



MONTESSORI SCHOOL
of BOWLING GREEN, OH

Parent/Student Handbook

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HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

Mission Statement

The Montessori School of Bowling Green is a nurturing community that educates the whole child in a Montessori environment, where children develop mutual respect, personal responsibility, and a passion for learning.

School Song

CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE

Words and Music by *Barry DiBiasio* © 1992

Verse One

We learned about saving the whales
And together we know that we won't fail
We learned about recycling
And together we will keep our planet clean

Verse Two

We learned about the planets and the stars
And in our spaceship we really can go far
There's a planet brown, blue and white
The earth is our home and we've got to
Treat her right

Chorus:

Children are the future
Every boy and every girl
We will make a difference someday
We are the future of the world

Bridge:

There's no doubt about it
We're a part of a team
And it's getting better
Now it's clear to me

Sequence:

Verse One, Chorus, Verse Two, Bridge, Chorus

Montessori Method

The Montessori Method is an educational approach for children based on the research and experiences of Italian physician and educator Maria Montessori (1870–1952). It arose in the process of her experimental observation of young children given freedom in an environment, leading her to believe by 1907 that she had discovered "the child's true normal nature." Based on her observations, she created an environment prepared with materials designed for their self-directed learning activity. She also strongly believed that children's brains best develop with hands-on learning manipulatives. Children are introduced to all concepts with concrete, beautiful and exciting materials.

Curriculum and Philosophy

The following are core characteristics of MSBG, an Accredited Montessori School:

Self-directed, inquiry-based learning

The Montessori method respects individual liberty of children to choose their own activities. This freedom allows children to follow their inner guidance for self-directed learning. With each freedom the child has to make a choice, there are also limits to that freedom based on the functionality of the environment. Students in the Early Childhood program choose a variety of activities from the six main content areas: Practical Life, Sensorial, Math, Language, Cultural Sciences and Peace. Elementary students work at their own pace and level in the context of a three-year cycle with a variety of hands-on and inquiry-based lessons, collaborative activities and student-led research.

Individualized education

Montessori realized that children are all different and therefore need the greatest possible liberty for their individuality to grow. This individuality is respected and safeguarded. There are various opportunities for individual, small group and whole group lessons. Children may work on different tasks at the same time or the same task at different times. The child is not held to the pace or interests of the teacher or other children. He competes only with himself. The impulse to learn comes from within the child; consequently, rewards and punishments are unnecessary. Lessons are brief, concise and simple. The teachers do not follow a curriculum that has to be finished by a given point in time. Rather, she takes her cues from the child, providing appropriate challenges when the child indicates he is ready, so that the child meets success with a minimum of frustration.

Low student/teacher ratios with highly trained teachers

In each classroom, we have highly qualified teachers. Most of our current teaching staff certified through the American Montessori Society (720 contact hours and two year program) and have advanced degrees. The turnover rate is extremely below average.

Peace and character education

- *Peace means taking care of ourselves.* At this school, we strive to educate the whole child (mentally, physically, and emotionally) by guiding the children to learn to take care of themselves. This starts by teaching them to independently choose their work and to put it back on the shelf when they are finished; to learn practical skills, such as washing, spooning, sorting, etc. so that the child has the abilities to be successful with life skills. Taking care of themselves develops into time-management and organizational skills as they plan and prepare for assignments and projects. Another important aspect of taking care of themselves is learning to navigate their emotions and learn when it's time to take a peaceful moment away from the group, or how to express themselves in writing or in appropriate speech.
- *Peace means taking care of each other.* At our school, children are taught from day one how to prepare their work for the next child and how to use respectful and calm words to resolve conflicts. Teachers are highly trained in peaceful conflict management and constantly model a calm and loving manner. Students use objects like the peace rose to engage another student in a loving way to resolve the hurt feelings. Older students learn to do peer mediation and work on the lifelong skills of listening, speaking respectfully, and finding a solution through compromise and diplomacy. What incredible skills they will have as adults!
- *Peace means taking care of the earth.* Students develop a sense of wonder for the universe. Students are encouraged to ask big questions about the earth's formation, the enormity of the universe, and the scale of time that life has been on the planet. Students are taught to love and care for our beautiful planet and to appreciate their unique place in space and time. Even in the early childhood classroom, students learn earth science concepts on their birthdays when they hold a model of the earth and orbit around the sun to mark each year of their life.

Vertically-integrated curriculum designed with patented hands-on materials

Dr. Montessori always emphasized that the hand is the chief teacher of the child. In order to learn there must be concentration, and the best way a child can concentrate is by fixing his attention on some task he is performing with his hands. All the equipment in a Montessori classroom allows the child to reinforce his casual impressions by inviting him to use his hands for learning.

Education of whole child

Physical

- Freedom of movement in the classroom – children may work at tables or rugs and freely choose activities from the shelves
- Outdoor play on our beautifully wooded land and developmentally appropriate equipment for all ages
- Activities in the classroom such as songs, dances and exercises that promote healthy movement
- Structured physical education classes that encourage fitness and skill development for our elementary age students

Cognitive

- Hands on materials that actively engage the children in the learning process
- Multi-sensory approach which provides for individual learning styles
- Competencies are encouraged through repetitive, successful experiences
- Concepts and skills are internalized at an individual's pace
- A rich curriculum of math, science, language arts, grammar, geography, history, foreign language, art physical education and music exceeds the standards set by the state of Ohio and American Montessori Society
- Social
- Heterogeneous and multi-aged groupings provide opportunities for peer teaching and natural social development

- Opportunities to socialize with other classroom ages. Example: Book Buddies – a pairing of Upper and Lower Elementary students to enjoy books together
- After school activities such as chess, cross country, scouts, etc. encourage social interactions

Emotional

- Peace education activities that build awareness of self, others and the community
- A school-wide atmosphere of mutual respect and peace

Mixed-aged classrooms

Children learn from one another. This can be seen in family and play situations where children are free to observe and interact in a variety of activities. Young children learn higher-level cognitive and social skills not only through mental development, but also by observing others as models. Multi-age grouping helps children develop a sense of community and supports social development. Older children act as role models and (sometimes) teachers of younger children. This aids in the development of personality, collaboration, and cooperation. Montessori classrooms have used mixed age groupings for over 100 years. At MSBG, the age groupings are as follows: Early Childhood - 3 to 6 years; Lower Elementary - 6 to 9 years; Upper Elementary - 9 to 12 years.

