.g.: dressing frames, hand washing, hanging coat, blowing nose, eating snack or lunch, cleaning spots on clothes

Social relations (grace and courtesy exercises) – e.g.: answering the phone, greeting a visitor, using manners at snack and meal time, saying please and thank you, offering someone something, passing objects, walking behind someone, taking turns, using respectful language

SENSORIAL DISCRIMINATION

Visual sense

1. Size—e.g.: cylinder blocks, pink tower, broad stair, red rods, bi- and trinomial cubes, square of Pythagoras
2. Shape-geometric shapes – circles, rectangles, polygons up to ten sides, triangles (equilateral, scalene, obtuse), quadrilateral figures, irregular curved figures
3. Color—primary, secondary, tertiary colors; shades, hues, tints

Tactile sense

1. Texture (rough-smooth)
2. Baric (weight)
3. Temperature
4. Stereognostic (recognition of 3 dimensional shapes by touch)

Taste

1. Sweet, sour, salty
2. Matching

Smell (matching)

Hearing

1. Intensity of sound
2. Pitch

LANGUAGE

Tracking Left-Right, Top-Bottom

Vocabulary enrichment throughout the curriculum, expression of ideas, listening to and telling stories, poetry, reports, descriptions of objects and pictures

Pre-writing and writing:

Development of fine motor skills and pencil grip, finger tracing sandpaper letters, movable alphabet, tracing metal insets, handwriting (manuscript)

Pre-reading and reading:

Sequencing, matching, finishing a series, classification by attributes, association of phonetic sound with sandpaper letters, initial consonant sounds, final consonant sounds, blends, digraphs, short and long vowel patterns, phonetic word patterns, non-phonetic or puzzle words, phonetic readers and reading storybooks

Reading classification:

Naming objects in the environment, classification and definition cards,

Function of words:

Verbs, nouns, articles, adjectives conjunctions, prepositions, adverbs

Reading analysis:

Simple sentences

MATHEMATICS

Quantity and Numeration:

1-10, and teens using number rods, sandpaper numerals, spindle boxes, numerals and counters

The Decimal system:

Quantities and numeration to the thousands using Golden Bead materials and cards

Basic operations

Addition, subtraction, multiplication, division using a variety of concrete materials

Linear and skip counting

Tens and teens, linear counting, skip counting

Transitional exercises*: Small bead frame, large bead frame *towards *abstracting operations*

Fractions:

Introduction and basic operations, using fraction materials

CULTURAL SUBJECTS

Geography:

Sandpaper globe (land and water), continents globe, hemispheres puzzle map, continents puzzle map, U.S. puzzle map, land and water forms

Science:

Living vs. nonliving

Botany—caring for plants, nature walks, names and parts of plants, experiments, gardening
Zoology—caring for animals, nature walks, names and parts, basic classification of vertebrates
Simple science experiments

Music:

Listening, movement to music
Singing

Ear training (bells, solmization beat, rhythm, pitch),

Instrumental music

Writing and reading music

Spanish:

Vocabulary and basic conversational

Art:

Illustration of class work, basic media and techniques, styles and self-expression

Physical Education:

Fitness exercises, elements of games

Montessori Curriculum: Lower Elementary Level

PRACTICAL LIFE

Community ecology projects
 Going out (field trips and visits by outside specialists)
 Conflict resolution skills
 Grace and courtesy
 Class government and constitutions
 Applied economics (student management projects)
 Keyboard and computer skills
 Animal care
 Plant care
 Classroom jobs
Music
 Analysis and composition of music: complex songs and orchestration, composition and performance, choir
Art
 Complex art techniques, advanced analysis and history
Physical Fitness
 Nutrition, swimming, fitness and complex games with emphasis on skills, teamwork, sportsmanship over competition

