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2018-2019 PARENT HANDBOOK

MSW: Helpful Contacts.....MC=Montessori Compass

Administrative Assistant

Kim Jersild
 410.848.6283 EXT 100
 MC: JERSILD, KIM (ADMINISTRATOR)
 EMAIL TO: KJERSILD@THEMSW.ORG

Admissions

Suzanne Radcliffe, Registrar
 410.848.6283 EXT 104
 MC: RADCLIFFE, SUZANNE (ADMINISTRATOR)
 EMAIL TO: SRADCLIFFE@THEMSW.ORG

After School Care (3:30 – 6:00 PM)

Wanda Weller, Senior Staff
 410.848.6283 EXT 120
 MC: WELLER, WANDA (TEACHER)
 EMAIL TO: WWELLER@THEMSW.ORG

Art Instruction

Mary Mark Munday
 MC: MUNDAY, MARY MARK (TEACHER)
 EMAIL TO: MMUNDAY@THEMSW.ORG

Bangerd, Chris

Bookkeeper; Office of Finance
 410.848.6283 EXT 103
 MC: BANGERD, CHRIS (ADMINSTRATOR)
 EMAIL TO: CBANGERD@THEMSW.ORG

Before School Care (7:00 – 8:30 AM)

James Wright, Senior Staff
 410.848.6283
 MC: WILLIAMS, LYNN (TEACHER)
 EMAIL TO: JWRIGHT@THEMSW.ORG

Board of Trustees

MSW Board of Trustees
 EMAIL TO: OFFICE@THEMSW.ORG

Bookkeeper

Chris Bangerd
 410.848.6283 EXT 103
 MC: BANGERD, CHRIS (ADMINISTRATOR)
 EMAIL TO: CBANGERD@THEMSW.ORG

Campbell, Kathy

After School Care Aide
 410.848.6283 EXT 120 (3:30 -- 6 PM)
 MC: CAMPBELL, KATHY (TEACHER)
 EMAIL TO: KCAMPBELL@THEMSW.ORG

Carroll, Jennifer

Primary Guide
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Daisy/Brownie Troop

MSW Daisy/Brownie Troop #1698
troopleaders@mswgirlscouts.com
 Website: www.mswgirlscouts.com

Davis, Stephanie

Middle School Guide
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DiLeonardi, Frank

Physical Education
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Level5soccer@gmail.com
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Engagement Director

Stephanie Halley
 410.848.6283 EXT 102
 MC: HALLEY, STEPHANIE (ADMINISTRATOR)
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Environmental Educator

Misner, Stefanie
 MC: MISNER, STEFANIE (TEACHER)
 EMAIL TO: SMISNER@THEMSW.ORG

Events & Logistics Coordinator

Shannin Sheasby
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 EMAIL TO: SSHEASBY@THEMSW.ORG

FAX

MSW Fax Line
 410.848.3217

Felker, Linda

Lower Elementary Guide
 MC: FELKER, LINDA (TEACHER)
 EMAIL TO: LFELKER@THEMSW.ORG

Finance

Chris Bangerd, Bookkeeper
 410.848.6283 EXT 103
 MC: BANGERD, CHRIS (ADMINISTRATOR)
 EMAIL TO: CBANGERD@THEMSW.ORG

Geier, Brady

Lower Elementary Aide
 MC: GEIER, BRADY (TEACHER)
 EMAIL TO: BGEIER@THEMSW.ORG

Geiman, Stevie

Beginnings Aide
After School Care Aide
 MC: GEIMAN, STEVIE
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Girl Scout Troop

MSW Daisy/Brownie Troop #1698
troopleaders@mswgirlscouts.com
 Website: www.mswgirlscouts.com

Halley, Stephanie

Engagement Director
Choral Music Director
410.848.6283 EXT 102
MC: HALLEY, STEPHANIE (ADMINISTRATOR)
EMAIL TO: SHALLEY@THEMSW.ORG

Head of School

Jodi Lupco
410.848.6283 EXT 101
MC: LUPCO, JODI (ADMINISTRATOR)
EMAIL TO: JLUPCO@THEMSW.ORG

Instrumental Music Instruction

Niles, Mindy
MC: NILES, MINDY (TEACHER)

Jersild, Kim

Administrative Assistant
410.848.6283 EXT 100
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EMAIL TO: KJERSILD@THEMSW.ORG
EMAIL TO: OFFICE@THEMSW.ORG

Johnson, Taylor

Visiting Nurse
nurse@TheMSW.org

Language Resource Specialist

Terri Miller
MC: MILLER, TERRI (ADMINISTRATOR)
EMAIL TO: TMILLER@THEMSW.ORG

Lupco, Jodi

Head of School
410.848.6283 EXT 101
MC: LUPCO, JODI (ADMINISTRATOR)
EMAIL TO: JLUPCO@THEMSW.ORG

Malcolm, Gretchen

Upper Elementary Guide
MC: MALCOLM, GRETCHEN (TEACHER)
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Middle School Classroom

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Miller, Terri

Language Resource Specialist
MC: MILLER, TERRI (TEACHER)
EMAIL TO: TMILLER@THEMSW.ORG

Misner, Stefanie

Environmental Educator
MC: MISNER, STEFANIE (TEACHER)
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Music Instruction

Mindy Niles
Instrumental music
MC: NILES, MINDY (TEACHER)

Stephanie Halley

Choral Music Director
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EMAIL TO: SHALLEY@THEMSW.ORG

Munday, Mary Mark

Art Instruction
MC: MUNDAY, MARY MARK (TEACHER)
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Myers, Ashley

Primary Aide (Mrs. Strine's class)
MC: MYERS, ASHLEY (TEACHER)
EMAIL TO: AMYERS@THEMSW.ORG

Neiko, Maryna

Upper Elementary Intern
MC: NEIKO, MARYNA (TEACHER)
EMAIL TO: MNEIKO@THEMSW.ORG

Niles, Mindy

Instrumental Music Instruction
MC: NILES, MINDY (TEACHER)

Nurse

Visiting Nurse
Taylor Johnson, RN
nurse@TheMSW.org

Office

MSW Administrative Offices
410.848.6283 EXT 100
410.848.3217 (FAX)
EMAIL TO: OFFICE@THEMSW.ORG
MC: JERSILD, KIM (ADMINISTRATOR)

Parent Organization

MSW Parent Organization
MSWParentOrg@gmail.com

Parent Volunteer Commitment (PVC)

PVC Tracking Questions
Chris Bangerd, Bookkeeper
410.848.6283 EXT 103
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Kim Jersild, Administrative Assistant
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Physical Education

Frank DiLeonardi
Level5soccer@gmail.com
443.952.0861
MC: DILEONARDI, FRANK (TEACHER)

Quinn, Tres

Lower Elementary Guide
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Radcliffe, Suzanne

Registrar; Office of Admissions
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Registrar

Suzanne Radcliffe, Office of Admissions
410.848.6283 EXT 104
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EMAIL TO: SRADCLIFFE@THEMSW.ORG

Secretary

Kim Jersild, Administrative Assistant
410.848.6283 EXT 100
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Sheasby, Shannin

Events & Logistics Coordinator
Spanish instruction
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South Pavilion

UTZ Field House addition
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Spanish Instruction

Shannin Sheasby
MC: SHEASBY, SHANNIN (ADMINISTRATOR)
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Strine, Dawn

Primary Guide
MC: STRINE, DAWN (TEACHER)
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Weller, Wanda

After School Care Senior Staff
410.848.6283 EXT 120 (3:30 -- 6 PM)
MC: WELLER, WANDA (ADMINISTRATOR)
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Welsh-Baer, Lauren

Lower Elementary Guide
MC: WELSH-BAER, LAUREN (TEACHER)
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Woolford, Jennifer

Primary Aide (Mrs. Carroll's class)
MC: WOOLFORD, JENNIFER (TEACHER)
EMAIL TO: JWOOLFORD@THEMSW.ORG

Wright, James

Beginnings Guide
Before School Care Senior Staff
MC: WRIGHT, JAMES (TEACHER)
EMAIL TO: JWRIGHT@THEMSW.ORG

Should you wish to reach any staff member not listed above, please contact the MSW office at 410.848.6283 or by email to office@TheMSW.org.

After 3:30 PM on school days, messages may be left on the school's answering machine.

PLEASE REFER TO THE PARENT DIRECTORY LOCATED BEHIND THE SECURE PARENT PAGE ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE TO FIND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MSW FAMILIES

Introduction

This handbook is designed as a reference to the Montessori School of Westminster, Inc.'s policies and procedures. Complete copies of the Montessori School of Westminster, Inc.'s bylaws are available upon request made to the Head of School.

The Montessori School of Westminster, Inc., a non-profit organization formed in 1973, opened the Montessori School of Westminster in September, 1974. **The school is governed by a Board of Trustees who are not compensated for board services.**

The Montessori School of Westminster, Inc. is an accredited member of the American Montessori Society (AMS) and is accredited by the Association of Independent Maryland Schools (AIMS). The school has fulfilled the requirements for approval established by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the MSDE Office of Child Care.

Mission Statement

We are a Montessori environment guiding students to be inquisitive, independent and self-motivated citizens.

Diversity Statement

The Montessori School of Westminster is committed to individual and organizational efforts to build respect, dignity, fairness, caring, equality and self-esteem in our students, staff and community resulting in an environment that is inclusive of all. We recognize that diversity includes, but is not limited to culture, gender, sexual orientation, age, traditions, beliefs, physical attributes and access to resources. We strive to create curriculum, programs and activities that encourage diversity and a high regard for all.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Montessori School of Westminster admits students and conducts its employment practices without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national and ethnic origin, sexual orientation or disability.

Maryland Green School

The Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education recognizes the Montessori School of Westminster as a Maryland Green School where students understand their connection to the environment and create a healthier space to learn with support from guides, school staff, and community partners.

Admissions Policies

Governance

The ultimate authority and responsibility for governing and operating the Montessori School of Westminster Inc. shall be with the Board of Trustees as set forth in its bylaws. The daily operations of the school are under the direction of the Head of School who reports directly to the Board of Trustees.

Eligibility

It is the policy of the Montessori School of Westminster that no child shall be denied admission to the school because of race, religion, color, sex or national origin. All applicants shall be no less than two years of age or no more than 15 years of age by September 1 of the year they will be attending. All students must be toilet-trained prior to entering the school, except for those seeking admission to the Montessori Beginnings program. All students five years or older will be screened by School Search Group, an independent testing agency, at the parents' expense. The process of admissions is described in subsequent sections of this Handbook, below.

Children of ages two and three (as of September 1st) are eligible for the three-day-week option currently offered. The three-day-week option takes place on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday during the school year.

Children are expected to be in their classrooms and ready to begin their school day at 8:30 AM. Children of ages two through four (as of September 1st), including those who are enrolled in the three-day-week option, may attend for a half day until midday dismissal (11:50 AM through 12:00 PM) or for a full day which ends at afternoon dismissal (3:00 through 3:10 PM).

Children of age four (as of September 1st) are eligible for the "Primary PM" option of the Extended Day (afternoon) program. This option allows the student to arrive at 11:30 AM and stay through 3:00 PM while participating in Primary level activities. Primary PM is a five-day-a-week program.

Children of age five are considered to have achieved kindergarten status. As such, kindergarten-age students in the MSW Primary program will attend five days a week from 8:30 AM until 3 PM.

Application Procedure

Applications for enrollment may be obtained from the Office of Admissions or via the school website at www.MontessoriSchoolofWestminster.org or www.TheMSW.org. Before submitting an application for enrollment, the parents or guardians of the prospective student should read and understand (1) the MSW Parent Handbook, and (2) the Parent Volunteer Commitment (PVC) guidelines, both of which are available upon request from the Office of Admissions.

The parents or guardians of the prospective student will be required to attend one classroom session for the purpose of observing the Montessori method and environment and be interviewed by the Head of School, faculty member, and/or an alternative administrator before an application for enrollment will be processed. Parents and candidates for admissions whose application for enrollment is received after the observation period has ended will be required to visit the school and fulfill other pre-admission requirements as deemed necessary. Notification is provided upon the receipt of a child's application for enrollment by the MSW Office of Admissions.