Our Credentials

The first AMS accredited school in Ohio.

Chartered, non public Ohio school

Licensed under Ohio Department of Education

Governed by a Board of Directors

Accredited through National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA)

Benefits

Angeline Stoll Lillard's 2005 book *Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius* (Oxford University Press) presents a recent overview evaluating Montessori versus conventional education in terms of research relevant to their underlying principles. Lillard cites research indicating that Montessori's basic methods are more suited to what psychology research reveals about human development, and argues the need for more research.

A 2006 study published in the journal "Science" concluded that Montessori students (at ages 5 and 12) performed better than control students who had lost a random computerized lottery to attend a Montessori school and instead went to a variety of different conventional schools. This improved performance was achieved in a variety of areas, including not only traditional academic areas such as language and math, but in social skills as well (though by age 12 academic benefits had largely disappeared).

On several dimensions, children at a public inner city Montessori school had superior outcomes relative to a sample of Montessori applicants who, because of a random lottery, attended other schools. By the end of kindergarten, the Montessori children performed better on standardized tests of reading and math, engaged in positive interaction on the playground more, and showed advanced social cognition and executive control more. They also showed more concern for fairness and justice. At the end of elementary school, Montessori children wrote more creative essays with more complex sentence structures, selected more positive responses to social dilemmas, and reported feeling more of a sense of community at their school.

The authors concluded that, "when strictly implemented, Montessori education fosters social and academic skills that are equal or superior to those fostered by a pool of other types of schools." Research by K. Dohrmann and colleagues supplements this by showing superior math and science performance in high school by children who previously attended public Montessori (as compared to high school classmates, over half of whom were at the most selective city public high schools); and two studies by Rathunde and Csikszentmihalyi showing a higher level of interest and motivation while doing school work as well as more positive social relations among Montessori middle-schoolers as opposed to matched controls.

References

Lillard, Angeline: *Montessori: The Science behind the Genius* ISBN 0-19-516868-2

Loeffler, Margaret Howard: *Montessori in Contemporary American Culture* ISBN 0-435-08709-6

Montessori, Maria: *The Discovery of the Child* ISBN 0-345-33656-9

Montessori, Maria: *The Montessori Method* ISBN 0-8052-0922-0

Montessori, Maria: *The Secret of Childhood* ISBN 0-345-30583-3

A Montessori Mother by Dorothy Canfield Fisher

History

Mrs. Marie Pendleton and Mrs. Cheryl Samples founded the Montessori School of Bowling Green in 1980 under the name The Nazarene Montessori School, with half-day programs available for early childhood. Mrs. Samples worked with the school for two years before moving to California in March 1982. Mrs. Pendleton retired from the school as Executive Director in June 2005.

A full day option for kindergarten was added in 1986. The school's name was changed in the spring of 1990, to The Montessori School of Bowling Green when the school moved from its church home into leased space at the Greenwood Center. That fall, the elementary and extended-day programs were opened. The school moved into its new facility at 515 Sand Ridge Rd., during the summer of 1992. A Capital Campaign for Phase 2 concluded with the expansion and remodeling of our facilities during the spring and summer of 2000. Nearly 10 acres were donated to the school in 2003, which has facilitated our Phase 3 addition of additional classrooms to house new upper elementary and music classrooms. The school now has a staff which includes the Executive Director, Director of Education, Director of Development, Finance Coordinator, Office Manager, AMS Certified Teachers, Educational Aides, Extended Care Workers, Physical Education, Art, World Language, Band, and Music Instructors and Speech and Intervention Specialists.

Staff

We have a wonderful record of longevity among the teachers at our school as we have had very little staff turnover through the years. The Montessori certified teaching staff has extensive training. Montessori teachers have participated in a minimum of a full-year of intensive study of Montessori educational philosophy and materials, and a supervised, full-year practicum (student teaching), which is a prerequisite for Montessori teaching certification. Non-Montessori trained teachers have completed graduate degrees in education, or have a bachelor's degree, special subject teachers have specialized training in their subject area(s); and before and after school care staff meet the requirements of the Licensing Agent. Each classroom meets the Ohio Department of Education State Licensing Requirements.

GOVERNING ENTITIES

Accreditation, Charter, License

The Montessori School of Bowling Green serves early childhood through children. It is operated as an independent, nonprofit institution, governed by a Board of Directors comprised of former school parents, current school parents and community members. The student body is drawn from Bowling Green and the surrounding area. The school recruits and admits students of any race, color, or ethnic origin and the student body is representative of the community. The school follows all truth-in-advertising laws.

AMS Accreditation

In April 1999, The Montessori School of BG became the first school in Ohio to be accredited by the American Montessori Society. An Accredited Montessori School has the following characteristics:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ~It is devoted to a mission | ~It is student centered |
| ~It knows itself | ~It plans its future |
| ~It keeps its promises | ~It enjoys the confidence of the professional |
| ~It accepts objective evaluation | community |
| ~It is recognized | ~It creates confidence in families |
| ~It is self-correcting | ~It maintains the responsibilities of accreditation |

Ohio Charter

The Montessori School became chartered by Ohio's State Board of Education as a nonpublic school in July 1991. This does not mean that we are a "Charter School." Instead, it means that our complete courses of study for all nine curriculum areas (Art, Health, Language Arts, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Reading, Science, and Social Studies) meet the requirements, and have been approved by the State of Ohio for grades K-8. These courses of study are revised as needed to remain current. The charter entitles the school to a nominal amount of state funding for the purchase of materials; school age children to free transportation on the city school buses; and the school to participate in various school-related programs in Wood County.