LANGUAGE

Phonics and word patterns, spelling phonetic readers, basal readers, sight words
Word study (alphabetical order, compound words, capitalization rules, contractions, affixes, etc.)
Grammar and syntax: parts of speech, function of words
Sentence analysis
Spoken language: listening and speaking skills, reports, drama, debates
Reading comprehension: analogies, author's purpose, cause and effect, fantasy and reality, fiction/non fiction, vocabulary in context, sequence of events, predicting outcomes, drawing conclusions, summarizing, recalling details, etc.
Writing: gathering information, hypothesizing, outline, composition, editing, types of writing (poetry, story, journal, report, dialogue, descriptive, etc.)
 Study skills: dictionary, encyclopedia, almanac, atlas, parts of a book, library skills, note taking, research and reference skills
 Style: child's own, authors, analysis
 Literature: folk tales, fables, myths, biographies, historical and science fiction
 Spanish
 Handwriting/Penmanship
 Vocabulary

MATHEMATICS & GEOMETRY

Numeration and quantity: cardinal and ordinal numbers, place value, exchanging, estimating, rounding, odd and even, greater than/less than, prime numbers, Roman numerals, square numbers 1-10, binomials and trinomials
Mastery of operations and memorization of math facts, story problems, commutative, associative and distributive laws
Fractions: advanced operations, story problems, equivalence
Money: quantity, value, counting, story problems
 Graphing, patterning, estimating, rounding
GEOMETRY: Geometric solids
 Construction of shapes
Closed plane figures: circles, rectangles, triangles, polygons, quadrilaterals, curved figures
Classified Nomenclature: Lines: types, parts and positions of lines
 Angles: parts, types and angle positions, complimentary and supplementary angles
 Plane figures: types and parts of each type
 Congruency, Similarity, Equivalence
 Perimeter, area, volume
 Measurement of angles, use of ruler, compass, protractor
 Geometry word problems

HISTORY

Great Lessons: Story of the Universe, Story of the Coming of Life, Story of the Coming of Man, Story of Language, Story of Math
Concept of Time: calendar work, timeline of a child's life, months of the year, seasons of the year, days of the week, the year and its parts, clock studies (hours, minutes, seconds, half past, quarter past/quarter to, mastery of telling time
Past, Present, Future
Age of the Earth
Timeline of Life: from the Precambrian period to the Quaternary Period
Fundamental Needs of People: clothing, nutrition, transportation, shelter, defense, communication, physical health, religion and philosophy, social acceptance, art and music
 Physical Health: five senses, basic anatomy, systems of the body, food pyramid and basic nutrition
Society and Civilizations: study of civilizations, research, history of child's country

GEOGRAPHY

Geography
 Globe and Map studies, including map making, map reading, scale, orientation, relief, contour, latitude and longitude, cardinal directions, legends and keys
Continents and oceans of the world
Continent research: countries, capitals, flags, animals, biomes
 Pin-maps (countries, capitals, mountains, rivers, lakes)
Land and water forms
Biome research: desert, woodlands, rain forest, ocean, wetlands, tundra, grasslands, savanna
Universe, solar system, earth: solar energy and the earth, movements of the earth, the atmosphere, wind
Ecology: energy chains, biosphere, atmosphere, natural cycles, the endangered spaceship earth, recycling activities
Earth Science: geological timeline, classification and use of minerals, plate tectonics, erosion, oceans, weather, clouds, precipitation
 Physical Science: magnetic, non-magnetic, temperatures, matter, gases, weight, measurement, forces, simple tools, electricity, gravity, buoyancy, balance

ZOOLOGY

Vertebrates: parts of a fish, parts of an amphibian, parts of a reptile, parts of a bird, parts of a mammal
The animal kingdom: animal stories, animal research, how animals satisfy their needs
Types of vertebrates: types of fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, animal riddle stories
 Invertebrates: parts of a protozoa, porifera, cnidarians, echinoderm, annelid, mollusk, arthropod, nematode, platyhelminth
Classification of the Animal Kingdom: main characteristics of vertebrates and invertebrates, animal classification chart, timeline of life research

BOTANY

Living/Non-Living
 Five Kingdoms
 Food Chain
Classified Nomenclature:
 Plant: parts, types and research
 Root: parts, types and research
 Stem: parts, types and research
 Leaf: parts, types and research
 Seed: parts, types and research
 Fruit: parts, types and research
 Flower: parts, types and research
 Other Botany Activities: fruits and vegetables, leaf cabinet, plant pictures and labels, plant classification chart

