

Dear MSW Families,

Welcome to our most recent version of the MSW Parent Handbook, your guide to procedure and policy at the Montessori School of Westminster.

Text in **red ink** indicates sections which are amended due to the Covid-19 health emergency. Please refer to the “Covid-19 Addendum,” located at the end of the Handbook, for more information on temporarily suspended school practices or pandemic-specific procedures.

As always, we welcome your outreach to us should you have questions or comments about any school-related matters. We deeply appreciate the trust you repose in the MSW team as we work with your children, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

The Faculty & Staff of the Montessori School of Westminster

2020-2021 PARENT HANDBOOK

<u>Introduction</u>	5		
Mission Statement			
Diversity Statement			
Vision Statement			
Non-Discrimination Policy			
Accreditation & Licensing			
Maryland Green School			
<u>Admissions</u> Policies.....	5		
Governance			
Eligibility			
Application Procedure			
MSW Parent Guidelines			
Admissions Process			
Acceptance			
Student Selection			
Waiting List			
Student Placement			
Reenrollment			
Transition			
<u>School Operations</u>	11		
Drop-Off & Pick-Up			
The School Day			
Student-Staff/Guide Ratio			
The School			
Curriculum			
Foreign Language Study			
The Student			
The Guide			
The Aide			
The Classroom			
The Parent			
Discipline Policy			
<u>Privacy</u> Rights and Access to Records.....	17		
Privacy Rights			
Performance Transcripts			
Parent Review			
Parent Communication			
<u>Observations, Evaluations, Conferences</u>	187		
Classroom Observations			
Conferences			
<u>Schedule</u> Policies.....	19		
All Day Care			
Weather Policy			
Snow Make-Up Days			
Transportation			
Schedule Changes			
<u>Health & Safety</u>	20		
Student Health Records			
Sunscreen			
In the Event of an Emergency			
Absenteeism			
Illness			
Medication Policy			
Medications & Overnight Travel			
Participation at School & in Physical Education			
Head Lice Policy			
Accident			
Car Safety Seats—Lower Elementary			
Vehicle Safety			
Weather Guidelines			
<u>Security</u>	25		
Door Access			
Drills			
Emergency Cards			
		Volunteers	
		Other Security Measures	
<u>General</u> Classroom Policies.....	28		
Lost & Found			
School Clothing			
Beginnings & Primary Students			
Possessions			
Photos			
Gift Policies			
Special Information from Home			
Allergies			
Snack			
Lunch			
Breakfast During Before School Care			
Napping			
Screen-free Curriculum			
<u>Communications</u>	32		
Montessori Compass			
Guidelines for Online Communication			
MSW Updates			
The Blue Bag			
RSVPs			
MSW Website & Parent Access			
Textedly			
MSW & Facebook			
<u>Development & Family Involvement</u>	35		
<u>Cell Phones</u>	36		
<u>Special Days & Events</u>	37		
Parent Visits			
Parent Education Nights			
Grandparent Days			
Parties			
Field Trips			
Closing Ceremony			
<u>MSW Summer Camp</u>	39		
Availability			
Registration			
Payment			
Drop-Off & Pick-Up			
Medical & Emergency Forms			
Camp Lunch & Snacks			
Clothing & Sunscreen			
Nappers			
<u>Finances</u>	41		
Payment Options			
Returned Check Fee			
Application of Payments			
Payment Schedules			
Withdrawal & Refund Policy			
Nonpayment of Tuition and Fees			
Late Pick-Up Fees			
Payment Due Date/Late Fees			
Maryland State Sales Tax			
Maryland Nonpublic Textbook Program			
Maryland Building Grant Program			
Maryland Safety Grant Program			
<u>Parent Volunteer Commitment (PVC)</u>	44		
Parent Referral Incentive Program			
<u>Grievance Policy</u>	45		
Student Dismissal			
<u>MSW Board of Trustees</u>	46		
Board Committees			
<u>MSW Staff Profiles</u>	47		
<u>Covid-19 Addendum</u>	53		

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 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 deliver an individualized, self-paced, structured education in a nurturing environment that allows students the opportunity to explore topics deeply and reach their fullest potential.