ODE License

The Montessori School of Bowling Green is legally licensed to operate under the Ohio Department of Education. The license and a current inspection report hang outside the school office and the laws and rules are available for your review. The licensing record, including, but not limited to, compliance forms, health, building, and fire department inspections, is available upon request. The school is licensed to serve preschool and to provide extended care to preschool, kindergarten, and school age children. If you have a question or concern that cannot be answered by your child's teacher, or if you would like further information on the licensing and compliance reports for your child's classroom, please contact the Director of Education at 419-352-4203. **To report any concerns, complaints and/or violations contact the Ohio Department of Education at 614-466-0224 or 877-644-6338.

Governing Board

The Montessori School of Bowling Green, Inc. is a non-profit corporation and is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The school's Executive Director, hired by the Board, is an ex-officio member of the Board. The Board meets monthly.

Strategic Planning/Development: Building our Future

The Montessori School of Bowling Green has a limited number of fund raising events each year to supplement tuition income and enrich our educational programs. Parents, faculty, alumni and friends are asked to make a tax-deductible gift to provide for those needs of our program that cannot be met by tuition.

Our goals for the program include: owning our building; feeding our operating budget with investments to help minimize tuition increases; continuously updating our technology; providing scholarships for children who otherwise cannot attend our school; and providing Montessori training and professional development for our staff.

The Annual Campaign was created to find additional sources of income to reach our dreams without sacrificing what we are: a child-centered, family-oriented community, with a diverse socio-economic population of students. The focus of the Annual Campaign is participation. We ask each family to make a pledge, no matter how small. This demonstrates to the businesses we ask for funding that the school's parents, faculty and Board members have given all they can.

EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT

Art

All students who are enrolled in the full day kindergarten or elementary programs receive weekly art instruction. The art education program closely follows Montessori education methods, State of Ohio art requirements and individual classroom curriculum at MSBG. The children are exposed to various artists, movements and media, 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional art creation and all the principals of design and elements of art, while maintaining a fully integrated Montessori classroom.

Foreign Language

All children are provided with weekly foreign language instruction. This instruction is integrated into the Montessori curriculum across all age groups. All students have foreign language study which includes several materials in Spanish that are available on the shelves in each room.

Physical Education

All ages participate in programs designed to develop physical skills and large and small motor control. Early Childhood students spend time daily in large motor activity. Elementary students have physical education with an instructor and participate in units of study involving jogging, hockey, basketball, baseball, soccer, and other games designed to develop physical skills, cooperation and sportsmanship. Students need a pair of athletic shoes for gym.

Music

Early Childhood through 6th year students participate in a music program designed to help children perceive sounds and rhythms, distinguish the structure of the music through listening, composing and performing; produce compositions; move or dance to music; reflect and evaluate performance; and reflect upon music's heritage. Occasionally, students hold recitals at which they play for one another and any parents that are able to attend. Parents are also welcome to attend music classes with their children to enjoy their development .

Band

There is an optional band program for students in grades five and six. Students receive small group lessons on instruments, and as they progress are also involved in ensembles and performances.

Library

The school library is open to both students and parents. All children in Early Childhood need to be supervised by an adult while in the library and/or checking out a book. Once a book has been removed from the shelf, it should be checked out or returned to the cart. Library cards will be kept on file at the Librarian's desk. The same card will serve the student throughout their Montessori School career. Our library houses a large variety of media for student work as well as leisure reading. We also house an ever growing parent library with resources on Montessori philosophy, history and instruction.

Multicultural Education

Multicultural education is a means of helping children understand the world in which they live and the traditions and motivations of cultures other than their own. This understanding is necessary for children to grow into adults who can promote world peace. One important difference among people is in celebrations.

The Montessori School's holiday celebration policy in general is to acknowledge holidays as an opportunity for multicultural education. Children will learn about holidays and find out how they are celebrated in our society. Besides the more traditional holidays, the children will learn about holidays relevant to the cultural diversity present in our school families during any given year.

Teachers educate their students on the various holidays which diverse people in our society celebrate. Children learn which people group(s) celebrates a certain holiday, how old the celebration is and the affirming traditions that have been part of that holiday.

Special Curriculum Programs

The School offers, as part of its curriculum, Wood County programs such as SAPP (Sexual Abuse Prevention Program). Parents may opt out of this program for their child if they wish. The School also uses materials from a conflict resolution curriculum in the interest of promoting "education for peace" and teaching the communication strategies necessary to eliminate undesirable behaviors.

After School Enrichment Programs

Each year a variety of enriching activities are offered after school. Programs such as martial arts, chess and yoga have been offered. Programs and fees are determined at the start of each school year. Cub Scouts and Daisy Troop are excluded from these fees.

Field Trips

A person trained in First Aid will be available on each field trip or special outing. Written, signed permission slips will be obtained before every trip and a first aid box will be available.

Whenever possible, children will be transported by Bowling Green City School buses. It may become necessary to use alternative means of transportation.

Emergency transportation forms and attendance records will accompany students on trips to insure that all children are accounted for at all times. All medication that has been provided by the parents of children with medical plans on file will be taken on trips.

Children will be transported to the source of emergency medical or dental care by an ambulance. Only those children whose parents have signed the emergency transportation authorization form consenting to emergency transportation can be taken to the source of emergency care. Every effort will be made to contact parents immediately if this type of emergency should arise.

Safety Patrol

Fifth and sixth grade students are trained each fall before they begin serving on the safety patrol. They are introduced to all of the students in the building and can be identified by the orange safety patrol belts that were provided by our local AAA office. Safety Patrol students rotate the responsibility of seeing that the children who ride the bus are safely escorted to and from the bus each day.

Outdoor Education Camp

Each year the upper elementary class has a three-day educational experience at Camp Willson, a YMCA Camp, near Bellefontaine, Ohio. Working with the Camp Willson staff, our teachers plan a set of learning experiences appropriate to the season and relating to topics studied in the classroom. This is an exciting experience in learning and living together you won't want your child to miss.