MSW Parent Guidelines

The parents of prospective students must seriously consider the below-listed guidelines for families in the school community. In addition to the payment of tuition and other financial obligations, families who enroll a child should:

- Arrive promptly in the morning for start of day and after school for pick-up of the child. Your child benefits from starting the morning at a relaxed pace before the day's work begins. He or she is most comfortable entering the classroom between 8:20 and 8:30 AM with classmates. It is more difficult for a child to orient him or herself to the class's daily workflow and to comfortably choose work when everyone has already begun their day. Many materials are designed for more than one child to use in partnership; your child wants to find a partner for these types of work as the day begins.
- Attend and participate in Parent Education Nights to increase understanding of the child's classroom experience and the Montessori method of education. Check the MSW calendar for dates.
- Attend scheduled conferences twice per year for Elementary and Middle School families and three times per year for Beginnings and Primary families. Attend class-specific and other school events to support your child's development as a student and to be an involved, informed parent.
- Provide the school with any information that affects the school's ability to educate and support the child's development.
- Understand the differences between a Montessori education and traditional education styles. In addition to information distributed by MSW, such as the periodical *Tomorrow's Child* magazine, the following books are helpful:
 - *The Montessori Way* by Tim Seldin & Paul Epstein Ph.D., published by the Montessori Foundation, 2006;
 - *The Absorbent Mind* by Dr. Maria Montessori, published by Holt Paperbacks, 1995, (first published 1949);
 - *A Parents' Guide to the Montessori Classroom* by Aline Wolf, published by Parent Child Press, 2009 (originally published 1995);
 - *The Science Behind the Genius* by Angeline Stoll Lillard, published by Oxford University Press, 2005, (first published 2005).

An abundance of information about Montessori pedagogy and its implementation is available on the internet.

- Read thoroughly all notices from the school including the weekly "MSW Updates" emails, notices sent home in student Blue Bags, messages on the school's internal system—Montessori Compass, and timely respond to all notices requiring RSVPs or other actions to ensure the smooth functioning of each class and the school in its entirety.
- Respect school security policies to ensure the safety of all students. As such, we require all parents, guardians, and visiting guests to sign in at the school office before proceeding through the building on school days.
- Patiently allow the child to participate in the household to support the Montessori education experience.
- Fulfill the Parent Volunteer Commitment (PVC) to the school.
- Communicate with faculty and administration as soon as a concern arises so that it may be addressed promptly.

Upon acceptance of the Montessori method and the acknowledgment of the above-listed parent guidelines, the prospective family will submit to MSW the child's application for enrollment together with the current application fee. A copy of the child's birth certificate is also required. Upon receipt of the application for enrollment, the child is then considered for admission to the Montessori School of Westminster.

Admissions Process

Acceptance for enrollment at the Montessori School of Westminster is predicated upon our evaluation of the child. For children below age five, no formal assessment is needed; however, we do require a visit with the child and interview with the parent conducted in one of our classrooms. Applicants of age five or above applying for enrollment are subject to an assessment via School Search Group, an independent testing agency, at the parents' expense.

For children of age five and above seeking admission, a classroom visit during the school year, also known as a "shadow day," is scheduled. School records from any previous school or program are ordered and evaluated. Any other pertinent records are included for review during the admissions procedure. The Montessori School of Westminster reserves the right to request additional information or require further steps in the admissions process as candidates for admission to the school are evaluated.

Acceptance

Candidates selected for enrollment are notified in writing following the completion of the admissions process. A letter of welcome will include the formal contract (Tuition Payment Agreement, or "TPA") to be signed and returned to the school with a required nonrefundable deposit and tuition payment plan. For additional information, please refer to the section of this Parent Handbook entitled "Finances" or contact the MSW Office of Finance at 410.848.6283 EXT103.

Families of students accepted for enrollment will be required under Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) regulations to submit student health and immunization records before the child's first day of attendance in the school. Please refer to the section of the MSW Parent Handbook entitled "Health & Safety" for additional information or contact the school office.

Student Selection

Subject to favorable screening, the Head of School will determine a student's eligibility using the admission preference stated below:

- Current students from the previous academic year
- Siblings of currently enrolled children
- Transfer students from other Montessori programs
- New applicants

While the admissions process may be finalized beforehand, open enrollment for new applicants begins on March 1st of each year. Applications for enrollment may be submitted at any time.

Student selection is discretionary and final admissions decisions are made by the Head of School.

Waiting List

Applications for enrollment for prospective students are accepted year-round. Those applications received after classroom rosters are established for any upcoming school year are placed on a waiting list. Families who have submitted applications for enrollment for children on the waiting list must complete admissions requirements in order for children to receive placement if and when classroom positions become available. Available positions are offered to applicants best suited for admissions to MSW.

Student Placement

While parental input is taken into consideration, the process of placing students is undertaken by the Head of School in collaboration with the classroom guides. Should there be a conflict of opinion between the Head of School and a guide, the Head of School will make the decision. Ideally, the classrooms are composed of one-third of the students of each age in the multi-age program (Example - Primary: 1/3--3-year-olds; 1/3--4-year-olds; and, 1/3--5-year-olds) as well as having a balance between boys and girls.)

While initial placement of students into programs within the school is age-based, subsequent placement of students into appropriate levels relies upon other factors, including developmental readiness, and is determined by the Head of School in collaboration with classroom guides.

Reenrollment

In early December, the families of current students are advised of reenrollment by way of a packet sent from MSW to the family. Packets include revised tuition rates for the next academic year, payment option information, etc. Returning students of age five or above applying for entry to Lower Elementary are subject to an assessment via School Search Group, an independent testing firm, at the parents' expense. Applications for enrollment of siblings of current students are offered at this time. In January, contracts for tuition are provided to the families of current students and siblings. Signed contracts, "Tuition Payment Agreements," (TPAs) are due to MSW by February 1st with a nonrefundable ten percent (10%) tuition deposit. Remaining spaces within the school are offered to new students beginning on March 1st. Please request the MSW Financial Packet for additional information.

Transition

In late July, an orientation and social time is held for families new to MSW. The orientation includes an informal question and answer session, distribution of helpful materials, and supervised childcare at MSW.

To facilitate the new student's transition into the Montessori School of Westminster, a visit to the classroom by the student and his or her parent is planned. During this visit, the student will meet his or her assigned guide and tour the classroom. The classroom visit affords the new student an opportunity to experience the classroom in a one-on-one setting with the guide.

With the exception of students in the Middle School level, classroom guides and aides will call upon the new student and family in the child's home for a brief visit during August. Home visits are scheduled by guides prior to the onset of the new school year. These visits are intended to be brief and focused on the child.

The annual All School Night gathering for parents is held to prepare the school community for the onset of the new school year. This meeting is held in late August and includes an all-school session in the UTZ Field House followed by classroom-specific meetings in the academic building. During this evening, parents will receive information regarding what they can do to ensure their child's success during the school year. The attendance of all parents is expected; this event is strictly for adults.

Please contact Mrs. Radcliffe, Registrar, at 410.848.6283 X104 or via email to sradcliffe@TheMSW.org with questions regarding the admissions process.

School Operations

The school has a nine-month school year. A written calendar is provided at the end of this publication. Our main and most current school year calendar is available online via Montessori Compass.

Montessori Beginnings for two- and three-year-old children and Primary for three-, four-, and five-year-old children are half-day sessions. Class times are 8:30 AM to 11:50 AM. Extensions of these programs are available: The Nappers program is for children ages two, three, or four; and, the Extended Day program is for children ages four and five. Class times for these afternoon programs are 11:50 AM to 3:00 PM. As part of the Extended Day offering, a program option called Primary PM for families of four-year-olds seeking afternoon classroom time is available from 11:30 AM to 3:00 PM Mondays through Fridays.

For children who are age three on September 1st of the school year and enrolled in either the MSW Beginnings or Primary programs, a three-day-week option is available. The three-day option includes Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, a schedule designed to preserve consistency, a key component of Montessori education, for the student.

Elementary and Middle School classes have full-day sessions, five days a week. Class times are 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Lower Elementary consists of 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades. Upper Elementary consists of 4th, 5th and 6th grades, and Middle School consists of 7th, 8th and 9th grades.

Before School Care (BSC) is available to all children at an additional fee. Hours are 7:00 AM to 8:30 AM. This program can be added at any time as long as space is available. After School Care (ASC) is available for an additional fee to all children who are enrolled in a MSW program until 3:00 PM. Hours are 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM. This program can be added at any time as long as space is available.

All children are expected to attend school on a full-time basis for the length of the contract (with days excused for illness and vacation).

Drop-Off and Pick-Up of Students

Students may be dropped off no earlier than 8:20 AM unless they are enrolled in BSC. From 8:20 until 8:30 AM as measured by the atomic clock in the lobby window, staff will welcome your child to school each day by opening the door of your vehicle, assisting children who need help from vehicles, making eye contact and shaking the child's hand politely, and escorting children to the door and/or classroom as needed. Middle School students exit vehicles and enter school independently. All other students should remain in vehicles until a staff member approaches and opens the vehicle door.

When the need arises, staff may begin morning drop-off at 8:15 AM.

One of the hallmarks of our Montessori day is the morning greeting offered car-side as students arrive to begin their day. Please ask your child to disengage from any in-car activities as you approach Montessori Drive in the morning.

All students must be in their classrooms no later than 8:30 AM. Students arriving after 8:30 AM are considered tardy. Because responsibility is an integral part of the Montessori experience, it is necessary for students to be in the classroom on time. Arriving on time allows your child to start the school day successfully with his or her guide and classmates.

For your child's safety and security, if you find yourself running late, it is your responsibility to bring your child into the building and sign in at the school office. Faculty and staff strive to guide young learners to Montessori independence, so we ask that you do not walk with your children to their classrooms. A staff member will gladly escort your Beginnings or Primary child to his/her classroom whenever necessary. Elementary and Middle School children may proceed to their classrooms after they are signed in at the office. This allows staff to ascertain the location of all children in case of an emergency in the school. At no time should any parents or other visitors be in MSW hallways or classrooms without first reporting to the office and signing in.

At the end of the school day, a staff member will escort your child to your car. Students must be picked up promptly at the end of their school day. If you are late, you must come into the building to pick up your student.

Late fees apply and are invoiced when students are not picked up at the agreed upon times. For students picked up after 3 PM, the fee is \$15. After 3:30 PM, the fee converts to provisional care (the rate charged for non-care enrolled students) and is \$25.

Please notify the staff via a written note, if possible, when your child needs to be picked up early or is to leave school at dismissal time with someone other than his or her parent or regular carpool driver. Plan on arriving before the necessary early departure time in order to park and enter the building while staff assists by escorting your child from his or her classroom. Children leaving at times other than during normal dismissal must be signed out by parents or caregivers.

Please list all those who may be picking up your child from school on the "Emergency Contact Card," a form which is updated by parents on an annual basis. In the event someone who is unfamiliar to MSW staff arrives to pick up a child, staff may request identification before releasing the child.

In order for MSW to prohibit a legal guardian from picking up a student, court documents giving us this authority must be provided to the school office.