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.

Vision Statement

We envision a school that cultivates independent, self-advocating, intellectually curious learners engaged in a global community.

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.

Accreditation & Licensing

The Montessori School of Westminster is accredited by the Association of Independent Maryland & DC Schools (AIMS) and the American Montessori Society (AMS). Membership in these oversight organizations ensures compliance with the highest proposed standards.

Additionally, MSW is approved by the Maryland State Department of Education. Programs providing services to children below the kindergarten level are subject to the licensing requirements assigned by MSDE and administered by the state agency known as the Office of Childcare.

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.

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 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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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:

2020-2021 PARENT HANDBOOK

- 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. 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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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.

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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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 is held for families new to MSW. The orientation includes an informal question and answer session and distribution of helpful materials.

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 event, 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 hradcliffe@TheMSW.org with questions regarding the admissions process.

School Operations – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

The school has a nine-month school year. Our 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.

For children who are age two on September 1st of the school year and enrolled in the MSW Beginnings program, 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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

Students may be dropped off no earlier than 8:15 AM unless they are enrolled in BSC. From 8:15 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.

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 3:10 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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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 2020-2021 School Year:

	All Staff	Guides Only
Montessori Beginnings	1:6	1:12
Primary	1:13	1:13
Lower Elementary	1:10	1:15
Upper Elementary	1:9	1:15
Middle School	1:9	1:7

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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

- 1 Montessori Beginnings class
- 3 Primary classes
- 2 Lower Elementary classes
- 2 Upper Elementary classes
- 1 Middle School class
- Before School Care program**
- Nappers program
- Extended Day program
- 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 of the Middle School work cycles are followed by an Immersion Week away from school. The last cycle of the year is followed by an Adventure Trip. The final week of each cycle is the assessment week, utilizing a variety of assessment methods. The cycle format is designed to help students learn time management, organization, and decision-making skills.

Foreign Language Study

Primary, 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 Aide

The aide provides support to the guide in the administration of the classroom and is integral to the success of its function.

Aides at MSW undergo six hours of continuing education annually, at a minimum, and senior staff members undertake at least 12 hours of continuing education per year.

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. Once parents have invested the time and resources to learn basic Montessori principles, they 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 ask that you make every effort to attend these sessions to better your understanding of MSW and the 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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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 Beginnings 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, conferences are not structured to include student participation. However, there are certain circumstances which are best resolved via a collaborative effort between staff, parents, and student. Conferences of this sort are scheduled at mutually agreeable times for staff and family members.

Schedule Policies

All Day Care – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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, Textedly cell phone notifications, 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 “Textedly” cell phone notification system. Please contact the MSW office with all new contact information to ascertain your receipt of important messages.

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.

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 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.

See also “Weather Guidelines for Recess, Physical Education, and Environmental Education” in the Health & Safety section of this handbook.

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. For children in the Beginnings and Primary programs, a Sun Safety directive selecting the family's choice for the application of sunscreen is provided.

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, please communicate with MSW throughout your child's illness and recovery. Please note that regular attendance will maximize your child's learning experience.

Illness – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

Students with severe colds, a fever of 100 degrees or higher, 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.** When providing the names of those persons who are permitted to pick up your child from MSW on the school emergency form, please include provisions for those times when your child may become ill at school and include who may pick up your ill child within 30 minutes after receiving notification from the school.

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

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 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.

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 for required review and verification by the MSW school nurse.

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 as mandated by state law. 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 the field trip.

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. No passing is permitted by vehicles while in carpool lines. Drivers should refrain from parking in the pedestrian crosswalk at any time.

Weather Guidelines for Recess, Physical Education & Environmental Education

Time spent outdoors is an important part of the school day whether it is guided during Physical Education (PE), Environmental Education (EE), or free play during recess. It is difficult to set guidelines that fit every circumstance and condition in regards to outside activities, especially during periods of rainy or cold weather. Students at MSW will go out every day if the weather is within the parameters listed below.