Montessori Curriculum: Upper Elementary Level

PRACTICAL LIFE	LANGUAGE	MATHEMATICS & GEOMETRY	HISTORY	GEOGRAPHY	SCIENCE
Harvesting and marketing	Advanced grammar and sentence analysis	Numeration and quantity: decimals, integers, square numbers 1-10, binomials and trinomials	Archeological Dig Fossil Dig Review Time Line of Life: from the Precambrian period to the Quaternary Period	Functional Geography Work of air, work of water, work of maps	ZOOLOGY: Living/Non-Living Five Kingdoms Gifts of Phyla Animal Systems: Mamalia, Aves, Reptilia, Fish, Amphibia, Invertebrate Chinese Boxes: Mamalia, Aves, Reptilia, Fish, Amphibia, Invertebrate
Community ecology projects	Spelling and vocabulary development	Mastery of advanced operations: memorization of facts, multiples, squaring, square roots, cubing, cube roots, problem solving	History of Mankind: Hominids, Patterns of Migration; World Ancient Civilizations, including Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Middle Ages, Explorers, Early America, Colonial Times	Physical Geography: world maps, continents, oceans, rivers, lakes, mountains, deserts, plants, animals, economy United States, Oklahoma, Tulsa: state names and capitals, bodies of water, mountains and deserts, animals and plants, economy Cultural Geography: Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Europe, North America, Australia, South America (maps, research, reports)	Plant Fungi Protist Monera
Student planned field trips and visits by outside specialists	Word study: capitalization, commas, quotation marks, hyphens, apostrophes, possessives, dictionary, thesaurus, antonyms, proofreading, punctuation	Decimals: operations, conversion to fraction, fraction of decimal, rounding, ratios/cross products, percent, decimal to percent, fraction to decimal %, rate problems, base problems, percentage problems			BOTANY: Nomenclatures and experiments
Conflict resolution skills and Peace Curriculum	Spoken language: listening and speaking skills, reports, drama, debates	Fractions: advanced operations, improper fractions, mixed numbers, equivalency, reducing, common factors, word problems			
Grace and courtesy	Reading comprehension: sequence, cause and effect, predicting outcomes, context clues, noting details, main idea, inferences, sentences, drawing conclusions;	Pre-Algebra and logic: problem solving strategies			
Class government and constitutions	Writing: sentences, paragraphs, descriptive, narrative, comparative, persuasive, 'how to', personal and business letters, poetry (haiku, sonnet, couplet, quatrain, cinquain), newspaper, journal	Ancient Civilization and mathematics of the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans			
Applied economics (student management projects)	Literature: folk tales, fables, myths, biographies, historical and science fiction; 'reading circles' to discuss plot, character development, setting, etc. in context of literature	GEOMETRY: Finding areas of closed plane figures: quadrilaterals, parallelograms, triangles, polygons, curved figures			
Computer skills	Spanish	Circles: circumference, area, sector, volume			
Plant and Animal Care	Latin	Congruency, Similarity, Equivalence			
Handling Money	Handwriting/Penmanship	Perimeter, area, volume			
Classroom Jobs		Measurement of angles, compass work; constructions; Pythagorean Theorem			
Music Steel Drums Bands, percussion, teamwork, analysis and composition of music					
Art Complex art techniques, advanced analysis and history					
Physical Fitness Nutrition, swimming, fitness and complex games with emphasis on skills, teamwork, sportsmanship over competition					