The School Day

Before School Care 7:00 – 8:30 AM	
Beginnings and Primary Classes 8:30 – 11:50 AM	Nappers Programs and Extended Day Programs 11:50 AM – 3:00 PM
Elementary and Middle School Classes 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM	
After School Care 3:00 – 6:00 PM	

Student—Staff/Guide Ratios

Student-to-staff ratios for the 2017-2018 School Year:

	All Staff	Guides Only
Montessori Beginnings	1:6	1:16
Primary	1:13	1:26
Lower Elementary	1:10	1:13
Upper Elementary	1:10	1:18
Middle School	1:9	1:9

Important information for parents of children in child care facilities can be found at www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/division/child_care/child_care.htm

The School

- 1 Montessori Beginnings class
- 2 Primary classes
- 1 Lower Elementary class
- 1 Upper Elementary class
- 1 Middle School class
- 1 Before School Care program
- 2 Nappers programs
- 2 Extended Day programs
- 1 After School Care program

Curriculum

Subject areas covered in **Montessori Beginnings and Primary** include:

Practical Life	Sensorial
Language Arts	Art/Art History
Math	Geometry
Social Studies	Science (Botany/Zoology/Experimental)
Spanish	Environmental Education
Music/Music History	

Subject areas covered in **Elementary** include:

Language Arts	Physical Activities:
Spelling	<i>Motor Coordination</i>
Math	<i>Sportsmanship</i>
Geometry	<i>Group Participation</i>
Zoology	History:
Physical Science	<i>Representing time</i>
Botany	<i>Fundamental human needs</i>
Biology	<i>Origin</i>
Geography	<i>Evolution</i>
Environmental Education	
Earth Science	Art:
Spanish	<i>History</i>
Handwriting	<i>Technique</i>
Reading	Music:
Composition	<i>History</i>
Research Skills	<i>Theory</i>

Subject areas covered in **Middle School** include:

Physical Science	History
Earth Science	World Cultures
Life Science	Career Education
Environmental Education	Physical Education
Speech	Personal Reflection
Literature	Fine and Practical Art Electives
Language	
Spanish	
Writing	
Math:	
<i>General Math</i>	
<i>Pre-Algebra</i>	
<i>Algebra</i>	
<i>Geometry</i>	

Two Middle School work cycles are followed by an Immersion Week away from school. In addition, the last cycle of the year is followed by an Adventure Trip. The final week of the cycle is the assessment week utilizing a variety of assessment methods. The cycle format is designed to help students learn time management, organizational and decision-making skills.

Foreign Language Study

Primary, Primary Extended Day, Elementary, and Middle School classrooms have foreign language instruction twice per week. Students in the Beginnings program participate in Spanish instruction once per week.

The Student

- The heart of any education system is the student.
- In Montessori schools, the student's natural drive to learn is respected and fostered.
- The student can exercise a sense of freedom and spontaneity. The student feels joy and enthusiasm in learning because he/she is able to select among multi-sensory materials in the prepared environment.
- Gradually, the child builds a strong sense of independence and self-confidence as his/her skills increase.
- The Montessori philosophy is built on a student's love of learning and instills a lifelong motivation for continuous learning. Often, high academic achievement is a product of this method.

The Guide

The guide, through use of the prepared environment, helps the student discover basic principles about his/her world which provides a firm foundation and keen desire for future learning.

All guides are Montessori-certified for a particular program level. The Montessori certification process is the equivalent of at least 30 hours of graduate study. Beginnings and Primary guides must possess, at least, an associate's degree to receive their Montessori credential. Guides in the Elementary and Middle School programs have achieved, at a minimum, a bachelor's degree to be eligible for Montessori certification.

Guides are responsible for setting up the prepared environment. The guide strives to know each student's needs and directs each child to his or her level of learning. The guide instructs the student in the proper use of the Montessori materials and then returns to observing the student, intervening only when necessary.

Guides welcome calls from parents regarding any aspect of a child's classroom experience. You may leave a message for your child's guide at school, and he or she will return your call within 24 hours.

The Classroom

The prevailing atmosphere in a Montessori classroom should be one of freedom within the limitation of respect for others. Rooms are equipped with Montessori materials and supplementary materials that enhance the classroom experience. The student chooses the materials with which he or she wishes to work but must use them in a prescribed manner so as not to infringe upon the rights of classmates.

The atmosphere should be free from adult domination and be non-competitive; the room should be attractive, comfortable, orderly, simple, and stimulating. The furniture is student-sized, and the Montessori materials are self-correcting to provide a maximum problem-solving effort by each student. Many different levels of abilities and interests are anticipated among the class, and each activity is designed to stimulate a student's natural curiosity. There is a designated place for each piece of equipment to be stored, and objects in the room are "real" whenever possible.

The Parent

Educating parents about Montessori method is crucial for a successful program. To provide continuity, parents, having learned basic Montessori principles, should attempt to implement them in the home.

The Montessori School of Westminster relies on parent involvement. This involvement not only keeps the school operating on a daily basis, but also helps to ensure that new ideas and diverse talents are introduced to the system.

Please refer to the Parent Education Nights schedule on the MSW calendar. We invite you to attend these sessions to better your understanding of MSW and Montessori method.

Discipline Policy

The Montessori philosophy is such that each person within the environment has certain rights and privileges. Ground rules are set up by and for the class and are expected to be followed for the social cohesion of the group. When the rights of an individual within the environment are infringed upon, positive steps for correction are taken.

The following shall be measures taken in disciplinary actions:

1. A positive example is modeled by the guide and/or classroom aide.
2. The guide or aide will counsel the child.
3. The lesson on proper conduct will be repeated with the child.
4. The child may sit in a quiet area of the classroom.
5. The child may briefly be separated from the group with supervision.
6. The guide or aide and/or child will communicate with the parents about the problem.
7. The child may be required to remain home if he/she is a continuous disruption to the other students or if there are acts of aggression. A psychological evaluation and counseling may be required in order to help the child return to school.
8. The child will be permitted to return to school when he/she is able to follow the rules of the program.

Any student is subject to dismissal from the school at any time by written notice from the Head of School. The Head of School, after conferences with faculty and parents, will notify the Board of Trustees of the dismissal.

Privacy Rights and Access to Records

Privacy Rights

In order to insure a student's privacy, the classroom staff and Head of the School have access to the records of individual students. The Administrative Assistant and Bookkeeper, at the direction of the Head of School, may file or send out documents.

Performance Transcripts

When a student leaves the school, a transcript of the student's evaluation will be made available provided all financial obligations have been met in accordance with the tuition contract. Should parents wish transcripts of student records to be forwarded to a receiving school on behalf of the exiting student, MSW must receive a written request providing all necessary contact information to facilitate the transfer of the transcript. The subsequent transcript will be forwarded directly to the receiving school.

Students who attend Middle School will also receive a transcript of credits earned while in attendance at this level. One course credit is equal to 120 hours of class time and the completion of 75 percent of course objectives. A half credit is equal to 60 hours of class time and the completion of 75 percent of course objectives. Courses that earn credits will be shared with student and parents during conferences.

Parent Review

A parent or guardian may look at his/her student's records at school in the company of the Head of School.

Parent Communication

MSW values and relies on communication from and with the parents of our students.

If you have a question or a concern about your child's education, we encourage you to talk with your child's guide. A phone call or a note will be responded to within 24 hours. If the problem or concern has not been resolved to your satisfaction or the concern continues, please bring it to the attention of the Head of School.

Please refer to the section in this Parent Handbook entitled "Communication" for a detailed explanation of types of communication in the school.

Observations, Evaluations, Conferences

Classroom Observations

Parents, grandparents, relatives and other interested persons are encouraged to visit the classroom once the students have adjusted to the environment and rules. All observations will be scheduled by the parents of the student to be observed. Scheduled classroom observations may be arranged effective mid-October through April. No family observations are available in May.

Appointments to observe may be made by calling the school office. Appointments are made in an effort to allow the number of visitors per observation to be a maximum of two adults representing one family. **Observations are for adults only.**

Observations are scheduled for approximately 45 minutes. At the end of the observation, the guide and the parent will leave the classroom to discuss the student's progress and activity levels and answer any questions about the classroom. Parents may choose to observe their student in the classroom in place of a conference.

Observations may be scheduled at:

Montessori Beginnings	9:00—10:00 AM
Primary	9:00—10:00 AM
Extended Day	1:00—2:00 PM
Elementary	9:30—10:30 AM
Middle School	By appointment

Progress reports are sent home three times a year; one in the fall (usually in November); one in the spring (usually in March); and, one after the end of the school year in June.

Conferences

Conferences are scheduled twice during the school year to coincide with the fall and spring progress reports. In addition, a conference for the parents of new Beginnings and Primary students will be scheduled a few weeks after the start of the school year. The parent or guides may call for a conference at any time if either feels it would benefit the child. Conferences, at all times, are confidential conversations between the staff and the parent. With the exception of Middle School, children are not allowed in conferences.

Schedule Policies

All Day Care

As noted on the school calendar, All Day Care will be offered on certain days when the normal school day is not in session or is shortened. It is first offered, for a fee, to those students already enrolled in either Nappers, Extended Day, or After School Care.

After the All Day Care offer period ends for those students enrolled in programs as described above, the offer of fee-based All Day Care is extended to non-care program enrolled students if spaces remain in the program. This type of care is referred to as *provisional care* and is for non-care program enrolled students on All Day Care days.

Before School Care and After School Care will also be available on the same schedule beginning at the regular opening time of 7:00 AM for those enrolled in BSC, and ending at the regular closing time of 6:00 PM for those enrolled in ASC.

Weather Policy

In the event that school must be canceled or delayed due to inclement weather, the decision to close or delay will be made between 6:00 and 6:30 AM. The Montessori School of Westminster does **not** follow Carroll County Public Schools in matters of weather-related closures or delays. Parents can refer to emails for an MSW Update, call MSW at 410-848-6283 to hear a recorded message, or tune into the following radio or television stations:

Stations

WJZ – TV (Channel 13)
WMAR – TV (Channel 2)
WBAL – TV (Channel 11)
WBFF – TV (Channel 45)
WTTR (1470AM) – Radio
WGTY (107.7FM) – Radio
WBAL (1090AM) – Radio

Stations offering free announcement services on inclement weather days are verified periodically; however, MSW cannot guarantee the availability of announcement services at all times.

Please do not rely solely on the MSW Update system as occasionally the internet does not work properly. In the event that school must be closed early due to inclement weather, you will be contacted via the MSW phone chain system. It is of utmost importance to keep all emergency contact information on the phone chain updated. Please contact the MSW office with all new contact information.

CAUTION: The downhill “S turn” prior to Montessori Drive is often slippery when other parts of Hughes Shop Road are fine. Please use caution prior to approaching this section of the road.

For information about midday school closures due to weather-related situations, please refer to the “Phone Chains” section of this handbook listed under “Communications.”

Snow Make-Up Days

The MSW school year calendar includes several days labeled “1/2-day snow make-up days.” These are shown as schedule options on certain days throughout the school year and are dependent upon weather-related closures. **Please make note of these schedule options on your family calendar.** We incorporate these days into the school calendar as we plan in order to fulfill the requirement for the number of days school must be in session. That number is regulated by the state of Maryland for both private and public schools.

Your review of the school calendar will show that ½-day snow make-up days are often scheduled as options on days that would be, alternatively, in-service days, days when school is closed to students.

We meet three goals by creating ½-day snow make-up days on our school calendar:

- (1) We ensure our students attend school for the correct amount of time annually.
- (2) We preserve some of the important time set aside for faculty and staff to meet, plan, prepare, review, etc.
- (3) We avoid extending the school year by adding year-end days, thus retaining summer opportunities and scheduling priorities for MSW and its families.

Please note that ½-day snow make-up days are only one way of resolving unforeseen school closures caused by weather or other circumstances. Some snow make-up days may be full days, and extreme circumstances may require further measures, such as a shorter “spring break,” or other calendar changes as deemed necessary.

Transportation

Transportation is the responsibility of the parents. We encourage carpooling. Those desiring to carpool may utilize the Parent Directory as located on the school website to find those families with whom they would like to carpool. New families are added to the website Parent Directory each summer. It is mandatory that you notify the staff in writing of the children in your carpool. A written note must be sent to MSW if someone other than the regular driver is to transport the student. The student will not be released to unauthorized persons. List permitted carpools and authorized persons on your Emergency Contact Card and update annually. MSW retains the right to verify the identity of any persons transporting students. As carpools are formed, those parents involved should establish rules of conduct for the carpools. Help the staff by making as few last minute changes as possible.