Our expectation is that parents will provide their child with clothing appropriate for all types of weather so he/she can participate in all outdoor opportunities.

When determining whether a classroom will go outside, we will make these considerations:

- Temperature
- Humidity
- Heat index
- Wind chill
- Age of students
- Length of time outdoors
- Adequacy of students' clothing
- Condition of the playground

Cold Weather Guidelines

1. When properly clothed, children can participate in safe, vigorous play in an outdoor environment in most weather conditions. Increased caution should be practiced when temperatures reach below 40 degrees including wind chill factor.
2. When temperatures and wind chill factors fall below:
 - 32 degrees including the wind chill, students in-- Beginnings and Primary are limited to 20-minute intervals outside.
 - 30 degrees including the wind chill, students in-- Beginnings and Primary are kept indoors. Elementary and Middle School are limited to 20-minute intervals outside
 - 28 degrees including the wind chill, students in-- Beginnings and Primary are kept indoors. Elementary and Middle School are kept indoors.
3. Temperatures considerations and proper clothing:
 - Below 60 degrees >jacket or long sleeves recommended
 - Below 50 degrees >coat and long pants recommended
 - Below 40 degrees >gloves and hats with previously recommended gear necessary
4. Clothing requirement when snow is present:
 - Snow pants and snow boots. A change of clothes is an acceptable alternative. (Boots kept at school for EE may be used during snow unless otherwise noted by parent.)

Note: Due to difficulty of preparing the entire class for outside play in proper attire, students in Beginnings and Primary will only be going outside in the snow during their scheduled EE small group time. For additional information, please consult your child's guide.

Heat Advisory Guidelines

1. When the temperature reaches 95 degrees as indicated by the National Weather Heat Index chart, faculty should provide for inside activities or lessons.
2. For temperatures below 95 degrees, faculty should provide students with a water break before and after recess. Additionally, any student who shows signs of heat exhaustion or overheating should be allowed a water break during the recess period.
3. Faculty should be aware of medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy (seizure), allergy medications etc. which put students at a high risk of heat-related illness. These conditions could be intensified if exercising in hot weather; however, there is no reason to limit students' participation, unless a known risk is obvious or the parent has advised the school that their child should not participate.

Rain Guidelines

If the temperature is 45 degrees and above including the wind chill, students will be permitted to be outside during a light to moderate rain event. Note: PE will not be held outside during any rain events.

1. Clothing requirements for rain:
 - Rain jacket
 - Rain boots

Please be advised it is best to encourage your child to be prepared to be outside each day. You are welcome to send extra clothing for your child to school. Should your child come to school unprepared, he/she will not be able to participate in outdoor activities.

References: Weather Guidelines – National Weather Service | Montessori Services | Barlett City Schools

Security

In order to provide a safe environment for all students, the Montessori School of Westminster has certain practices and procedures in place. Security needs of the school are evaluated on an on-going basis. School staff has participated in training to help ensure the needs of students are addressed in the event of a crisis, and an emergency plan is in place for crisis management. This plan is available for review in the school office.

Door Access

The doors to the academic building remain locked whenever students are present in the school. All visitors to the school are admitted only after ringing a signal buzzer located adjacent to the main entrance and being visually identified by office staff. Visitors must then report to the school office and sign a roster naming their destination within the school. Visitors are supervised by school staff and are asked to sign out when their visit is complete.

In order to maintain the most secure environment possible for children, parents and students are directed to refrain from permitting visitor access to the building by opening doors from inside the building. This helps MSW staff identify and supervise all visitors within the academic building. This applies to all persons entering through the main doors of the building; everyone entering the building should be acknowledged by a staff member.

Drills

Drills are conducted throughout the school year to help in preparedness for a variety of emergencies including those related to weather, intruders, fire, etc. Students of all ages participate in drills.

Emergency Medical & Medication Training

Certain staff members have participated in qualifying training to assist with health-related situations that may arise within the school. State regulations mandate that at least one staff member in each program level maintain approved certification for:

- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
- Automated External Defibrillator (AED),
- First Aid

At MSW, approximately 20 staff members are certified for CPR, AED, and First Aid, exceeding the state-required mandate.