Montessori Curriculum: Middle School Level

SCIENCE	LANGUAGE	MATHEMATICS & GEOMETRY	HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY	SPECIALS & ELECTIVES	PRACTICAL LIFE	PERSONAL WORLD
<p>Scientific method</p> <p>Scientific observation</p> <p>Reporting and interpreting data</p> <p>BIOLOGY</p> <p>Connections between all living things</p> <p>Cells: plant and animals</p> <p>Cell Cycle</p> <p>Characteristics and needs of living things</p> <p>Classification systems: vertebrates vs. invertebrates</p> <p>Study of microorganisms</p> <p>Genetics and DNA</p> <p>Ecosystems and population growth</p> <p>Conservation of earth's resources</p> <p>Pollution</p> <p>PHYSICAL SCIENCE</p> <p>Forces: Newton's Laws of motion, gravity, friction, electromagnetism</p> <p>Speed, acceleration, velocity</p> <p>Atomic structure: atoms, elements, compounds</p> <p>Chemical properties</p> <p>Kinetic and potential energy</p> <p>Thermodynamics and transfer of energy</p> <p>Types of energy (fossil fuels vs. alternative energy)</p> <p>Waves and energy</p> <p>Simple machines</p>	<p>Study of Vocabulary: word origins and etymology</p> <p>Conventions: commas, colons, titles, paragraphing, parentheses, hyphens, dashes, semi-colons, proofreading, punctuation</p> <p>Spoken language: listening and speaking skills, presentation skills, meeting leadership</p> <p>Reading comprehension: poetry, short essays, novels focused on each cycle theme, and various personal choice novels.</p> <p>Writing: writing workshops and daily practice writing in the areas of personal choice, science, social studies and health; short research papers; lab reports, creative writing pieces; poetry; apprentice famous writers; lengthy research paper; reflective essay. Peers and guides evaluate each published piece of writing using a writing rubric based on 6+1 Writing Process.</p> <p>Literature: literary elements; making connections to self, text, media and world; sub-text; intertextuality; gender and social norms, group literature discussions and writing about reading strategies.</p> <p>Socratic Seminar: The goal of a Socratic seminar is for students to help one another understand the ideas, issues and values reflected in a specific text and to make connections to other works.</p>	<p>Pre-Algebra:</p> <p>Decimals: operations, conversion to fraction, fraction of decimal, rounding, ratios/cross products, percent, decimal to percent, fraction to decimal %, rate problems, base problems, percentage problems</p> <p>Fractions: improper fractions, mixed numbers, equivalency, reducing, common factors, mean, median, mode and range</p> <p>Advanced operations: memorization of facts, multiples, squaring, square roots, cubing, cube roots, real world word problem solving</p> <p>Algebra: grouping symbols, properties and solving equalities & inequalities, solving equations, equations with exponents, sequence & series, evaluation expressions with powers, polynomials, difference of squares, factoring patterns, quadratics by factoring/formula, direct and indirect variation, calculating power, work, potential, & kinetic energy, coordinate plane, slope, graphing equations function, domain</p> <p>Geometry: finding the volume and surface area of 2-D and 3-D shapes, measuring and constructing geometric figures, geometry in architecture, determining interior angles of polygons, discovering Euler's formula</p>	<p>American History: American Revolution, US Constitution, waves of immigration, Native Americans, industrial Revolution (history, causes, effects, inventions, inventors)</p> <p>Exploration: Explorers (past and present), North America, other continents, space</p> <p>Social Studies: economic systems, The Stock Market, overpopulation, war, peace initiatives, other local and global issues, social injustice</p> <p>Tulsa, Ok: History of Tulsa and historical landmarks</p> <p>Physical Geography: world maps, continents, oceans, rivers, lakes, mountains, deserts</p> <p>Cultural Geography: Geographical needs of people</p>	<p>MUSIC</p> <p>Rock band, experimental band</p> <p>ART</p> <p>Art journal: personal record of images; made by drawing, sketching, doodling, painting, stamping and collage; Sculpture: paper mache, paper topography and clay, multi-media; Painting: Acrylic techniques; Drawing: techniques for portrait and still life.</p> <p>PHYSICAL FITNESS</p> <p>Improving speed and endurance in the one mile run; understanding/skills in games such as football, soccer, frisbee, and kickball; sportsmanship, positive team building; upper body and core strengthening through sit-ups and push-ups.</p> <p>SPANISH</p> <p>Adjectives, prepositions, and present progressive verbs, Irregular verbs, present continuous tense, and beginning level direct object pronouns in context of short story</p>	<p>21st Century Skills</p> <p>Information Literacy skills: Microsoft Outlook for email and calendar, Word, Power Point, Excel, internal drives, shared drives, online textbooks, Khan Academy online research, MLA citations, understanding bias & perspective, critical reading, propaganda</p> <p>Media: presentations with Power Point, Prezi, i-movie; analyzing and evaluating advertising, documentary films, TED Talks.</p> <p>Home economics: planning, shopping, preparing and serving a weekly meal; cleaning, plant and pet care; raising chickens; planting a garden, student planned three-day away and adventure trips</p> <p>Independent research projects</p> <p>Classroom Business: Budgeting, handling money, creating purchase orders, reporting/balancing income and expenses, customer service</p> <p>Community Service: Blue Thumb – Coal Creek monitoring & conservation; Tulsa Children's Museum; Tulsa Public Library</p>	<p>21st Century Skills</p> <p>Life Skills: Flexibility, Initiative, Social Skills, Productivity, Leadership</p> <p>Learning Skills: Critical thinking, creative thinking, collaborating, communicating, conflict resolution</p> <p>Heroic Journey</p> <p>Mindfulness: emotional regulation, stress management</p> <p>Grace and courtesy</p> <p>Brain Structures & Neurotransmitters</p> <p>Rites of Passage</p> <p>Kohlberg's 6 Stages of Moral Development</p> <p>Morality and Self-Actualization</p> <p>Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens</p> <p>Native American Medicine Wheel</p>