Schedule Changes

The Head of School and faculty have the right to make changes to the calendar and schedule as deemed appropriate for the welfare of the students. Notice of such changes will be sent via MSW Updates, the Blue Bag, Montessori Compass, or other communication method. Should you be scheduled to attend or participate in a school event, please check Montessori Compass messages and calendar for the most recent announcements, schedule changes, etc.

Health and Safety

Student Health Records

MSW is required by the state of Maryland to maintain records detailing the immunization history and health records of each student in the school. Health forms are required to be completed and must be submitted prior to the onset of the first day of school for each new student and must be updated periodically. The MSW school nurse reviews student health records and advises any family whose child may lack required immunizations.

Families of students who participate in the MSW Summer Camp program prior to the onset of their first year of enrollment as a school-year student do not need to re-submit the health forms packet before the start of the school year unless the child has visited his or her pediatrician and received new immunizations. In such a case, updates to the student's MSW immunization record are required. Any medical or other event which changes the child's health profile should also be entered into the student's MSW health records. It is the responsibility of the family to provide to MSW required health records from the student's health care practitioner.

Students whose families have not submitted the necessary health records are notified and advised of a reasonable timeframe in which to provide missing information and forms, including immunizations, as mandated by the state of Maryland. If a student's record is not properly updated as advised by MSW, the child will not be allowed to return to school until such record is complete.

Each student in the school is required to receive his or her second "MMR" vaccine for measles, mumps, and rubella by the child's fifth birthday.

More information about immunization schedules and state vaccination requirements may be found by using the following link:

<http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/IMMUN/Pages/back-to-school-immunization-requirements.aspx>

If a family has any questions regarding MSW's student health records, immunization policies, or other health practices, please contact the school offices for more information.

Sunscreen

MSW recommends each family apply sunscreen to their child before the start of the school day. For children who benefit from additional applications of sunscreen on certain days, please send to school the preferred sunscreen clearly labelled with the child's name and any necessary directions regarding its application.

In the Event of an Emergency

The school staff will continue to personally care for your student in the event of an emergency. We will maintain an environment that is as normal as possible in order to continue with the school experience for our students. All safety precautions will remain in place. If there is a national crisis and you are unable to pick up your child at dismissal, our staff will continue to care for your student until arrangements can be made. Please review the section of the Parent Handbook entitled "Communications" for additional information.

In case of an emergency, call the school at 410-848-6283. Messages are monitored prior to each midday and afternoon dismissal.

Absenteeism

If your child will be absent from school, please notify MSW by phoning the school before class. If your child has an ongoing illness, a call on the first day is sufficient. Please note that regular attendance will maximize your child's learning experience.

Developmental Screening

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has implemented a state regulation for all children in regulated care and early childhood educational programs. All children up to kindergarten entry attending regulated care and early childhood educational programs will need to have periodic developmental screenings conducted. Because the Montessori School of Westminster is licensed by MSDE, students entering or enrolled in its Beginnings and Primary programs (through age five) will be subject to the assessment.

Developmental screening is used to celebrate a child's achievement as well as refer them for support and services when there is an area of concern. Developmental screenings, along with regular physical exams, hearing tests, and vision tests, are important ways to monitor a child's growth and development. A child's development can be measured by how a child learns, speaks, moves, behaves, and relates. Skills such as smiling, waving, and talking are developmental milestones. Results from developmental screenings indicate when children would benefit from a full evaluation and assessment. Children who receive early intervention services generally do better in the long term than those identified later. Upon completion of the screening, we will relay to you the findings and whether a referral to another agency for further evaluation is necessary.

Children aged birth to 36 months will be required to have two screenings per year.

Children aged 37 months – kindergarten entry (generally, third-year Primary students or as determined by MSW) will be required to have one screening per year.

Parents should consider this process as part of the required documentation in order for the child to attend MSW or any other licensed program in the state.

The screening tool our school will use is called "Ages & Stages Questionnaires 3rd Edition" (ASQ-3). Please contact the MSW office should you have any questions.

Illness

Students with severe colds, fevers, vomiting or communicable illness are not allowed in school. **Students who are vomiting or have fevers may not return to school until they have been symptom free for 24 hours.**

If the student becomes ill at school, he/she will be isolated, and you will be contacted to pick up your child as soon as possible. **To protect all students, the school reserves the right to determine when a student is to be sent home because of illness.**

The guides must be informed at once of a communicable disease other than colds. This includes, for example, chicken pox, pink eye, head lice and strep throat. Please contact MSW to help us advise other families of precautions that may help limit the spread of communicable illnesses.

We employ a school nurse on a flex-time basis; therefore, a nurse is not regularly on the premises. Our nurse, however, is on call for information and advice.

Medication Policy

All Medications – In General

If possible, alternate plans should be made to avoid the administration of medication at school. Parents are encouraged to consult with their physician to discuss administering medication before and/or after school. In most cases, these arrangements can and should be made. Parents may come to school to administer medication. Medication may only be administered in the school office, not in the classrooms.

All medication must be in the original container or prescription bottle and clearly labeled with the child's name. Under no circumstances will unlabeled medication be given.

Students are not permitted to carry any medications to school or keep any type of medication in their lunch boxes or other personal carriers. All medication must be given to an adult (staff member) by an adult (parent or caregiver).

For All Students – All Medications – Use of Medication Authorization Form

No medication, whether prescription, non-prescription or any over-the-counter, or homeopathic remedies, will be administered without a **Medication Authorization Form** signed by a parent and/or a physician. The form must list precautions or possible side effects. It is recommended that families review and understand the **Medication Authorization Form**. In order to meet compliance standards, MSW utilizes the Maryland State Department of Education **Medication Authorization Form** also used by Carroll County Public Schools. The form is used for parent authorization **and/or** physician authorization in the various circumstances described below.

For Beginnings & Primary Students

All Medications

A Medication Authorization Form must be signed **by a physician** who must also provide the name of the drug, reason for giving it, dosage, time, and dates of administration. This information is included on **the Medication Authorization Form**.

For Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary and Middle School Students

Over-The-Counter (OTC) Medications Only

OTC medications can be given when a parent's written permission is on record at MSW. Completion of the Medication Authorization Form by the parent/guardian fulfills this requirement.

Prescription Medications

A physician's order including the name of the drug, reason for giving it, dosage, time, and dates of administration is required, except for cough drops. Completion of the **Medication Authorization Form** by the physician fulfills this requirement.

Please contact MSW at 410.848.6283 or via Montessori Compass message to Administrative Assistant Kim Jersild should you have any questions about the MSW Medication Policy or to receive the **Medication Authorization Form**.

Medications and Overnight Travel

Students in Upper Elementary and Middle School are given valuable opportunities to travel during the school year. For those students who require the administration of medicine on a strict schedule, the needed medications that must accompany them on the school trip must be submitted to MSW two weeks prior to the scheduled departure date.

Participation at School and in Physical Education

If your student is well enough to be at school, he/she must be able to participate in all programs, including physical education. If a student suffers from a persistent physical problem, the student will need to remain with the class during physical education. If a student has an ongoing physical problem, please send a note from the student's physician explaining why he/she cannot participate.

Head Lice Policy

Please check your student periodically for head lice.

- Any student who is found to have lice or nits (even one) when at school will be immediately sent home.
- If this is an initial occurrence, your child may return to school only when all lice and nits are gone. If a student returns to school and is found to have lice and/or nits (even if it is just one), the student will immediately be sent home again. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that all nits and lice are gone.
- If this is a repeat occurrence, your child will not be readmitted to school for three full days following the detection.
- Before readmission to school, all nits and/or lice must be removed. A parent must accompany the student into the school office to be checked before admission to the classroom.
- The parent must stay until the student is cleared to enter the class.
- During a lice outbreak, students with long hair must have their hair tied back.
- Please remember that it is each parent's responsibility to check their child daily.

Accident

In case of a serious accident at school, the student's parent is called immediately after first aid is given. If you cannot be reached, the emergency number you indicated on the Emergency Contact Card will be called. If that person is not available, your student's doctor will be called.

If transportation to a hospital or medical facility is required, transportation will be provided by the parent or ambulance.

Car Safety Seats—Lower Elementary

Parents are required to provide safety seats for all field trips or other school-related travel. Students who do not have car safety seats and are required by the state of Maryland to ride in a car seat will not be allowed to participate in field trips.

Vehicle Safety – Carpool, Parking Lot, Driveway

Please note that the posted speed limit on all paved areas at MSW is 15 miles per hour. During carpool arrival and dismissal times, or at any time when cars are parked at the front entrance to the academic building of the school, on the parking lot, or in any area normally used by vehicles, it is important for children to stay in cars and to be supervised by parents or caregivers.

General Classroom Policies

Lost and Found

Please check with your child's guide for lost items. There is also a lost and found located in the school office area. Labeling **all** your child's clothing, including outerwear (each mitten, boot, hat, scarf, etc.), will reduce the number of misplaced items.

Many families support MSW events by preparing food items to share. Please make certain that each serving piece, each container, lid, base, etc. is labeled in order to facilitate return.

School Clothing

For safety reasons, students may not wear flip-flops, opened-toed, or slip-on shoes on outdoor equipment. Shoes or sandals appropriate for play on the playground climbers must include closed toes and a strap securing the back of the child's foot. No hats, bandanas or visors will be worn indoors.

Because several students may own identical items, students must have their names on all outerwear (coats, sweaters, mittens, boots, hats, etc.). **Please label every piece of clothing your child will wear to MSW.**

Clothing selected for school should be appropriate for indoor and outdoor curriculum which includes floor work, exploration, movement, active play, etc. Clothing selections should be suitable for wear in an interactive mixed-age student population. MSW staff has the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing worn to school.

Because MSW has an on-going Environmental Education program that includes outdoor study in all weather, please provide outer wear appropriate for each season throughout the year. Please include slip-on rubber boots (no laces or buttons) for your Beginnings and Primary student.

Additional classroom clothing policies may apply within separate programs; parents will be given this information at All School Night or during the school year.

Beginnings and Primary Students

Every student must have a complete extra change of clothing (labeled with his/her name) in school. Please send extra clothes to the classroom in a bag marked with the student's name.

Students' school clothing should be practical and washable. Play clothes for both boys and girls are necessary. Students get dirty sometimes, so please have your child dress accordingly. It is more important that he/she participates in an activity than remains clean.

We expect Primary students to be able to handle their own clothing. When selecting new pants for your child, check to see that he/she can fasten and unfasten them alone, or buy pants with elastic waistbands.

Children should always try the zipper and buttons on a coat before a purchase is made. Some zippers and buttons are frustrating to children. Children should also try on new shoes and snow boots before purchasing them. They should be simple for the children to put on and take off by themselves.

Possessions

Sharing: Students are encouraged to bring anything that they have made to share with their class. Please label every item with your child's name.

Books: Students are encouraged to bring books to share with the class. Books must have the owner's name in them. All books must be in good condition. For Beginnings and Primary students, it may take days or, perhaps, longer to read each book. Keep this in mind when sending library books – the staff cannot be responsible for their timely return.

Nature items: Students are encouraged to bring items from nature. They may leave them at school for the class to enjoy or take the items home after sharing with their class.

Toys: Please point out to your student that his/her toys are for home use and, at school, he/she has "special" work to do. If a student does bring a toy from home, it will be stored in the student's "cubby" (storage space) or held by the staff until dismissal time. Trading cards of any type are not permitted at school.

Animals: Without prior written permission, no live animals or insects will be permitted.

Photos

The Montessori School of Westminster periodically takes photographs of the students and reserves the right to publish photos online, in brochures, newspapers, periodicals, displays, and in any other manner deemed appropriate by the administration during or after the student's enrollment at MSW. All photographs are the property of the school. Parents may have copies printed at their own expense.