Bowling Green City School buses transport the students and faculty. Two male parents are asked to attend with the group to supplement the female faculty as counselors. A parent information meeting is held prior to the camp trip where parents learn the details of the trip, meet members of the Camp Willson staff and complete all necessary forms. The camp requires a medical form.

ADMISSIONS

Non-Discriminatory Policy: Students and Employees

The Montessori School of Bowling Green, Inc. recruits and admits students of any race, color, or ethnic origin, assures all rights, privileges, programs, and activities and follows all ADA laws. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarships/loans/fee waivers, educational programs and athletics or extra-curricular activities. In addition, the School is not intended to be an alternative to court or administrative agency ordered, or public school district initiated, desegregation. **The Montessori School of Bowling Green, Inc. will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in the hiring of its certified or non-certified personnel.**

Enrollment

A signed enrollment contract and deposit are necessary to enroll your child. The deposit is required before your child's enrollment is guaranteed and is non-refundable. A registration packet will be provided for each student following enrollment.

If a family wishes to hold a spot when a child will not be starting at the beginning of the school year (as in the case of a child turning three or a family moving in from out of town), they may do so by paying the deposit and committing to the full tuition by selecting one of the available payment plans.

Because the school adheres to the Montessori philosophy, which stresses individual responsibility for learning, potential students at any level will be screened for admission on the basis of their ability to make developmentally appropriate choices. The school recognizes that not all children have the self-discipline to make responsible learning and behavior choices.

All students are enrolled for a probationary period each year ending September 30. During the probationary period, teachers will evaluate the child's academic and social adjustment to the program. The child's behavior in relation to teachers and peers in the classroom setting will also be taken into account. Students enrolling after the start of the school year will have an approximate six week probationary period with the end date determined based on the child's start date.

Since every child is an individual, decisions concerning the child's adjustment to the school's classroom setting will be made on a case-by-case basis using the following guidelines:

Teachers will consider the child's ability to:

- ~work in, and benefit from a Montessori program;
- ~share the attention of teachers with other students;
- ~demonstrate respect for him/herself, other students, teachers, school property, and the property of others;
- ~work independently for developmentally appropriate periods of time;
- ~accept and follow classroom rules;
- ~demonstrate developmentally appropriate self-control in frustrating situations.

If, during the probationary period, either the school staff or the child's family feels that this is not an appropriate educational option for the child, the child's enrollment will be discontinued and the family will be responsible for 20% of the total tuition. The deposit is not refundable

Student Age

Children age three through six are admitted to the early childhood classes. Children must be three on or before the first day of the school year to be considered three year olds. Children who are three will be accepted into the school over the course of the fall and winter if space becomes available.

All children must be toilet trained. This means the child is ready to use a regular toilet or the smaller one in our bathrooms. We do not use potty chairs at school. A child who has more than one accident at school per week is not considered toilet trained. It is not appropriate for a toilet-trained child to wear "pull-up" style diapers to school.

The staff/child ratio for the early childhood classrooms does not exceed 1:12. The teachers in your child's classroom are team teaching and your child will interact with all staff in the classroom. The school attempts to maintain a staff/child ratio of approximately 1:12 for the elementary classrooms.

Early Childhood Orientation

The first week of school is orientation week for all early childhood children. Children are scheduled to come in small groups for shorter periods of time in order to help them adapt to the classroom. This orientation period is very important to your child's adjustment. This is true for new and returning children alike. Please schedule your summer vacation so that your child will be present during orientation week.

An orientation meeting for all parents whose children are enrolled in a new classroom is scheduled prior to the beginning of school. All new families are required to attend. Returning families are highly encouraged to attend each year.

Custody

If there has been a divorce or legal separation, a copy of the agreement containing custody information and the *signature of the judge* must be on file in the school office. Without such documentation, children will be released to either parent.

Rosters

Rosters of names, telephone numbers, addresses, and email addresses of parents, custodians, or guardians of children attending the school are available to all families. Rosters shall not include the name, telephone number or addresses of any parent, custodian, or guardian who requests this. Dissemination of the roster is for the sole information of the parents and is not intended for other commercial or recruitment purposes.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Tuition (FACTS)

For ease of tuition collection, the Montessori School of Bowling Green utilizes services provided by the FACTS (Fast Automated Cash Transfer System) Company. Families enroll online via a link provided on the MSBG website, www.montessorischoolbg.com, and are able to choose a method of payment and a payment timeline from several school-determined choices. Once a FACTS account is set up, parents can view payment history and balance at <https://online.factsmgt.com>. More information on this service can be found in your child's enrollment packet.

Scholarships

Philosophy:

Scholarships will be provided to assist families who are committed to the Montessori principles, and who have financial constraints to attend the Montessori School of Bowling Green.

Principles:

1. Scholarship money will be made available to families based on economic need.
2. Scholarships are awarded with emphasis on assisting current families, and then new families who have a strong commitment to the Montessori philosophy.
3. The School reserves the right to prioritize the awarding of scholarships based on the current or projected needs of the Montessori School of Bowling Green.
4. The School believes that parents must commit financially to their children's education; therefore, full scholarships will not be made available.

Scholarship applications are available on line to all families of current and prospective students at the following websites:

- For the Northwest Ohio Scholarship, information and applications can be found at www.nwosf.org
- For MSBG administered scholarships, applications can be found at www.factstuitionaid.com/facts/gaapp

Withdrawal from School

If a child is to be withdrawn from school written notice is required. If notice of withdrawal is received by June 30, tuition will be fully refunded (the deposit is non-refundable); if notice of withdrawal is received between July 1 and October 31 families will be obligated to pay 50% of the total tuition; between November 1 and December 31 families will be obligated to pay 75% of the total tuition and after January 1 families will be obligated to pay 100% of their child's tuition.