Guidelines for Independent School Parents

Independent schools are blessed with parents who are invested in the success of their children. Quite literally, independent schools could not offer the quality of education service and sense of community they do if not for parental involvement as volunteers, committee members and supporters.

Many parents enrolling in independent schools do so as newcomers to private education, and as such, may be unsure about their roles in the school community. They may wonder, "What do I get for my tuition dollars?" or "How can I best work with the teachers and administration so my child gets the most out of school?"

The following guidelines are straight-talk offered as support for the parent as well as administrators and teachers.

Parents can best work for the benefit of their children if they:

Understand enrollment means more than service for a fee. Membership in a school community means forming a long-term relationship with the school. In essence, schools say to you, "Yes, we will educate your child through thick and thin. We will serve him or her over the coming years." That's a commitment schools do not take lightly. While enrollment is renewed yearly on a business-like basis, schools see membership in the community as an idealistic blend of contract and covenant, a delicate web of trust that holds parents, child, teachers, and administration together. The Home and School relationship exists only with one proviso: that the school's educational service and the child's educational needs remain a good fit.

Recognize that enrollment means entrusting your child to the professional expertise and devoted care of the school's personnel. Independent school administrators and teachers know what they are doing. They are not perfect and don't claim to be. But they are experienced and well-intentioned; they genuinely care about your child. They do their jobs not for the money but because they love kids and believe in the ideals of education. While teachers and administrators should be expected to explain methods, discuss philosophy, include constituencies in decision-making, and be open to honest discussion, they do not have to justify their existence or defend every action, decision, or policy.

Understand and accept values upon which a school operates. You should explore a school's values with admissions people and other administrators and teachers, asking questions like:

- How does the school balance individuality with group harmony?
- What values are central to your discipline policy?
- How will the school's core values remain unchanged as my child develops and passes through the divisions of the school?
- What values are behind the grading system and practice of testing?
- What does the school believe about competition in the classroom and on the playing field?
- What kind of events does the school sponsor for fund-raising, and what are the values inherent in those activities?
- How are curricular, disciplinary, policy and financial decisions made, and what values do those processes reflect?

Parents cannot pressure schools to change their values nor do schools govern by public opinion. If you and the school honestly seek together what's best for your child, then you and your child's teachers and administrators shall not stray far from the school's core values. The harmony of values

prevents a clash of beliefs that often spells tragedy for the child, the family, and the school. When disappointments or disagreements place you and the school on opposite sides of an issue, your child is always left in the middle.

Use channels of communication appropriately. It is the job of administrators to make those channels understood, clear, and open. It is also their job to help you in a school; otherwise the school would suffer from an implosion of individual opinion. When you have a question or a problem, be it logistic (Can Sara leave school five minutes early on Tuesdays for her piano lesson?) or philosophical (Why can't the third grade play interscholastic football?), you ought to know where to go for a response. Angry or fearful parents, who break the channels, going directly to the head or a board member, tend to tear apart the web of relationship and ultimately dis-serve their child, who inevitably absorbs their frustration and attitudes. While you may get rumor or second-hand information about school issues from the pick-up line or in the parking lot, you will get the best information if you seek it out through the proper channels.