Any photos taken in the classroom will be at the convenience of faculty or other staff and will be in accordance with the policies stated in the administrative manual of the school. *Any photographs taken in school, on the campus, or during a Montessori School of Westminster-sponsored field trip may be used by the school for publicity.*

Gift Policies

Students may not exchange invitations or gifts within the school. A printed class roster is provided to each family at All School Night. Names and addresses of our families are available on the secure portion of our school website at www.MontessoriSchoolofWestminster.org (or short form: www.TheMSW.org). Students may give gifts to the classroom, such as a book or an exercise; please check with the guides beforehand.

Traditionally, MSW staff has received a generous gift from the parents in the form of monetary contributions used to fund a year-end luncheon. No other personal gifts to any staff from parents or students are expected or encouraged. This practice may place undue burdens on families, especially those with multiple children within the school.

Special Information from Home

In the event that a significant change occurs in your home, please inform your child's guide as soon as possible. Common causes of distress are either one or both parents being away from home, a new person living at home, illness of a family member, hospitalization, accident or death in the family, divorce or separation, moving, or death of a pet.

Allergies

There are documented food allergies among our students. Due to the risk of anaphylaxis, which could cause a narrowing of the airways as well as being potentially fatal, there is a **STRICT NO PEANUT BUTTER or PEANUT POLICY**. Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Head of School and the school nurse.

Snack

The school, supplemented by the parents, will provide nutritious snacks throughout the year for Beginnings and Primary students. If you or your child would like to prepare something which you would like to share with the class, check with the guides before bringing it to school. Snack requests for Elementary and Middle School will be defined by each classroom.

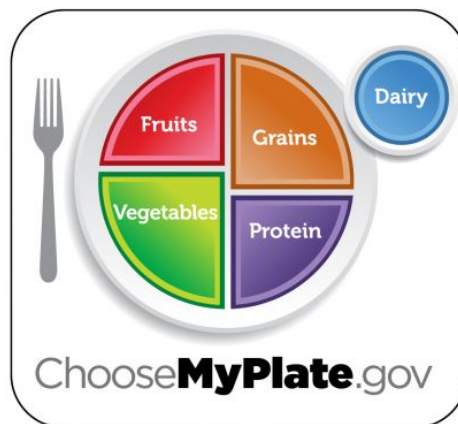
Examples of popular snacks include raw vegetables, fruits, and muffins. In order to promote healthy eating habits, please avoid foods that are high in processed sugar. Also, please refer to specific classroom requirements that will be provided by your child's guides.

Always label any snack that is sent into the school with your name as well as the name of the classroom/program or event for which it is intended. To ensure the return of your dishes, containers, or other personal items, please make sure each piece is marked with your name.

Lunch

Students in the Beginnings and Primary programs will have their lunches refrigerated as required by the MSDE Office of Child Care for all pre-school children. Please be mindful of our limited refrigerator space when purchasing lunch boxes. Keep all hot food separate and labeled with your child's name. Kindly label each item in your child's lunch to assist in repacking unused portions, containers, etc.

Ideally, students will be active participants in preparing their lunch at home, as well as in taking responsibility for bringing their lunch to school with them each day. If your child forgets his or her lunch, a standard lunch will be provided by the school, and you will be charged a fee for the lunch provided. This lunch is made by school staff and will contain representative items from each of the recommended food groups. Appropriate foods include fruits, grains, vegetables, protein, and dairy. For more information, go to www.choosemyplate.gov.



Students in the Elementary and Middle School programs must bring their own lunches, and those lunches will not be refrigerated. Students in the Middle School program will define their own requirements for lunch.

Do not send soda, juice, or gum with lunches. Also, avoid foods and beverages containing processed sugars. Beginnings and Primary students will be served milk or water at lunch.

We do not permit the trading or sharing of any food during lunch due to varying nutritional philosophies as well as food allergies that exist in the school. In order for parents to be aware of how much food their child has consumed, all uneaten food that can be repackaged will be sent home. This can assist you and your child in packing lunch.

Breakfast During Before School Care

While the school is unable to provide breakfast during Before School Care, children who attend this program are welcome to bring and eat a breakfast in the morning.

Nappers

Due to limited storage space, please have your child bring a pillow no larger than 12" x 12", a crib sheet, and a small blanket to use while he/she sleeps. These items will be sent home weekly for laundering in a tote bag provided by MSW. (Please note: The tote bag used for nap laundry is separate from the Blue Bag used for school-parent communications.)

Communications

The key to creating the most effective partnership between MSW and families of students is communication. Communication is a two-way process.

Your child's guide is responsible to notify you when he or she believes that there is a genuine concern regarding your child's progress or behavior. Should parents have a concern about their child, or any circumstance involving the classroom or guide, the parent must first contact the student's guide directly to discuss any concerns. If the parent/guardian feels that the concern has not been addressed, it is then appropriate to reach out to school leadership.

If you would like to speak to a guide, please send a note to school with your child(ren) or contact the school, and we will relay the request to the guide to call you.

Montessori Compass

Montessori Compass is an internal system, accessible via the internet, used to facilitate communication between MSW and parents. It includes classroom-specific information, school-wide communications, photographs, calendars, and more. It is a helpful tool in becoming an active member of the MSW community.

An internet connection is required for access to Montessori Compass. To receive login credentials for Montessori Compass, please contact Mrs. Lupco, Head of School, at 410.848.6283. A Montessori Compass phone application is also available for smart cell phone users.

Montessori Compass provides a method for MSW to reach its families with up-to-the-minute information. **The calendar provided within the Montessori Compass system is the primary calendar for the MSW community. Please rely on the Montessori Compass calendar for most accurate event details. Please check Montessori Compass messages and calendar before setting out for any school-related events or activities (e.g., field trips, observations, etc.) as it will be used to announce cancellations or other changes that may affect your participation.**

Guidelines for Online Communication: Email or Montessori Compass

Staff and parents should keep in mind that while online communication via email or Montessori Compass messages is a quick way to send a message, it is not necessarily the best way to get a quick reply or resolve an issue. With this in mind, parents are asked to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Email or Montessori Compass messages should not be used to discuss contentious, emotional, or highly confidential issues.
2. Using email or Montessori Compass messages as a communication tool is voluntary. Parents and staff must agree to use email or Montessori Compass as a form of communication.
3. Email or Montessori Compass messages should not be used for time-sensitive communication.

MSW Updates

MSW Updates are sent via email, and it is each parent's responsibility to read and understand the information contained therein. MSW Updates will be used to relay new information as well as reminders. Please provide the school with a current email address in order to view all messages sent. **Please contact the school office if you are not receiving weekly email updates.**

The Blue Bag

The Blue Bag traditionally carried by MSW students through the Lower Elementary level is intended to relay Montessori school messages to parents from the Board of Trustees, the school staff, the MSW Parent Organization, and from MSW committees. Messages must pertain to school business or school-related activities. No personal items, invitations, or notes may be sent out via the Blue Bags. The Blue Bag may contain folders sent home from the various programs within the school. For example, a student who attends the Primary program in the morning and the Extended Day Primary program in the afternoon may have two separate folders in his or her Blue Bag. **Please review the contents of your child's Blue Bag and folders, and return them to the classroom the next school day.**

Students in Upper Elementary and Middle School may use backpacks. It is the responsibility of students and their parents to ensure the prompt delivery of messages to and from the school when transported in a student's backpack.

Please do not use your child's Blue Bag or backpack to send payments of any kind to the school.

RSVPs - Responding to Notices from MSW

Many notices from MSW to parents require timely responses. The use of the notation "RSVP" means we are planning an event that requires a headcount to be successful, and we need to know if you'll be there. On certain occasions, responses determine whether or not events will take place. Sometimes, it is necessary to know the number of children who will attend an event in order to provide sufficient childcare. MSW devotes resources to purchasing supplies for events, have staff on hand, etc.; thus, your responses assist us in accurate budgeting and planning.

MSW Website and Parent Access

The website for our school is online at: www.MontessoriSchoolofWestminster.org **or** www.TheMSW.org.

The school website contains helpful information for MSW families, including access to our Parent Directory, the contact list for all families within our school population. The Parent Directory includes names, mailing addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses and is updated annually during summer months to reflect changes in the school population. It can be a helpful tool for those who wish to carpool.

This MSW Parent Handbook is regularly shared with the families of prospective students. To protect the confidentiality of current students and their families, parent login information is given to each family *in written form* separate from this Handbook prior to the onset of each school year. Login information can also be acquired by contacting the school office.

Important: Please help MSW maintain an accurate Parent Directory by advising the office of any and all changes in your listed contact information.

The school website also includes:

- MSW Contact list
- Classroom phone chains – classrooms' telephone contact systems used in emergencies
- PVC Opportunities – list of jobs that can fulfill the Parent Volunteer Commitment (PVC)
- PVC Hours Form – online reporting of completed PVC hours/jobs
- Handbook – parent handbook online
- Parent Organization – details on "Parent Org"-sponsored events within MSW
- Parent Directory – contact information for all MSW families
- Direct link to Montessori Compass via the MSW website's home page

- Payment option for tuition and fees via the button located on the MSW website's home page
- Donation option via the button located on the website's home page

While MSW makes every effort to keep all information on its website current, please confirm listed information as to dates for accuracy. Website information changes from school year to school year and must be updated constantly.

The public portions of our school website provide useful references as you discuss MSW with families interested in the school for their children.

MSW and Facebook

Various groups within the school, including parent groups within classrooms, have found it helpful to create Facebook pages for internal communication; however, it is important to remember that the school has one official Facebook page labeled "Montessori School of Westminster."

Please note that everyone has different priorities and access abilities regarding Facebook. Information received should be verified; kindly direct your questions to our faculty or staff. We want to communicate with you whenever possible to provide clear answers to questions and solutions to any concerns that may arise.

Phone Chains

Certain situations may occur that require at least one member of each student's family to be reached quickly, particularly when an early and unexpected school closing is required, such as a midday snow storm, and parents are being asked to pick up their children from MSW immediately or at a time earlier than the normal pick-up time.

In order to accomplish calling each student's family, a system of phone chains has been established for each program within the school. The phone chains are organized at the beginning of the school year by the program guide or, for instance, the senior staff member of the After School Care program.

The purpose of the phone chain is to create an accurate, organized list of telephone numbers so each student's family can be reached directly and quickly to confirm (1) notification of the unexpected closing has been conveyed directly to the student's parent, and (2) a parent or other approved driver is immediately en route to MSW to pick up the student if the situation requires early pick-up of the student. Phone chains can be activated for any all-school or program-specific contact purposes, some which may not require early pick-up of the student.

Each family provides to the phone chain organizer (a guide or other MSW staff member) a phone number where one designated family member can be reached quickly. The organizer then appoints phone chain "captains" who will make phone calls to the families whose names lie below the captain's on the phone chain. Hence, the captains are the designated callers. Not everyone needs to make a phone call, but all families must provide the organizer of the phone chain with a number where one designated family member can be reached.

If the phone chain captain who has attempted to reach you has left a recorded voice mail message for you because you were unavailable to answer at the provided telephone number, you must call the phone captain back immediately. The phone captain will continue to attempt to contact you until he or she receives your confirmation that you have received the notification from the school. If you cannot be reached directly at the telephone number you provided during phone chain organizing, neither the phone chain captain nor MSW will be responsible for delays in contacting you.

Phone chains are available for viewing on the parent-only portion of the school website.

In order for phone chains to function accurately for the well-being of students, parents must notify the MSW school office of any changes to contact information as soon as possible.

Development & Family Involvement

Thanks to contributions from our families, alumni, MSW staff, and the community, your children are able to experience all that Montessori has to offer.

Did you know?

- Your tuition dollars cover 95% of your child's education and school expenses.
- MSW provides financial assistance to families not able to fully afford school tuition.
- Because of contributions made to the school, our students are able to learn through art, music, Spanish, environmental and physical education, and have access to individual support through a Language Resource Specialist.
- Philanthropy is a part of a Montessori education. Students of all ages are learning about their role in the world and how they can make a difference – through financial support and through giving of their time and talents, and raising money for their favorite causes.