Additionally, eight staff members have received training for the administration of medications.

Emergency Cards

MSW maintains student file cards detailing emergency contact information, the names of those permitted to pick up children from school, etc. Each family must update this information annually at the beginning of the school year. It is important to consider who is entrusted to pick up your child when he or she is ill, **preferably within 30 minutes of receiving notice** from MSW regarding symptoms.

Volunteers – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

Parents who wish to volunteer within the school are asked to undergo a criminal history background check via fingerprinting. This applies in all cases in which a volunteer could potentially be alone with one or more students. Fingerprinting and background checks are conducted at the volunteer's expense, the cost of which is then applicable to the family's Parent Volunteer Commitment (PVC) to the school.

Fingerprinting can be obtained locally in the Westminster area. Contact information on businesses supplying this service is available through the school office. The cost for fingerprinting and criminal background history checks is approximately \$45 to \$65.

MSW reserves the right to update and amend its requirements for volunteers at any time.

Other Security Measures

MSW has measures in place which are not publicly described in order to preserve additional security for its students, staff, and visitors.

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 – **SEE COVID ADDENDUM**

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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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.

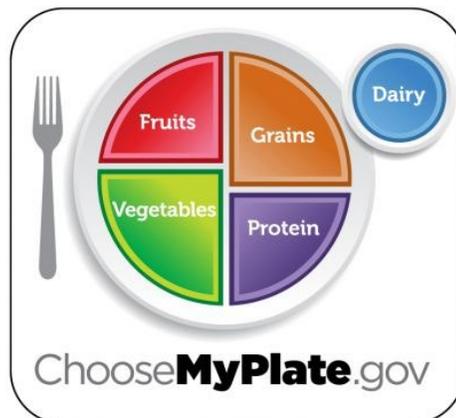
Examples of popular snacks include raw vegetables, fruits, and mini-muffins. In order to promote healthy eating habits, please avoid foods that are high in processed sugar. Also, please refer to specific classroom requirements that will be provided by your child's guides.

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 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.

Napping

Students enrolled in the Beginnings program who stay during afternoon hours will nap after lunch. Students of age three to 4.5 who stay at MSW during the afternoon will begin the school year in the “napping classroom” that provides options for sleeping and/or quiet activities. Faculty and staff will evaluate the needs of students on an on-going basis, and each student’s program enrollment will be adjusted to accommodate his or her appropriate developmental phase. Students of age 4.5 to five will participate in the MSW Extended Day program which is conducted in Primary classroom space during afternoon hours.

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.)

Screen-free Curriculum – Beginnings through Lower Elementary

Students in Beginnings, Primary, and Lower Elementary (age 2 through third grade) do not use devices with screens in the classroom or as part of the curriculum of any MSW program in which they participate.

Students in Upper Elementary (grades four, five, and six) and Middle School (grades seven, eight, and nine) are provided with technology options including access to devices utilizing screens for the preparation of reports based on research and for other activities. Student access to the internet at MSW is filtered and monitored for appropriate content and use.

This policy applies to students enrolled in Before School Care, After School Care, or any summer camp programs at the school.

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. Payments of any sort should be delivered by the parent to the school office.

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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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
- **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.

“Textedly” Cell Phone Notifications

MSW uses a school-wide cell phone notification system for important notices, especially those regarding weather-related closures and/or delays. Families who list cell phone numbers on applications for enrollment are automatically included.

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.

Development & Family Involvement – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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 participate 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.)
- 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 participate.

If you have questions or would like to talk about making a contribution, please contact Trish St. Michel, Director of Development (tstmichel@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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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 better 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.**

Grandparent Days – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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. Due to space limitations, we cannot accommodate parents as visitors on Grandparent Days. 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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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. No (non-enrolled) siblings are allowed on field trips.

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.