Tax Deductions

The Montessori School of Bowling Green is incorporated as a nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax deductible. Gifts of cash, appreciated securities, real estate or non-cash gifts will be accepted and acknowledged with a tax receipt. Bequests can be made by adding a simple codicil to your will. For more information about contribution opportunities contact the school.

Tuition is not tax deductible, but may qualify for the childcare tax credit. Please consult with your accountant if you have questions concerning eligibility for deductions and tax credits. The school's tax ID number needed for the childcare tax credit is 34-1314846. If you require a childcare tax letter, please submit your request in writing to the Finance Coordinator approximately one week in advance.

PARENT/STUDENT INFORMATION

School Hours

Classrooms open at 8:30 a.m. and morning classes *begin* at 8:40 a.m. Children who arrive after 8:40 a.m. are considered tardy. Early Childhood families please be advised that children arriving after demonstration time has begun will be asked to enter the classroom quietly so as to cause the least disruption.

- Half-day morning class children may be picked up between 11:05 and 11:15 a.m.
- Classrooms open for the half-day afternoon classes at 12:30 p.m. and class begins at 12:40 p.m.
- Students may be picked up between 3:05 and 3:15 p.m.

Before school care (7:30-8:30 a.m.) and after school care (3:15 p.m.-5:30 p.m.) classes are available to Montessori school families who need these programs. Students not enrolled in before and/or after care should be dropped off after 8:30 am and picked up before 3:15 pm. Early childhood morning students who are picked up past 11:15 am will be charged \$10.00 per occurrence. Early childhood afternoon students and all full day students picked up after 3:15pm will be sent to extended care and will be charged the drop in rate of \$15.00.

Student Attendance

The responsibility for attendance of the students of the Montessori School of Bowling Green is placed upon the parents or guardians. School is in session a minimum of 178 days and students are expected to attend school on all days, which are not altered by emergency. Doctor and dental appointments should be made during non-school hours whenever possible. Parents should notify the school each day a child is absent. A member of the office staff will call the home of students who are not in attendance if the school has not had a call by 11:00 a.m.

To gain the most from a year of school, regular attendance is of extreme importance. When an elementary child is absent for a long period of time due to extended illness, parents are asked to bring a medical excuse from their doctor and should ask for assignments from their child's teachers so the work may be done at home, if possible.

The following are considered legitimate excuses for being absent or tardy:

- ~illness
- ~weather emergency
- ~court appearance
- ~medical exam
- ~death in the family

Student Records

Under federal law and School policy, parents have a right to examine a child's record, to challenge the content of those records before a disinterested party and to insert into the record an explanation of any disputed information. Student records will not be released until all accounts are paid in full. Student records do not include financial information.

Observation

We encourage parents to spend time with their children at school. We ask that observation of early childhood students take place during the morning or later in the afternoon session through the observation window in the nap room until after the first of October. After that time there are two options available. You may schedule a time to observe your child in the classroom by speaking to one of the teachers. Once all of the children have had a chance to adjust, they sometimes enjoy having a parent with them in the classroom. The other option is to view your child's class through the observation window

If you would like to observe in one of the elementary classrooms, please check with the teachers. Many parents like to stay in the morning and see their children start their work.

Kindergarten and third grade children are invited to shadow a lower elementary or upper elementary student respectively, for a morning in the early spring. This provides the children with the opportunity to experience the classroom they will be attending in the fall.

Parent Meetings/Participation

Parent meetings are scheduled several times during the school year. There is a parent orientation meeting around the start of the school year in the Fall. In addition, the Bowling Green Montessori Parent Teacher Organization plans monthly meetings, and various social and fundraising events.

Parents are also invited to help out with special projects at the school. Parents are invited to share special talents during group meeting time, and to share their child's birthday celebration at school. Parents are asked to help supervise field trips and some parents are on the substitute teacher list. Parents also are represented on the Board of Directors. If you have a talent or skill you would like to share, please let the Administrative Team know.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice a year, in the fall and the early spring. (Teachers and/or parents may schedule additional conferences as needed). A Performance Objective Packet is initiated each fall for all new early childhood students and then kept up-to-date during your child's years with that program. It will be yours to keep at the end of your child's kindergarten year. These records give specific information concerning your child's progress through each curriculum area.

Elementary students have new conference forms each year. A copy will be available for parents at conferences and at the end of the year.

Nap Program

Early Childhood children attending school for more than five hours a day may participate in the nap program. Each child will have a cot individually assigned and will have a rest period. Each child who naps should keep a lightweight blanket and a small pillow (if desired) at school. Children are welcome to bring a small soft toy from home. All bedding will be sent home to be washed weekly.

Children who do not normally fall asleep will join the afternoon session after a short rest period. Children who fall asleep will be allowed to awaken naturally and rejoin the other children as they become ready.

Sack Lunch Policy

All full day students need to bring a sack lunch to school. Parents of full day early childhood students must send a lunch that constitutes 1/3 RDA (required daily allotment) and includes at least one serving of dairy or dairy alternative, one serving of meat or meat alternative, two servings of vegetables and/or fruits (one serving of each is recommended) and one serving of bread or grains. Only 100% juice drinks meet the requirement for a fruit or vegetable. Children who bring their lunches should have a small frozen ice pack to store in their lunch box.

Microwave ovens are available to heat up lunch foods. However, because lunchtime is limited please do not send anything that requires more than one minute to heat. Frozen foods must be thawed and ready to heat in 60 seconds as well. Leftovers from dinner often make wonderful lunches as an alternative to sandwiches.

Snack

Early Childhood students are asked to bring their own snacks to school. Snack foods from two of the four basic food groups (milk, meat, breads, fruit or vegetable) need to be included for each snack. If your student is enrolled in after school care, a second snack may be needed.

Snack programs for the elementary are children may vary between classrooms. Please see your child's teacher if you have any questions.

Birthdays

On your child's birthday (or 1/2 birthday if it falls during the summer), there will be a special celebration during the group meeting time. Please be sure to schedule your child's celebration with the classroom teachers.