At the Montessori School of Westminster, we foster an environment in which our students are learning about giving back to the community – both to the school, to our local community, and to our world. **We encourage you to include your children in conversations about how your family will contribute to our school this year.** Talk to your children about the reasons your family makes financial contributions to the school and why it is important. They can even be a part of “earning” the money that your family contributes.

There are many opportunities to give back to our school. How will your family **ENGAGE** this year?

- Contribute to MSW's annual giving campaign. (You can make a donation at any time. There will also be a variety of times throughout the year when you'll be reminded of the opportunity to give.)
- Participate in our Superhero 5K Race and Family Fun Run in May! Plan to run or walk, sign on to help plan the event, and help us let our community know about this fun event!
- Serve on one of our committees; involve grandparents, aunts, uncles in volunteer opportunities and in our classrooms. There are lots of chances to bring your knowledge and skills to our students. Volunteer hours donated by extended family count toward your annual PVC requirement.
- Keep an eye on MSW Updates and Montessori Compass for more opportunities to **ENGAGE!**

If you have questions or would like to talk about making a contribution, please contact Stephanie Halley, Director of Engagement (shalley@TheMSW.org or 410.848.6283).

Cell Phones

At MSW, cell phone use by staff is restricted in our classrooms or wherever children are present with the exception of field trips or adventures to the stream where phones can be used in emergency situations. We gladly accept calls through the school office at 410.848.6283 to deal with the needs and emergencies of both staff and our students' families.

Our goal is to set the example of behavior we expect from our students, and we ask you to join with us to meet this challenge--limiting our cell phone usage to times and places that are separate from our young Montessorians whether in carpool line, on the playground, in the UTZ Field House, on trips, or in our classrooms. ***Thank you for using your cell phones in areas away from our students and their important activities.***

Special Days and Events

Parent Visits

Parents are vitally important to the school. The students love to meet their classmates' parents in the classroom setting. We would like to have all parents come to the class and share their professions or hobbies. You may spend as little as five minutes or up to an hour sharing with the children. Everyone's job or hobby provides a great opportunity for the students to learn about the "real world." Sharing photos and artifacts from travels or family cultures and traditions is a great way to be involved in your child's classroom.

Parent Education Nights

Look for Parent Education Nights on the school calendar. Throughout the year, several Parent Education Nights are conducted. Parents are required to attend all sessions to best understand the Montessori philosophy and include its application in the home. Parent Education Nights provide parents with an understanding of Montessori materials, methods, policies, and procedures. We invite grandparents and anyone who cares for the child on a regular basis to join these seminars.

Photo Day

Photo Day is designed for parents to photograph the students at work in the classroom. The photographers must work at being as unobtrusive as possible to allow all photos to be as natural as possible. The students are not to be interrupted or distracted from their work. Only one photographer per child is allowed on this day. Once you have finished taking pictures, you may leave before the scheduled time ends.

The students may also bring cameras to photograph their classroom colleagues after the parents leave.

Grandparent Days

On designated days, grandparents are invited to visit the school, meet staff members and other students' family members, and to spend time with their grandchildren. Please see the MSW calendar for dates and monitor weekly MSW Updates for event-specific information.

Parties

At the Elementary and Middle School levels, all classroom parties in recognition of holidays, special events, or cultural customs will be planned by the students with the assistance of the guides and are for Montessori students only. Birthdays at all levels will be recognized in a manner determined by each guide. This information will be shared with parents at All School Night. Please contact your child's guides if you have any questions.

Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled periodically throughout the year. Parents are asked to chaperone and/or transport the students during the field trip. If you sign up to chaperone and/or drive, please wait until you are contacted before you definitely change your schedule to be available for the field trip. There have been times when we have had an overabundance of drivers, and other times when we have not had enough. We will try to rotate drivers so everyone is given a chance to drive during the year.

Students must ride in the cars chosen by the classroom staff. We understand there are times when a child is anxious about going on a field trip. Please alert us early if you have any concerns. Our expectations are that all children are able to travel separately from parents when necessary. We strive to be sensitive to the needs of each child. All gift shops and snack bars are off limits for students and parent chaperones. No one may give any student food during a field trip other than the food the student brings for his or her lunch.

With the exception of Middle School students, students are not permitted to ride in the front seat of an automobile unless the student's parent is driving. Middle School students may ride in the front seat if they have a parent's permission. No siblings are allowed on the field trip.

Chaperones must be fingerprinted for an FBI background check in order to drive or conduct small groups for field trips; therefore, fingerprinted chaperones will be given first priority. To learn about the fingerprint process, contact Mrs. Jersild, Administrative Assistant, in the MSW office. The focus of the chaperones is to provide guidance to the students in their group, engaging with the students and the field trip presentations. Chaperones are asked to refrain from cell phone use on the field trip. If a situation arises when a chaperone must use his/her cell phone, please inform the staff so you can make your call away from the group and rejoin the students when you are available. Any student is subject to dismissal from a field trip by the staff at any time; parents will be called immediately to pick up their child.

Closing Ceremony

At the end of each school year, MSW marks the passage of time with its closing ceremony. This special event is held at venues throughout the community with sites selected to accommodate all those who wish to attend. All students participate in a closing ceremony performance and receive recognition as they complete their school year. Many staff members in attendance have roles in the presentation of the ceremony.

The closing ceremony especially honors those students finishing their years at MSW by graduating from its Middle School program. Students achieving this milestone address the audience with prepared remarks about their years at MSW.

It is important that guests in attendance monitor children who have completed their participation in closing ceremony activities or are otherwise in attendance. Providing our undivided attention to students speaking and performing in the ceremony is required, and we ask parents to ensure that children in the audience listen respectfully to those on stage. Being supportive of students' time, effort, and performances encourages their self-confidence and future public endeavors. A time for socialization is scheduled immediately after the closing ceremony ends.

MSW Summer Camp

Held annually, the Montessori School of Westminster offers weekly camp programs during summer months. Program times are designed to duplicate those in place during the school year and include full- and half-day options as well as a napping option, Before Camp Care beginning at 7 AM, and After Camp Care ending at 6 PM. The MSW Summer camp program is open to all age-eligible children in the community as well as those in the school population.

MSW Summer Camp features weekly themes. Subjects may include science, art, technology, nature, math, music, campus exploration, creativity, and more. Themes change from year to year. The MSW Summer Camp program is designed and administered by the Montessori School of Westminster. Montessori materials used during the school year may be used during camp when appropriate and relevant to the theme of the camp week.

The MSW campus offers 27 acres of space for exploration, field and stream play, nature lessons, outdoor games, sports, and more. Children attending MSW Summer Camp should be prepared to spend time outside on a regular basis.

Availability

MSW Summer Camp is divided into two age groups. **Primary** camp is for children ages two through five. A limited number of spaces are offered for two-year-olds. Up to 15 children may participate during camp weeks. **Elementary** camp is for children ages six through nine, and up to 12 children may participate during camp weeks.

MSW Summer Camp is offered first to children of current MSW families and then to members of the general public.

Registration

MSW Summer Camp registration forms are made available to the MSW school population and to the wider community early in the calendar year through various methods including the school website at (www.MontessoriSchoolofWestminster.org). A reduced rate discount period is offered annually. Children registered before the cut-off date listed on the registration form receive MSW Summer Camp t-shirts. Registration is on a first come, first serve basis. A separate registration form is needed for each child enrolled.

Payment

Those who register for MSW Summer Camp must pay a deposit for each week selected for the child. The balance due is invoiced prior to the week(s) selected and must be paid in full before the first day of child's camp attendance. Payment details are included on the camp registration form.

Payment for summer camp is made by check to the Montessori School of Westminster (MSW) or by credit card. Registration forms and payments for each child may be mailed to the school at 1055 Montessori Drive, Westminster, Maryland 21158 or hand-delivered during business hours. (It is recommended that visitors call 410.848.6283 before traveling to school offices.) Credit card payments are accepted via the school website at www.MontessoriSchoolofWestminster.org. A convenience fee collected by the credit card processing agency is charged.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up

A carpool procedure designed to match that utilized during the school year is in place for MSW Summer Camp. Families bring their children to the school by joining the vehicle loop that approaches the

front of the academic building. Campers are greeted at each car in succession by MSW Summer Camp staff members. Morning carpool is from 8:20 to 8:30 AM. Midday dismissal is from 11:50 AM to 12:00 PM. Afternoon dismissal is from 3:00 to 3:10 PM.

Children arriving for Before Camp Care must be escorted into the building by the parent. Please park your car in the school parking lot and escort your child into the academic building. For families whose children stay in the After Camp Care program, please park your vehicle and then request entrance to our locked building via the buzzer system at the front door to the academic building. Should After Camp Care be using other spaces on our campus (e.g, the playground or the UTZ Field House), a sign to that effect posted near our entryway will direct you.

In the event your child arrives late to camp, please park your car and bring your child into the school office after being admitted to the building.

Medical and Emergency Forms

A series of medical forms, including an immunization record, must be completed by your child's pediatrician and submitted to the MSW school office prior to the first day of camp attendance. Your completed Emergency Contact Card will be kept on record in the school office containing the names of those who will be called in the event of an emergency.

Families of students who participate in the MSW Summer Camp program prior to the onset of their first year of enrollment as a school-year student do not need to re-submit the health forms packet before the start of the school year unless the child has visited his or her pediatrician and received new immunizations.

Camp Lunch and Snacks

Children attending MSW Summer Camp pack and bring their lunches to camp. Refrigeration is provided for children through age five in Primary camp. Water or two-percent milk is provided as a beverage to Primary camp children. Wholesome snacks are provided to Primary camp children.

In our Elementary camp program, children's lunches are refrigerated upon arrival. A snack is provided; however, if your child has special dietary needs, please send a snack that meets your child's needs. A "water bottle" or other refillable container should be labelled with the child's name and brought to camp.

Please refer to the section of this MSW Parent Handbook detailing school lunches and recommendations for more information.

Clothing and Sunscreen

Children attending MSW Summer Camp should wear clothing that is comfortable and sturdy. Outdoor play, crafts, and other activities should determine the choices you help your child make in terms of appropriate camp attire. Closed-toe shoes are required for access to climbing equipment for both Primary and Elementary campers. Weather-appropriate clothing suitable for outdoor activities is necessary. Sunscreen should be applied prior to the child's day at camp. Please send additional sunscreen to camp in a labelled container as needed.

Children of ages two to five must bring a complete change of clothing. If the camper is not toilet-trained, please send one week's supply of diapers and cleansing wipes labelled with the child's name. An email will be sent to you if additional items are needed.

Nappers

Napping children need to bring a crib sheet, small pillow, and blanket to camp. These items will remain at MSW throughout the week.

Finances

Payment Options

Payments may be made to the Montessori School of Westminster in three ways: (1) check, (2) ACH, or (3) credit/debit card. We do not accept cash payments.

(1) Check

Please make your payments to the Montessori School of Westminster *via check* made payable to "MSW." Kindly use US Postal Service addressed to MSW, 1055 Montessori Drive, Westminster, Maryland 21158 or **personally deliver your payment to our administrative offices.**

Do **not** send payment with a child or in a child's weekly Blue Bag.

(2) ACH (Automatic Debit)

A second payment option exists via Automated Clearing House, or "ACH." By completing the ACH Authorization Agreement supplied by MSW, you authorize a direct debit of your bank account in the agreed upon amount on the first day of each month while payments are due. This authorization will remain in effect until the Montessori School of Westminster has received written notification of termination.

(3) Credit/Debit

A third payment option is via credit/debit card. Simply go to our website www.MontessoriSchoolofWestminster.org and click the "payment" button on the home page. When choosing this option you will be responsible for paying a convenience fee associated with the processing of your credit/debit card. This convenience fee goes directly to the payment page host, **not** MSW, for the processing of your payment.

For security and audit reasons, **cash is not accepted for ANY payments.** This includes fund-raising, trip fees, etc.

Questions concerning charges or payments should be addressed to the Bookkeeper.

Any extenuating circumstances that might interfere with the timely payment of tuition should be communicated in writing to the Bookkeeper before a missed payment occurs.