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 – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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 outdoor fun, crafts, and weekly themes for Elementary-age campers. Subjects may include science, art, technology, nature, math, music, campus exploration, creativity, and more. Themes change from year to year. Younger children in the Primary camp enjoy the Montessori classroom environments with a focus on fun and the great outdoors. 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. 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 the lunches of children through age five in Primary camp. Water or two-percent milk is provided as a beverage to Primary camp children as well as wholesome snacks.

In our Elementary camp program, children's lunches are not refrigerated; please pack accordingly. 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 every day.

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 container labelled with your child's name, as needed. Children in the Primary camp program will be provided with a form for parent signatures and consent for the application of sunscreen.

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 and are sent home for laundering weekly.

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 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 3:10 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.**

Maryland Nonpublic Textbook Program

MSW participates in the state of Maryland's Nonpublic Textbook program. This is a grant that allows MSW to purchase books, classroom materials, and technology equipment. By participating in the program, we are able to reduce the school's budgeted expenses by approximately \$60 to \$65 per **qualifying student**. This savings is considered when tuition rates are set by the MSW Board of Trustees.

Maryland Nonpublic Building Grant Program

MSW participates in the state of Maryland's Nonpublic Building Grant program. This is a grant that allows MSW to provide new doors, repave the parking lot, purchase a new HVAC system, etc. By participating in the program, we are able to reduce the school's budgeted expenses by approximately \$60 to \$65 per **qualifying student**. This savings is considered when tuition rates are set by the MSW Board of Trustees.

Maryland Nonpublic Safety Grant Program

MSW participates in the state of Maryland's Nonpublic Safety Grant program. This is a grant that allows MSW to evaluate our safety needs (cameras, safety locks, alarm systems, etc.). By participating in the program, we are able to reduce the school's budgeted expenses by approximately \$60 to \$65 per **qualifying student**. This savings is considered when tuition rates are set by the MSW Board of Trustees.

Parent Volunteer Commitment (PVC) – SEE COVID ADDENDUM

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
Josh Lippy	Secretary
David Schriver	Treasurer
Karen Barbour	Trustee
Jason Collins	Trustee
Amy Heikkinen-Brooks	Trustee
Michael Manion	Trustee
Hassan Mirazev	Trustee
Ed Molare	Trustee

Audit Committee—Ed Molare, Chair

Buildings & Grounds Committee—Doug Piper, Chair

Committee on Trustees— Doug Piper, Chair

Development Committee— Trish St. Michel

Finance Committee—David Schriver, Chair

Tech Committee—Josh Lippy, Chair

Marketing Committee—David Schriver, Chair

MSW parents are welcome to attend Board meetings. Dates are provided via MSW Updates. Those wishing to attend should contact Board member Josh Lippy via email to JLippy@TheMSW.org.

Montessori School of Westminster Staff Profiles

BAIN, MELISSA

Upper Elementary Aide

Mrs. Bain is originally from Pensacola, Florida and has lived in many places including overseas locations in Japan and Panama. She spent many years as a firefighter and paramedic and her work now includes being a strength coach. Mrs. Bain has been the MSW Girl Scout troop leader since 2015.

Mrs. Bain has three children; daughter Christina is attending MSW for her sixth year. Her two older children are both serving active duty in the US Marines and Army.

She enjoys strength training, backpacking, camping, section-hiking the Appalachian Trail, competing in strongman competitions, being outdoors, working on her farm, and her new grandson, Jayden.

CHRIS BANGERD

Bookkeeper; Office of Finance

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.

JENNIFER CARROLL

Primary Guide

Mrs. Carroll is a native of Westminster. She received her Bachelor of Science 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 and is currently coaching basketball at Manchester Valley High School.

Outside of MSW, Mrs. Carroll enjoys spending time with her son, Kaleb, and husband, Marcus. Mrs. Carroll enjoys being outside, hiking, and fishing.

KARALINE DIEHL

Primary Aide/After School Care

Ms. Diehl was born in Latvia and came to America in 2010. She enjoys working with small children at MSW. Ms. Diehl is a Raven's fan, likes spending time with her family, and loves the outdoors. She also loves spending time with her new chickens.