In the early childhood classrooms, the children are taught that the globe represents the earth we live on and a light represents the sun, which is made of burning gases. The birthday child is carefully supervised as he/she carries the globe around a light source as many times as he/she has ridden the earth around the sun. After the group sings "Happy Birthday" the child blows out the "light". The parents or guardians are asked to bring in a few snapshots of their child to pass around. A special snack (nutritious please!) can be brought to be shared with the class.

Lower elementary students usually make a timeline of their life from their snapshots. This gives other children a sense of the child's "history" since birth. They like having special food to share as well. Older students simply enjoy bringing a special food for snack or lunch. Nutritious snacks are preferred if possible. Parents are welcome to be here for their child's celebration.

Treat bags are not appropriate for school birthday celebrations, and party invitations may be distributed at school only when **every** child in the class receives one. All other invitations must be mailed. Thank you for your consideration of every child's feelings

Clothing

In order to provide a warm comfortable learning environment, each student is asked to bring a pair of rubber-soled slippers or lightweight canvas shoes to be kept and worn at school. Elementary students should also wear comfortable indoor shoes and will change if necessary for outdoor activities.

At least one complete change of clothing should be brought for each child to be used if necessary. These will be placed in a labeled box provided by the School. This is optional for lower elementary children and unnecessary for Upper Elementary students.

Your child will need to wear shoes or boots. Please be sure that your child is adequately dressed to stay warm, comfortable, and dry while playing outside. Children without appropriate clothing will be required to stay inside. All personal belongings brought to the school must be clearly labeled with your child's name.

Children should be brought to school comfortably dressed so that they can work and play without worrying about becoming "dirty" or "messy." Student clothing must not be disruptive to the educational process. Therefore:

1. All clothing should fit with some looseness but may not be more than one size too large.
2. Skirts must extend below fingertip length when arms are hanging loosely to the sides.
3. Shirts/dresses with spaghetti straps must cover the shoulders and the midriff, while arms are either extended straight up over the head, or straight down at the sides.
4. Slacks/lower garments must be worn at waist level; undergarments may not be exposed.
5. Clothing must be free from offensive logos and styles, including clothing that promotes or contains hate, violence, profanity, vulgar or negative language; advertises or promotes in any way the use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs; or contain sexually explicit language and/or pictures.
6. Each year, clothing styles take on a new meaning in the popular culture. Any clothing that carries messages that encourage illegal, immoral and/or lethal behavior, such as death and suicide, are prohibited.
7. Elementary students are not permitted to wear makeup.

Bus Procedures

Children who are school age (5 by Sept. 30th of the current school year) are entitled to transportation. Please contact your respective school's bus garage BEFORE the beginning of school to sign your child up for bus transportation.

Children who ride buses are required to follow the bus rules and regulations for student conduct. If your child is scheduled to ride a bus home, that will be the default policy. *If your child will be picked up after school please send a note or call or your child will be sent home on the bus.*

If you live outside the Bowling Green city school district, your local school system is required to provide you with transportation or monetary reimbursement. If your student is riding a school bus from a district other than Bowling Green City Schools, we need you to provide the teacher and the office with a copy of that district's school calendar. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the school office informed when their school district will not be running busses and what alternate arrangements they have made for their children. This includes days when buses may be running late (delays) or early (early dismissal/closures). Contact your local superintendent's office for further information on the policies of your district.

Walkers, Bikers, etc.

Elementary children who walk, ride a bicycle, roller blade, etc. to school and are unaccompanied by a parent must have a note of permission sent to the school once per school year. For the safety of all, walkers and riders must follow the designated walking path along the outside of the parking lot. Permission slips are available in the office.

Behavior Management/Discipline

Students are expected to:

- ~come to school ready to work and learn;
- ~respect the rights of other children;
- ~enjoy themselves while in school;
- ~respect the property of others and of the school;
- ~resolve any problems among themselves without getting hurt or hurting others.

The teaching staff will continually teach, encourage, and model problem-solving behavior for children. Childcare and discipline are handled with patience, kindness, understanding and love. Most children have innate self-discipline and are able to choose activities that will be a challenge. For example, if they choose work that is too easy or too difficult, they often choose different work spontaneously. The staff uses positive methods to encourage self-control, self-confidence and self-discipline. Children are redirected with positive suggestions for what to do. Children learn which activities will challenge them and their interest in their work eliminates the need for most external discipline. We encourage children to use self-discipline by allowing them to experience the natural and/or logical consequences of their own behavior when appropriate.

The staff is prohibited from hitting, punching, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting any form of corporal punishment. No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child. No child will ever be confined in an enclosed area as a form of punishment, nor be deprived of meals, snacks, rest or necessary toilet use.

The staff is prohibited from using mental or emotional forms of punishment such as shaming, humiliating, frightening a child, or subjecting a child to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks or other verbal abuse.

Reasonable discipline or restraint (i.e. holding a child on a lap) that is necessary to prevent a child from harming him/herself or other children will be used. No child will be disciplined by another child. No child will be disciplined for failure to eat, sleep, or for toileting accidents.

Parents' requests and suggestions in dealing with their child(ren) are respected by school staff to maintain continuity between the home and school.

Behaviors that are subject to consequences include (but are not limited to) the following: interrupting a lesson or demonstration; distracting another student; invading another's privacy; using inappropriate language; abusing property; failure to complete personal work responsibilities; destruction of property; physically striking others or biting; throwing objects; verbal abuse or threats directed toward an individual; and/or frightening other students.

Wherever possible, a natural or logical consequence for behavior will be used. In cases where natural consequences are not effective or the concern appears behavioral or medical, intervention will be determined by the nature of the behavior. This may include (but is not limited to) the following: a teacher redirecting the student's activities; the student being asked to choose another spot on the line or another place to work; the student being asked to leave the

circle and sit in a chair; the student being isolated from the group until they can gain control; the student being removed from the classroom; a teacher contacting the student's parent/guardian; teachers and parents/guardians meet in a conference and come up with an action plan; the student being sent home; the school may request parental permission to bring in a consultant psychologist or other appropriate professional to observe the child and discuss possible interventions with staff and parents; and/or the school will suggest that parents/guardians seek an assessment with recommendations of possible places where such an assessment might be obtained.