Accept the timing of the school's bureaucratic clock. Schools often take a long time to make a decision, fix a problem, find a solution, or reach a compromise. This is because independent schools tend to be conservative institutions. Also, school time can seem slow to impatient parents because many school personnel are involved in the decision-making process, and those people spend most of their day educating children. Sometimes you may feel worried or frustrated or entitled to faster service; adults today are not used to waiting, particularly when the welfare of their children is at stake. But, schools need time and your patience if they are to truly honor your child and do what is in her or his best interest.

Understand a teacher's job and its scope of responsibility. Teachers are not surrogate parents or drill sergeants or licensed therapists. The modern teacher is a guide and coach with expertise in an area of subject matter and a deep devotion to children. Independent schools take great care to hire the very best faculty they can; they look for qualifications such as rapport with children, knowledge of subject area, appropriate training, communication skills, and positive energy. Teachers are usually given a lot of say about what and how they teach within guidelines set by the division and/or department. The autonomy, combined with smaller classes, supportive parents, and stimulating colleagues, is the independent school recipe for excellent and inspired classroom instruction.

Understand the duties and scope of authority of an administrator's job. The head carries ultimate responsibility for the educational quality, tone, and personnel of the school. The head delegates responsibility for particular areas of the school to other administrators such as division heads and assistant heads. Administrators help govern the daily operation of the school. They attend many meetings throughout the day and week and confer with students, teachers, and parents. They articulate the school's mission and values both on campus and in the community, and they help write and enforce policy. Administrators oversee personnel, policy, mission, and finance. Administrators also handle emergencies, resolve problems, manage the flow of information, and answer questions. The Board, another part of the leadership of the school, oversees administration and is ultimately responsible for the present and future well-being of the school. The Board usually hires a head and entrusts to her or him the daily operations of the school.

Understand the role of the parent. You are indispensable to the school. You provide money in the form of tuition and gifts, you provide energy and time on fund-raising projects and teacher support, and you make your expertise available. You are responsible for supporting your child's education at home by complementing the methods and values and philosophy the school espouses. You are given a voice in many decision-making processes through a parent council or school committee. Depending on your school the Board may engage you as a member.

Know and believe the mission of the school and its promises to children. Most schools promise the following:

- To educate your child.
- To provide a safe environment in which he or she can develop appropriate social and academic skills.
- To emphasize values like scholastic excellence, civic involvement, personal responsibility, respect of self and others, emotional well-being, and creative expression.

Upon this common ground, every school builds a unique mission, and it's the school's job to articulate the mission clearly. Parents who misunderstand the mission or seek to change it or who challenge its values almost always create unhappiness and interfere with the learning of their child. When choosing a school, you should do so for reasons of philosophic and academic fit. The wrong reasons for enrolling a child in a school all center on parents and include:

- To improve your family's reputation.
- To guarantee your child's acceptance in the next school of choice.
- To mold your child in your own image.
- To live vicariously through your child.
- To increase your self-esteem.
- To buy your child good grades and success.

Schools promise none of these outcomes. The consequences of mis-enrollment usually surface sooner rather than later; unhappiness with the school, poor student performance, a clash of values, rumor-spreading that leads to taking sides, and nameless accusations that lead to war.

Honestly examine your expectations for the school. Independent schools create wonderful educational communities. They encourage a sense of belonging and even a feeling of family, but schools are not families. They are too big, their resources are too limited, and their purpose is too narrow to be a true family. The 1980's and 90's have already seen schools stretch the definition of what comprises an education. While schools may provide breakfast and lunch, child care, counseling, and friendship to students, in addition to their education program, they cannot make learning disabilities disappear or heal broken or dysfunctional families or teach children to be moral. Enrollment in an independent school is an *educational* decision. Independent schools can't and shouldn't pretend to do it all; but what they do, they do well. You play a vital role in your child's development by maintaining reasonable expectation for what your school can do and by providing a home in which your child can learn the crucial life lessons not found in the school's curriculum.