FRANK DiLEONARDI

Physical Education

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/Aide

Mrs. Felker first came to Montessori as a parent and Primary aide at the Montessori School of Westminster. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree at Thomas Edison State College and went on to complete her Montessori training in Lower and Upper Elementary at the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies. She has worked in a Montessori setting for 24 years.

Mrs. Felker enjoys gardening, needle crafts, cooking, and volunteer activities. She lives in Littlestown, Pennsylvania.

BRADY GEIER

Lower Elementary Aide

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.

AMY HEIKKINEN-BROOKS

Music Instruction

Mrs. Heikkinen-Brooks is the Music Teacher at MSW. She is a licensed clinical social worker, with a specialty in children's mental health and integrating the expressive arts with therapy. She has Bachelor and Masters' degrees in Social Work from the University of Maryland system, as well as undergraduate training in creative education from The New School in New York City.

She is a lifelong musician, singer, and self-identified Music Nerd, bringing all types of music into the MSW classroom and exploring different musical concepts and skills in the most fun, meaningful ways she can conjure.

Mrs. Heikkinen-Brooks and her wife live in Westminster with their young sons, and favorite family activities include roasting marshmallows over their front-yard fire pit, rocking out to their favorite songs in the car, and eating pineapple pizza.

KIM JERSILD

Administrative Assistant

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. Besides her current position in the school office, Mrs. Jersild has worked in Lower Elementary, Middle School, Beginnings, and After School Care. This year marks her 20th year at MSW. Mrs. Jersild enjoys spending time with her dog, Chewie, her daughters and grandson, Dylan. She also enjoys sewing, camping and cooking.

Mrs. Jersild has obtained certification for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Automated External Defibrillator (AED), First Aid application,

MSDE Office of Child Care Senior Staff, and Water Plant Operator.

ANN KIRKOWSKI

Upper Elementary Aide

Mrs. Kirkowski is a 2000 graduate of County College of Morris in Randolph, New Jersey with an Associates of Arts degree in Liberal Arts, a 2002 graduate of Drew University in Madison, New Jersey with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Behavioral Science, and a 2006 graduate of Gallaudet University in Washington D.C. with a Master's of Science degree.

Mrs. Kirkowski is a transplant to Carroll County having originated in New Jersey and subsequently living up and down the East Coast. She is an avid reader, novice gardener, hiker and lover of American Sign Language. She enjoys spending time with her family and newly acquired Mini Lop (bunny) named Little Miss.

NATALIE LEITAO

Primary Aide

Mrs. Leitao is thrilled to be a part of the MSW team! She is a Maryland native raised in nearby Eldersburg. She knew from a very young age that she always wanted to work with children. Mrs. Leitao received her Early Childhood Education certification in 2004. She has taught and worked in traditional preschools for over ten years, until researching and discovering the beauty of Montessori method. She loves working with children and seeing the joy on their faces when they discover something new. Mrs. Leitao plans on working to attain an Associate's degree at Carroll Community College.

She currently lives in Westminster with her husband, Jimmy, and her daughter, Gianna, who will be attending MSW. Mrs. Leitao enjoys spending time with her family, friends, watching movies, going to the beach, and she loves to travel and learn about new cultures.

JOY LIN

Beginnings Aide

Mrs. Lin studied Home Economics with an early childhood teaching certificate program in Taiwan. After graduating from college, she taught kindergarten for three years, then went on to pursue her Master's degree in Early Childhood Education in Texas Women's University. She received a Texas Educator Certificate for her

studies, and worked as a substitute teacher for levels kindergarten through fifth grade in public schools.

Due to a job opportunity for her husband, the family moved to Westminster a few years ago. They have a middle school son, Ethan, and enjoy hiking and camping as a family.

ALLIE LINDSEY

Middle School Guide

Ms. Lindsey is a graduate of St. Mary's College of Maryland with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English. She has also cultivated her interest in the sciences and has taken biology and chemistry courses at UMBC.

Ms. Lindsey recently enrolled in the Montessori Secondary training program with The Center for Guided Montessori Studies. She resides in Westminster with her partner Jacob (a MSW alumnus) and their daughter Violet. In her free time, Ms. Lindsey enjoys reading, hiking, and spending time with her family.