SCHOOL SAFETY

School Building Safety

It is school policy to keep the building locked at all times. If you are new to the school, you will need a FOB to enter the building to drop off and pick up your child. Our doors are kept locked to protect the children. If you forget your FOB, we have a doorbell and we can let you in by remote access, however, please show consideration for the office staff by using your FOB whenever possible.

The FOBs are assigned individually and you may purchase as many as you need for your family, including elementary and older students who are dropped off at the sidewalk. Babysitters or grandparents picking up your child will also need a fob.

Parents are permitted unlimited access to the school during its hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the school, or evaluating the program. Please notify the Administration of your presence in the building by stopping in to the front office upon your arrival to receive a parent name tag.

All parents: during the drop off and pick up times when the front door is busy, please be sure that anyone you are allowing in the building belongs here. You are always welcome to escort a visitor to the office if you are unsure. Our goal is to keep all of the children safe.

Emergency Procedures

1. Each staff person is familiar with the evacuation routes posted at the doorways of each room.
2. Fire drills are conducted so that the staff and children are familiar with the procedure.
The fire alarm is a loud pulsating tone and is used only for evacuation of the area.
3. In the event of a tornado warning, students and staff go into the nap room, a lower elementary coatroom, or a locker room and position themselves properly. Faculty are called over the classroom phone loudspeakers when a tornado drill occurs.
4. In the unlikely event of a full school evacuation, the school will contact the local Red Cross for assistance in housing students until parents can be contacted.
5. The school also conducts a school crisis management drill during the school year.

Safety/Site Risks and Hazards

The Montessori School of BG has a plan for dealing with the following site risks:

- ~electrical outlets;
- ~playground equipment, basketball hoop poles, parking lot, Slippery Elm Trail;
- ~hazardous cleaning materials and equipment;
- ~mowing, other grounds care, bug spraying;
- ~slippery floors, driveways and sidewalks when rain, snow or ice are present;
- ~medications;
- ~microwaves.

These procedures are available in the Office and can provide parents with more complete information if they desire. As per licensing regulations, the following rules are in effect:

1. Upon arrival at school, parents are to bring their early childhood children into the building and make sure a staff member knows they are present before leaving.
2. Children will be dismissed into the care of their parent/guardian or designee at the end of each session from either the classroom or the playground. A child cannot be released into the care of anyone else without authorization from a parent/guardian. Each classroom has a written list on file of all persons authorized to pick up your child. Persons picking up children will sign a form when they pick up the child.

3. If, in the opinion of school personnel, releasing a child is deemed seriously dangerous to the child's well being (i.e. an inebriated parent picking a child up by car), said school representative will use his/her own discretion to withhold the child from anyone (family members included) until such time as a third party can be contacted for assistance. All due diligence shall be exercised in obtaining intervention/assistance as quickly as possible.
4. **Early Childhood children may *never* cross the parking lot without being accompanied by an adult.** All adults are expected to follow this rule. Walkers should use the sidewalk on the East side of the parking lot. Elementary children who walk or ride a bike will have a note granting permission and signed by the parents on file in the child's folder.
5. No child shall ever be left unsupervised. Also, **do not leave children unattended in your car and do not leave your car running without you in it.**
6. Scissors, screwdrivers and pencils must be handled with care. They must be carried with the hand wrapped around the pointed end.
7. All materials must be kept out of the mouth.
8. Only those electrical machines that are a part of the learning environment may be handled by the students. Wall plugs and electrical cords are not to be touched by early childhood children. School age students may use electrical outlets with supervision.
9. Matches are not used by children at any time.
10. Teachers have immediate access to a phone in their classroom, should the need arise.
11. Monthly Fire Drills will be held. Tornado drills will be held in October, November, March, April and May. School crisis management drills are held annually.
12. A Fire Emergency and Weather Alert Plan is posted in each classroom.
13. In the event a child is hurt at school or in the unlikely event an accident necessitates the emergency transportation of a child, a report will be completed.
14. A childcare staff member shall immediately notify the local public children's services agency when the staff member suspects that a child has been abused or neglected.
15. Use of spray aerosols is prohibited when children are in attendance at the School.
16. As a universal infection prevention measure, the state requires all childcare workers to wear latex gloves anytime they come into contact with bodily fluids.
17. A blood borne pathogens exposure control plan is in place for the protection of all employees.
18. Trained 5th and 6th graders will rotate taking responsibility for seeing that younger children who are bussed are safely escorted from the bus to the school and from the school to the bus in the morning, at the noon hour and after school.

Sexual Harassment

The Board of Directors supports the principle of equal opportunity employment and equal educational opportunities. All persons associated with this school, including, but not limited to the Board of Directors, the administration, the faculty, and the students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community will be in violation of this policy.

The Board of Directors has developed complaint procedures that will be available to victims. The Board has also identified disciplinary penalties, which could be imposed on the offenders. Penalties could range from verbal or written reprimand to termination of employment or expulsion from school.

Definition of Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment or educational development;
2. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or educational decisions affecting such individual; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

All individuals should be aware that the privacy of the charging party and privacy of the person accused of sexual harassment would be strictly protected. There will be no retaliation on the part of anyone involved in the matter. This does not apply to the disciplinary matter if the accused is found guilty of sexual harassment.

Procedure

1. Any member of the school community who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment will report the incident(s) to the Executive Director, or Board President if the Director is unavailable or one of the parties.
2. The Executive Director/Board President will attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:
 - A. The Director/Board President will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the alleged facts.
 - B. The Director/Board President will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain his or her response to the complaint.
 - C. The Director/Board President will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary to gather facts.
 - D. On the basis of the Director/Board President's perception of the problem, the Director/Board President may:
 - 1) Attempt to resolve the matter informally through conciliation or
 - 2) Take disciplinary action as warranted, and notify the parties by certified mail of the official action relative to the complaint.
 - 3) After reviewing the record, report the incident to the Board of Directors.