(Laurence Boggess—writing in the November 1994, "Administrivia")

Position Paper
Authentic Montessori Community
Houston Montessori Center
Elisabeth Coe, Ph.D., Director

Private and public school Montessori programs are being implemented at an unprecedented rate. They began primarily as early childhood and elementary school programs, but are now expanding into charter schools, infant-toddler programs, middle schools, and high schools. With this rapid expansion, many factors have created tensions among administration, faculty members and sometimes parents in Montessori schools. Among these factors are administrators with little Montessori knowledge and the high focus on testing. In strong and successful Montessori school programs, this tension has been overcome with a collaborative approach. Administrators need support in understanding the true reason for Montessori academic success—a physical, social, and emotionally safe environment. This environment consists of more than academic materials, record keeping, and assessments. It is the result of highly educated teachers who have thorough knowledge of child development and understand how students learn, what motivates progress, and how to observe students and make a match between a student's skills and optimal challenge in the curriculum. This position paper, outlining the basic cultural values of a Montessori classroom, is submitted to support administrators, Montessori teachers, parents, and Montessori teacher educators. Its focus is on the way an authentic Montessori community looks, acts, and feels:

How it looks:

- The classroom environment should be an environment designed primarily for students with traditional teacher items kept to a minimum. Large desks, chairs, personal mementos are best kept in an office or other space.
- The environment is clean and esthetically pleasing, free from unnecessary visual distractions and clutter.
- The teachers and children move around the classroom slowly and quietly with a sense of purpose.
- The teachers meet the children at eye level in order to communicate.
- Communication is open and authentic; body language is consistent with verbal messages.
- Teachers are seen as supportive of success and constructive in their assessments.
- Teachers frequently take time to observe the class as a whole and to reflect on their observations in order to personalize the curriculum for individual learners' skills and learning styles and offer the right amount of challenge.
- As a result of their observations, teachers are able to anticipate problems and intervene before disruption occurs. At the same time, teachers do not intervene if students can solve their own problems.
- Students do not spend their time waiting unproductively.

How it Sounds:

- Teachers and students go up to people they are addressing and speak softly in a natural way.
- Teachers and students speak positively and with respect to one another.
- Encouragement is highly valued because it gives positive feedback to progress at any level.
- Choices and alternatives are offered within acceptable limits.
- Problems are solved more by listening rather than by talking. There is a structured method of problem solving.
- Personal silence is valued as a way to concentrate, reflect, and develop the "inner voice" necessary for metacognition. At the same time, dialogue with peers and teachers is a valuable learning tool. Small group and individual lessons are done quietly and at the

student's eye level.

- Interruptions are kept to an absolute minimum.

What it feels like:

- Learning is joyful and self-calming.
- The teachers and students feel socially, emotionally, and physically safe.
- With the introduction of new information, teachers learn to value their own and their students' disequilibria when it precedes valuable growth and learning.
- There is a mutual trust built into the community based on commitment to consistency in the ideas that everyone belongs, no one is excluded.
- The teachers and students assume consistency and dependability are the cornerstones of the trust they feel.
- The teachers and students know that choices are available and that poor choices result in consequences. Choices can be in the form of multiple intelligence, learning style, content, order, and timing. Students are encouraged to make choices that are acceptable to the larger community.

In order for this to happen, administrators must actively seek knowledge of Montessori philosophy and human development. A course through an accredited Montessori teacher education program will enable them to:

1. Set reasonable standards for teachers and students that they can understand and achieve within a reasonable time frame.
2. Use teacher assessment formats that are harmonious with Montessori philosophy.
3. Allow unbroken work periods of two to three hours for completion of tasks.
4. Keep interruptions to the teachers and students to a minimum with announcements only at certain pre-scheduled times of the day.
5. Encourage progress for the student-body as a whole, while avoiding competitions and rewards for the few.
6. Speak naturally but softly when addressing children and teachers in the classroom and hallways.
7. Use positive messages that involve positive choices.
8. Maintain an aesthetic, visually pleasant environment that is maintained daily.
9. Ask questions; listen to replies, encourage participation in problem solving.
10. Learn to trust the teachers and students by considering them as members of the community who will adhere to the larger community standards.
11. Establish a physical, social, and emotionally safe environment in order for academic successes to be realized.

Maria Montessori describes the essence of a healthy school environment as follows:

“What we all desire for ourselves, namely not to be disturbed in our work, not to find hindrances to our efforts, to have good friends ready to help us in times of need, to see them rejoice with us, to be on terms of equality with them, to be able to confide and trust in them--this is what we need for happy companionship. In the same way children are human beings to whom respect is due, superior to us by reason of the greater possibilities of their future. What we desire, they desire also.”