Returned Check Fee

A fee of \$25 will be added to the family's MSW account balance for any check returned to the Montessori School of Westminster by the bank. If an ACH debit is returned for non-sufficient funds, a fee of \$6.00 will be added to the family's MSW account balance.

The school reserves the right to require a family whose check has been returned to submit future payments in the form of a money order or cashier's check.

Application of Payments

Payments are recorded when received and are applied to account balances in this order:

1. Returned check fees
2. Late fees
3. Other fees: i.e. PVC, materials, etc.

4. Tuition balances

Payment Schedules

The Montessori School of Westminster offers various payment plans for tuition. All payment plans begin in February of the preceding academic year and end no later than January 1st. First year payment plans may be created to facilitate new student enrollments. To learn more about payment plan options, please contact the Bookkeeper in the Office of Finance at 410.848.6283 EXT 103 or and request an MSW Financial Packet, a helpful resource for new and returning families.

Withdrawal and Refund Policy

- Admission is for the full academic term in accordance with the dates set forth in the school calendar for the applicable school year.
- Upon written notice of withdrawal of the student from the program and upon written request for refund, if received before July 1, the school will refund any tuition paid, minus the 10% non-refundable tuition deposit payment.
- No portion of tuition paid or due will be refunded or cancelled after July 1, the subsequent absence, removal for cause, or withdrawal of the student from the school, notwithstanding.
- School application fee, billing fee and ten percent (10%) of the total tuition amount are **not** refundable under any circumstance.

Nonpayment of Tuition and Fees

- If any payment is in arrears by more than 45 days, the student may be removed from the school and his or her academic records withheld pending payment.
- During the school year, if a student is not attending the academic program and/or if any payment is in arrears by more than 15 days, the student's space will be forfeited.
- Re-enrollment for the subsequent school year is contingent upon payment of all outstanding tuition and fees.

Late Pick-Up Fees

When students are picked up late after school or after the closing time for the After School Care program, late pick-up fees are invoiced.

The families of students who are not picked up by 3 PM are charged \$15 as a late fee. After 3:30 PM, the late pick-up fee converts to \$25, the provisional care rate (for non-care program-enrolled students).

For those in After School Care, a fee of \$15 is invoiced if the student is not picked up by 6 PM. After fifteen minutes, the family will be charged an additional \$1.00 per minute.

Payment Due Date/Late Fees

There is a late fee of ten percent (10%) of the amount due, rounded to the next whole dollar, but not to exceed \$25.00, for each late payment. A payment is considered late when received in the school's administrative offices after the first of the month it is due, unless the first occurs on a weekend or legal holiday, in which case payment is due by the next business day. A "legal holiday" includes those days on which the US Postal Service is closed for business. If a payment remains unpaid after 30 days, an additional late fee will be assessed on the first day of the following month.

The late fee is assessed separately against each past due invoice.

Any extenuating circumstances that might result in a late payment should be communicated in writing to the Bookkeeper before a missed payment occurs.

Maryland State Sales Tax

Parents and staff occasionally make purchases for the school. The school is exempt from paying Maryland state sales tax when a copy of the exemption certificate is presented at the time any retail purchase is made. It may be prudent to present the exemption certificate to a store's management or customer service department before attempting to purchase goods as some stores have certain requirements for doing so. Please obtain an exemption certificate from MSW before making a purchase. **The school will not reimburse sales tax in either cash or Parent Volunteer Commitment time.**

Parent Volunteer Commitment (PVC)

The Montessori School of Westminster is a non-profit school. All families are required to sign a PVC agreement pledging 30 hours of Parent Volunteer Commitment time per school year or pay \$450. The PVC year begins on June 15 and ends the following year on June 14. PVC hours expire at the end of the current PVC year.

All parents are required to share in the maintenance and improvement of the school. PVC work has played a major role in lowering our expenses. The children take pride in knowing their parents are interested in helping with their classrooms, and parents get to know one another as they share their ideas and talents.

If you see a need or an opportunity at MSW that would benefit from PVC effort, please share your idea with a staff member.

Please request the PVC Manual to assist you in selecting qualifying jobs and tracking completed commitment hours.

Parent Referral Incentive Program

Parents of currently enrolled students who refer successful candidates to the school for enrollment receive an incentive of 25 non-expiring PVC hours plus a maximum \$500 tuition credit. The credit is awarded with the final tuition payment or as a refund near the end of the calendar year when tuition has been paid in full. Referred applicants must *not* be currently registered in our offices as members of “prospective families” and must enroll for the succeeding school year. Tuition credits are awarded per family and *not* per enrolling child. The maximum tuition credit for each referred family is \$500. If more than one referral name is listed by an enrolling family, the credit will be distributed accordingly. It is the responsibility of the referring family to make certain their referral lists them.

Parents who refer an interested family for an observation or tour or to an MSW Open House receive two PVC hours if the referred party enters the name of the referring family on the event sign-in log. Parents who attend an MSW Open House with an interested family and record the attendance of both parties via the event sign-in log receive four PVC hours. Should a referred family successfully enroll their child(ren), the hours grow to 25 hours for each family referral in addition to the \$500 tuition credit. These hours may be carried over from school year to school year, unlike other PVC hours. If more than one referring family is listed by the successful applicant, hours will be distributed accordingly.

This policy is in effect until changed or ended by action of the MSW Board of Trustees. Please contact Mrs. Radcliffe, Registrar, at 410.848.6283 EXT 104 or via email to sradcliffe@TheMSW.org for additional information.

Grievance Policy

Step 1—Talk directly to the person responsible for the difficulty.

Step 2—Contact the classroom guides and discuss the difficulty.

Step 3—If, after observing steps 1 and 2, you are not satisfied with the outcome, contact the Head of School.

Whenever satisfactory results are not obtained, calls or letters should be directed to a designated Board member. Grievances may be presented in written or verbal form to the designated Board member. The designated Board member must be contacted in advance of the Board meeting to ensure the grievance is placed on the agenda by the Board President. The issue may be discussed during the Board meeting or may be deferred for later action at the discretion of the Board. Any actions taken will be documented in the minutes of the meeting at which time the actions were approved. The designated Board member will contact the person who submitted the grievance with the Board's decision.

Student Dismissal

Any student is subject to dismissal from the school at any time by written notice from the Head of School. The Head of School, after conferences with faculty and parents, will notify the Board of Trustees of the dismissal.

MSW Board of Trustees & Committees

Those currently serving as members of the **Montessori School of Westminster's Board of Trustees** are:

Kraig Maenner	President
Doug Piper	Vice-President
Amy Dorman	Secretary
David Schriver	Treasurer
Rebecca Carpenter	Trustee
Jason Collins	Trustee
Carly Hudson	Trustee
Cameo Lawlor	Trustee
Joshua Lippy	Trustee
Matt Rickeman	Trustee
Kelly Shaffer	Trustee
Wendy Wolf	Trustee

Buildings and Grounds Committee—Doug Piper, Chair

Committee on Trustees—

Development Committee— Cameo Lawlor and Kelly Shaffer, Co-Chairs

Finance Committee—David Schriver, Chair

Montessori School of Westminster Staff Profiles

MC = Montessori Compass

CHRIS BANGERD

Bookkeeper; Office of Finance

410.848.6283 Ext. 103

MC: BANGERD, CHRIS (ADMINISTRATOR)

cbangerd@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Bangerd has an Associates of Arts degree in Accounting from Villa Julie College (now Stevenson University) and a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Baltimore. She passed the CPA exam in 1990 and has been working in accounting for over 25 years.

Mrs. Bangerd lives in Westminster with her husband. In her spare time, she enjoys reading and watching college basketball.

KATHY CAMPBELL

After School Care

MC: CAMPBELL, KATHY (TEACHER)

kcampbell@TheMSW.org

Ms. Campbell joined our staff in 1997 and has worked as an aide in our Primary classes.

This year, Ms. Campbell will be an aide in the After School Care program. Her hobbies and interests include a variety of crafts, the Baltimore Orioles, volunteering at the Union Mills Homestead, and especially enjoying her grandchildren.

JENNIFER CARROLL

Primary Guide

MC: CARROLL, JENNIFER (TEACHER)

jcarroll@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Carroll is a native of Westminster. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary and Special Education at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia in 2012. While attending St. Joe's, she played on their lacrosse team. Before starting her Montessori training at the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies in Silver Spring, Maryland, she worked at a local preschool for two years. Mrs. Carroll is active in local sports; she is currently coaching a fourth grade girls' basketball team, and is the junior varsity coach at Manchester Valley High School. She is excited to continue her journey at MSW.

STEPHANIE DAVIS

Middle School Guide

MC: DAVIS, STEPHANIE (TEACHER)

sdavis@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Davis earned her Bachelor of Science from the University of Maryland in 2001, majoring in Cell and Molecular Biology and Genetics. She received her Masters of Arts in teaching from University of Maryland University College in 2004. Prior to joining the MSW staff, she taught middle and high school sciences for eight years in Carroll, Charles, and Baltimore counties. She has recently undertaken Montessori Secondary training (middle school) at the Houston Montessori Center in Texas. Mrs. Davis lives in Westminster with her husband and two children, Riley and Rowan.

FRANK DILEONARDI

Physical Education

443.952.0861

MC: DILEONARDI, FRANK (TEACHER)

Level5Soccer@gmail.com

Mr. DiLeonardi is the lead assistant and primary goalkeeping coach for the men's soccer team at McDaniel College in Westminster, Maryland. He is entering his fifth season with the squad. In that time, he has coached the starting goalkeeper, who has earned both all-conference and all Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference honors.

Outside of McDaniel, Mr. DiLeonardi is the owner of Mighty Kicks and Level 5 Soccer, programs that use soccer as a tool to help young people become more active at an early age, and to help develop motor and social interaction skills.

Mr. DiLeonardi currently holds a National Level D license from US Soccer; a National Soccer Coaches Association of American (NSCAA) National diploma; a NSCAA Advanced National diploma; a NSCAA Premier diploma; NSCAA level 1, 2, and 3 Goalkeeping diplomas; and, a NSCAA Advanced National Goalie diploma. He is currently enrolled at Carroll Community College as an exercise science major.

LINDA FELKER

Lower Elementary Guide

MC: FELKER, LINDA (TEACHER)

lfelker@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Felker earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Thomas Edison State College with a concentration in education studies. She first came to Montessori education as a parent and Primary aide in 1988. She went on to take her Lower and Upper Elementary training from the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies and worked in both Lower and Upper Elementary at the Montessori School of Westminster for a combined total of 12 years before moving on to start an Elementary program in another school. She is happy to be back at MSW where she feels at home.

Mrs. Felker enjoys gardening, needle crafts, and community volunteer projects. She lives in Littlestown, Pennsylvania with her husband.

BRADY GEIER

Lower Elementary Aide

MC: GEIER, BRADY (TEACHER)

bgeier@TheMSW.org

After graduating from South Carroll High School, Mrs. Geier went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in gerontology from California University. She also holds an Associate of Arts degree from Strayer University in Business Administration and Accounting. Mrs. Geier has worked as a substitute teacher for Carroll County Public Schools. She resides in Westminster with her husband, Nick, and her sons, Noah and Dillon. When not working, Mrs. Geier enjoys being with her family, cooking, and gardening.

STEVIE GEIMAN

Beginnings Aide

After School Care Aide

MC: GEIMAN, STEVIE (TEACHER)

sgeiman@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Geiman is working on her Early Childhood Special Education degree at Carroll Community College. She has been working with children for over 15 years and currently has over 60 college credits. Mrs. Geiman has worked with children in childcare centers and also in the public school system, focusing on children with special needs.

Mrs. Geiman began working at MSW in 2018. Her son will be the Lower Elementary program this year. Mrs. Geiman's hobbies include

spending time with her family, reading book, camping, and going to the beach.