All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential.

Weather Guidelines

Outdoor play is essential to children's health and well being. Children need to run, climb, jump and play outdoors. The time children spend outdoors each day is just as important to their learning as the time they spend in their classrooms. For teachers, the outdoors offers many ways to enrich the curriculum and support children's learning and development. **Any child well enough to attend school will be considered well enough to participate in outdoor play and/or activities.**

It is our goal to take children outside each day, with the exception of rainy days. We utilize weather guidelines to ensure that we have limited outdoor play during extreme weather. Flexibility in the schedule also allows us to extend our outdoor play on fair weather days.

The following guidelines have been established for healthy outdoor play:

Cold Weather:

30-50 degrees Fahrenheit	Regularly scheduled outdoor play times are followed
15-30 degrees Fahrenheit	15 to 20 minutes maximum
15 degrees Fahrenheit or below	No outdoor play time

Teachers will check the current temperature for Bowling Green, Ohio at <http://abclocal.go.com/wtvg/areaweather?cityId=43402> prior to outdoor play. Teachers will exercise discretion regarding severe wind chill. We ask that children have winter coats, scarves, hats and gloves each day during the winter season. We will put snow clothes on children when snow is on the ground. Therefore, we request that all children have snow clothes (snow pants, boots, etc.) with them as the weather dictates.

Hot Weather

In temperatures of 96 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit, outdoor activities will be limited to 15 minutes at a time. The total amount of outdoor time for the day will not exceed one hour. Cold water will be available.

Snow, Ice and Fog Days

Occasionally, conditions warrant the closing of school. If the local school district of residence is delayed or closed because of weather and our school is open, there will be no bus service for your child(ren). The school may call a two hour delay for road conditions, which would cancel before school care and AM early childhood classes.

Closings and delays will be announced as early as possible on a variety of stations and channels. We will also send an email out to our school community indicating the delay or closing as well as posting it on our website.

Parents retain the final legal responsibility for their children's safe transportation to and from the school. There will be no penalty for students unable to attend due to inclement weather

MEDICAL INFORMATION

General Medical Information

Each early childhood student (up to, but not including Kindergarteners) must be examined by a licensed physician before the first day of school and annually thereafter. The physician certifying that the child is free from communicable disease must sign the provided medical form. The medical form must also include a record of all immunizations required by statute for admission to school. A separate medical form is also required for upper elementary students who attend outdoor education camp.

Faculty members have been trained by the American Red Cross in First Aid and Common Childhood Illnesses and can administer first aid if immediate medical assistance is needed. Superficial cuts and bruises, which can be safely cared for, will be reported to the parents of the child at the end of the day's session. No medications are administered unless the school has written permission signed and dated by a licensed physician, and prescribed for a specific child. Sun block and insect repellents in lotion form, as well as nonprescription medications can only be given with signed permission from parents and/or guardians. All employees shall wash their hands with soap and running water upon arrival at work, after assisting a child with toileting, using or cleaning the bathroom, before preparing or eating food, or before feeding any child. Disposable towels are available.

A child is considered by law to be ill if he/she has any of the following symptoms:

- ~a temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit when in combination with any other sign or symptom of illness; Temperature shall be taken by the auxiliary method with a digital thermometer.
- ~diarrhea (more than three abnormally loose stools within a 24 hour period);
- ~severe coughing (child is red or blue in the face and/or whooping);
- ~difficult or rapid breathing;
- ~yellowish skin or eyes;
- ~redness of the eye, obvious discharge, matted lashes, burning, itching;
- ~untreated, infected skin patches or unusual spots or rashes;
- ~unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool;
- ~stiff neck with elevated temperature;
- ~vomiting more than once or when accompanied by any other signs/symptoms;
- ~evidence of lice (defined as the lice themselves and/or nits 1 1/2 inches or closer to the scalp), scabies, or other parasitic infestation.

If your child has any of these symptoms, you must keep him/her away from school. If the faculty, either upon the child's arrival or during the session, discovers any of these symptoms the child will be sent home as promptly as possible. An ill child will be isolated away from the other children, under office supervision, provided a cot and made comfortable while awaiting a parent or other authorized person to pick him/her up. No child shall ever be left unsupervised.

If your child has had any of the symptoms listed above, you must keep him/her home from school until the symptoms are gone and until *at least 24 hours after the child's temperature has returned to normal*. If your child has had a rash,

please keep him/her home from school until every blemish is dry, or bring a signed, dated note from a licensed physician stating that the rash is not contagious.

A mildly ill child is a child who has minor common cold symptoms, but none of the symptoms listed above. This child will be allowed to remain with the group unless any of the above symptoms begin. However, please do not send your child to school feeling unwell. If the teachers determine that your child is too ill to function in the classroom, he/she will be sent home. Learning is hard work and nearly impossible when students are feeling unwell.

Copies of the Dental First Aid chart are posted in each classroom. The school staff is required to follow the guidelines of these publications. If your child is exposed to a communicable disease while at school, you will be notified promptly in a newsletter or in a note posted on the classroom door.

Other Medical Issues

Because our school does not provide medical/nursing services, it is the responsibility of the school parent to ask their physician to provide annual vision and hearing screening, as well as to seek any necessary follow up care.

Our school enrolls students with life-threatening allergies to peanuts and other tree nuts. Therefore, our school does not allow nuts or any products containing nuts in the building. Thank you for understanding what a serious health issue this is for some children.

HIV/AIDS

The Board recognizes that the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and the condition of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) which is caused by the HIV infection, are significant medical, legal, educational and social issues. The Board desires to protect the rights of all students and employees. The school has adopted a policy regarding personnel records, which is available in the office, and can provide employees or former employees with more complete information if they desire.

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