TRACY GRIMES

Beginnings Aide

After School Care Aide

MC: GRIMES, TRACY (TEACHER)

tgrimes@TheMSW.org

STEPHANIE HALLEY

Engagement Director

Choral Music Director

410.848.6283 Ext. 102

MC: HALLEY, STEPHANIE (ADMINISTRATOR)

shalley@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Halley wears a few hats at MSW (one of which is Mom to Zeke and Nate Halley). As Director of Engagement, Mrs. Halley applies her 20-plus years of nonprofit capacity building, fundraising, and executive coaching experience to help MSW even more effectively utilize our community's talents and resources.

Mrs. Halley also gets to use her years of musical training and performance as she serves as MSW's Choral Music Director, working with the Lower and Upper Elementary, and Middle School classes.

Having lived in cities such as Guayaquil, Ecuador; Paris, France; Washington, D.C.; and, Baltimore for much of her life, Mrs. Halley is thrilled to be 'back home' with her husband John and their sons in Carroll County, the hometown of both of her parents and family farm.

KIM JERSILD

Administrative Assistant

410.848.6283 Ext. 100

MC: JERSILD, KIM (ADMINISTRATOR)

kjersild@TheMSW.org or

office@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Jersild graduated from South Carroll High School and attended Carroll Community College. Prior to joining MSW, Mrs. Jersild worked at Carroll County General Hospital for 13 years. Mrs. Jersild has worked in Lower Elementary, Middle School, Beginnings, and After School Care. Mrs. Jersild enjoys spending time with her husband, two dogs, daughters and grandson, Dylan, who is in the MSW Lower Elementary program. She also enjoys sewing, camping and cooking.

TAYLOR JOHNSON

Registered Nurse

nurse@TheMSW.org

A former MSW student, Mrs. Johnson graduated from Towson University with a bachelor's degree in Business Management and Human Resources. She continued her education at Carroll Community College and acquired her Registered Nurse licensing.

As MSW's visiting nurse, Mrs. Johnson's duties include review of student files for compliance with vaccination requirements and to affirm medications are documented according to the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR).

At Lorien Life Care Center in Taneytown, Maryland, Mrs. Johnson works as a delegating nurse and assisted living manager. She currently resides in the Westminster area. When not working, Mrs. Johnson enjoys visiting the beach and spending time with her nieces and her entire family.

JODI LUPCO

Head of School

410-848-6283 Ext. 101

MC: LUPCO, JODI (ADMINISTRATOR)

jlupco@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Lupco is a graduate of Penn State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education. She first came to MSW as a parent and volunteer. She joined the staff in the fall of 1996 as Admissions Officer. In the summer of 2002, she took the Montessori Lower Elementary (ages 6 to 9) training from the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies in Silver Spring, Maryland. She was a guide in Lower Elementary from September, 2002 through June of 2007. Mrs. Lupco is CPR/First Aid-certified. She is an instructor for the newly developed Administrators Course at the Institute for Advance Montessori Studies. She currently serves on the Board of Trustees of Carroll County Youth Service Bureau.

Mrs. Lupco resides in Westminster with her husband, Mike, and enjoys spending time with her family. Her daughters, Taylor and Tori, both attended MSW.

GRETCHEN MALCOLM

Elementary Guide

MC: MALCOLM, GRETCHEN (TEACHER)

gmalcolm@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Malcolm is a graduate of Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Maryland, where she completed a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. An educator for 38 years, she was introduced to Montessori philosophy in 1985 and never looked back. She took the Elementary training at the Ohio Montessori Training Institute in Cleveland, Ohio.

TERRI MILLER

Language Resource Specialist

410-236-3855

MC: MILLER, TERRI (TEACHER)

tmiller@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Miller is our MSW Learning Resource Specialist. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Social Work from Shippensburg University, her Masters in Special Education/ Management, and later her Maryland Teacher Certification from Western Maryland College (now McDaniel College). She has 25-plus years in the fields of Special Education, Mental Health and Human Services Management. She is trained in Orton Gillingham, the Wilson Reading Program, and many other educational programs. Mrs. Miller worked as the Disability/Mental Health Coordinator for Head Start, managed the YMCA Childcare programs, has provided private and small group tutoring, and taught at Francis Scott Key High School.

Mrs. Miller lives in Westminster with her husband and two of their four children. She enjoys spending time with her family, outdoor activities, the beach, yard sales, movie nights, and church activities.

STEFANIE MISNER

Environmental Educator

MC: MISNER, STEFANIE (TEACHER)

smisner@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Misner received her undergraduate degree in Marine Biology from the University of North Carolina Wilmington, a master's in Environmental Education also from UNCW, and is a certified North Carolina Environmental Educator. With over 10 years of experience in aquariums and a local nature pre-school, she has worked with children of all ages, prefers to teach outside, and is passionate about molding the next generation of environmental stewards. Both her daughters, Penelope and Cordelia, are MSW students. In her rare free time, Mrs. Misner loves to scuba dive and travel.

ASHLEY MYERS

Primary Aide (Mrs. Strine's classroom)

MC: MYERS, ASHLEY (TEACHER)

amyers@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Myers grew up in Carroll County and now lives just across the Frederick County line with her family. Her first job at age 14 led to licensing in cosmetology as well as owning her own business as a stylist. When her child arrived, Mrs. Myers grew interested in education and searched for ways to reach her daughter at her level. Those efforts became the basis for spreading her passion for education to everyone.

Mrs. Myers' family includes her husband and four-year-old daughter who attends MSW. The Myers family enjoys camping and hiking, and especially visiting West Virginia.

MARYNA NEIKO

Upper Elementary Intern

MC: NEIKO, MARYNA (TEACHER)

mneiko@TheMSW.org

Maryna Neiko (Tkachuk) was born and raised in Western Ukraine. She pursued her dream to become a teacher at Podillya Technological University. She graduated from university with Bachelor's and Master's degrees in teaching home economics. Mrs. Neiko got her first part-time job as a teacher at the local middle school in 2001. After successful graduation from the Language School, Mrs. Neiko was offered an ESL teacher position in the fall of 2002. Mrs. Neiko moved to the US in 2008 and enrolled in the Northern Virginia Community College. She earned her Associate of Applied Science Degree. Since then, she has received continuing education certificates to maintain her credentials. Most recently, Mrs. Neiko has undertaken the training to receive the Montessori credential for teaching at the Upper Elementary level.

Children were always an indispensable part of Mrs. Neiko's life and now she loves raising her two sons. She joined the MSW team in 2015 and is passionate about Montessori method. In addition to seeking opportunities to grow and learn professionally, Mrs. Neiko enjoys spending time with her family. Her hobbies are cooking, knitting, putting puzzles together, and camping.

MINDY NILES

Instrumental Music Director

MC: NILES, MINDY (TEACHER)

Mrs. Niles is excited to be back at MSW as the Instrumental Music Director. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Lebanon Valley College, a Master of Music degree in Oboe Performance from the University of North Carolina, and is a former member of the Greensboro Symphony Orchestra. Mrs. Niles created the MSW music program in 2010, is adjunct faculty at McDaniel College, and continues to maintain a private studio in Carroll County. In addition to her work at MSW, she manages the Encore Music Association in Carroll County, which consists of a community band and orchestra, a homeschool academy, and two annual summer music camps.

Mrs. Niles and her husband, Tim, have two grown daughters; one is a music teacher and the other a physical therapist. Mrs. Niles has a new granddaughter and enjoys spending time with her family.

TRES QUINN

Lower Elementary Guide

MC: QUINN, TRES (TEACHER)

tquinn@TheMSW.org

Ms. Quinn graduated from Indiana University of Pennsylvania with a Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Math Education. Ms. Quinn has been at MSW for 16 years, having completed training at the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies.

Ms. Quinn's children, Elizabeth and Nathan, are both proud MSW alum.

Ms. Quinn loves going to high tea. She also enjoys watching BBC TV programs and reading historical fiction.

SUZANNE RADCLIFFE

Registrar; Office of Admissions

410.848.6283 Ext.104

MC: RADCLIFFE, SUZANNE (ADMINISTRATOR)

sradcliffe@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Radcliffe is an "alum mom" whose first year as an MSW parent was 1993. Her son, Robert, graduated from the MSW Middle School program ten years later. She served on the Board of Trustees during the construction of the campus and also served as Board secretary. She loves art, photography, writing, gardening, reading, and life on her farm. Mrs. Radcliffe obtained a *summa cum laude* BA in American Studies from UMBC in

1995 and a juris doctor degree from the University of Maryland School of Law in 1997.

SHANNIN SHEASBY

**Spanish Language Instruction
Events & Logistics Coordinator**
410.848.6283 Ext. 102

MC: SHEASBY, SHANNIN (ADMINISTRATOR)
ssheasby@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Sheasby joined MSW in 2013. She grew up in Westminster and earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish and Political Science from Gettysburg College. She studied abroad in Seville, Spain during her junior year in a full immersion program. She has taught Spanish at North Carroll High School and at Carroll Community College and worked as the ESOL liaison at the college as well.

Mrs. Sheasby joined the MSW development team as the Events & Logistic Coordinator in 2016. Her children, Noah and Ella, are both students at MSW. Mrs. Sheasby loves spending time with her family, hiking, reading, traveling, and working at MSW.

DAWN STRINE

Primary Guide

MC: STRINE, DAWN (TEACHER)
dstrine@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Strine attended Carroll Community College where she earned her Associate of Arts degree in Elementary Education. She taught preschool for three years before joining the Montessori staff in 1994. After 21 years at MSW, Mrs. Strine joined the MSW faculty by undertaking her certification training at the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Mrs. Strine enjoys reading, running, and spending quality time with her family in their Ocean City getaway.

WANDA WELLER

After School Care Senior Staff

MC: WELLER, WANDA (TEACHER)
wweller@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Weller is retired from Carroll County Public Schools where she spent 32 years as an instructional assistant. She is a member of the National Education Association Maryland State Retired School Personnel Association, and she has received her senior staff credential from the

Maryland Office of Childcare. Additionally, she has been trained in the administration of CPR and first aid.

Mrs. Weller is both an Orioles fan and a Ravens fan. She is married to Abe and has two grown children and two grandchildren. She enjoys spending time with her family, cooking and baking, collecting and creating recipes, gardening, reading, and serving on church committees.

LAUREN WELSH-BAER

Lower Elementary Guide

MC: WELSH-BAER, LAUREN (TEACHER)
lwelshbaer@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Welsh-Baer graduated from St. Catherine University with a Master's degree in Education and from Juniata College with a Bachelor of Science in Communication Education. She earned her Montessori certification from the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies in Silver Spring, Maryland. Mrs. Welsh-Baer was a student at MSW from Primary to third grade. She enjoys spending time with her husband, two children, and pets.

JENNIFER WOOLFORD

Primary Aide (Mrs. Carroll's class)

MC: Woolford, Jennifer (teacher)
jwoolford@TheMSW.org

Mrs. Woolford first became part of the MSW community as a parent in 2015. She is the mother of four, and her three youngest currently attend MSW's Lower Elementary program as first, second, and third graders. Her eldest child has graduated from college and is headed to graduate school.

After years of being a stay-at-home mom, Mrs. Woolford sought ways to engage more with the school and the community and considers herself extremely fortunate to have found a position at MSW.

Mrs. Woolford is currently a part-time student at Carroll Community College. She has written a children's book and has a blog on motherhood and life. In her free time, she enjoys writing, reading, and swimming.

Mrs. Woolford has lived in Carroll County with her family for over a decade. She is looking forward to this next chapter.

JAMES WRIGHT

Beginnings Guide

MC: WRIGHT, JAMES (TEACHER)

jwright@TheMSW.org

Mr. Wright graduated from the University of Maryland; College Park with a degree in Kinesiology and Clinical Nutrition. He has added Infant and Toddler Training from the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies to his credential and has joined our teaching staff as Beginnings guide. Mr. Wright and his wife, Melissa, together with their sons, Carter and Lincoln, live in Westminster. When he is not enjoying outside activities with his family, such as swimming and sledding, Mr. Wright likes exercise, particularly weight-lifting. He continues to enjoy studying about new things and is a “life-long learner.”