JODI LUPCO

Head of School

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 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

Mrs. Malcolm begins her 20th year teaching Upper Elementary at MSW. She graduated in 1980 from Washington Adventist University with a Bachelor's degree in elementary education, then married her college sweetheart, Stephen, in 1981.

She was introduced to the Montessori philosophy in 1985 and never looked back! She took the elementary (ages 6 to 12) training through the Association Montessori Internationale, then earned a Master's degree in curriculum development from Cleveland State University.

She has two grown children: Levi, who lives in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and a daughter, Mercedes, who lives Boston, Massachusetts. Mrs. Malcolm loves working with the children and families of MSW!

BETSY MERENA

Beginnings Guide

Mrs. Merena is excited to be back in the classroom for her second year at MSW. She is so glad to have made the switch from mainstream preschool to Montessori! Mrs. Merena received her Infants and Toddlers teaching credential from the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies and has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Roanoke College.

She lives in Westminster, just five minutes away from MSW, with her husband, Paul, and their daughter, Colette, who is in her third year of Primary at MSW.

TERRI MILLER

Language Resource Specialist

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 30-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

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 15 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.

MARYNA NEIKO

Upper Elementary Guide

Maryna Neiko (Tkachuk) was raised in Western Ukraine. She pursued her dream to become a teacher at Podillya Technological University where she earned her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in teaching computer science and home economics. Mrs. Neiko moved to the US in 2008. She earned her Associate of Applied Science Degree from Northern Virginia Community College in 2010. Mrs. Neiko learned about Montessori education while looking into schools for her son. She immediately fell in love with the philosophy and became a passionate supporter of Maria Montessori's teachings. Most recently, Mrs. Neiko has undertaken the training to receive the Montessori credential for teaching at the Upper Elementary level.

In addition to seeking opportunities to grow and learn professionally, Mrs. Neiko enjoys spending time with her family. She enjoys visiting new places, reading, knitting, and long walks in nature. Mrs. Neiko's greatest joy are her sons and her husband. She dreams to visit Ukraine with her boys and to share her heritage with them.

TRES QUINN

Lower Elementary Guide

Ms. Quinn graduated from Indiana University of Pennsylvania with a Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Math Education. She then completed Lower Elementary training at the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies. Ms. Quinn has worked at MSW for 18 years.

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

Ms. Quinn loves going with her three best friends to high tea. She also likes listening to books she downloads from the public library and watching British TV series.

SUZANNE RADCLIFFE

Registrar; Office of Admissions

Mrs. Radcliffe is an "alum mom" whose first year as an MSW parent was 1993. 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, studying the work of her personal superhero, Maria Montessori, and life on her farm, now featuring Scout and Peanut, Nigerian dwarf goats, plus her long-time buddy, her horse Joe.

Mrs. Radcliffe obtained a *summa cum laude* Bachelor of Arts degree in American Studies from UMBC in 1995 and a juris doctor degree from the University of Maryland School of Law in 1997.

Her son, Robert, attended MSW for ten years, completing Middle School in 2003. Robert now works at T Rowe Price and lives in Carroll County with his lovely wife while Mrs. Radcliffe patiently waits for grandchildren.

CLARK RICHEY

Director of Technology

Mr. Richey began working as the school's Director of Technology in 2017. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from UMBC and a Master's of Science in Computer Science from American University.

Mr. Richey has been an MSW parent for more than 12 years. His oldest daughter, Savannah, started MSW in Primary and departed after two years in Middle School and now attends Winters Mill High School. His younger daughter, Shannon, started MSW in Beginnings and is now in Mrs. Malcolm's Upper Elementary class.

When not working Mr. Richey loves table top games, reading, and annoying his daughters.

CHRISTINE SCHRIVER, RN

Visiting Nurse

Mrs. Schriver is a Nationally Certified School Nurse and an MSW parent since 2006. Her son, Cameron, graduated from MSW after ninth grade, and her daughter, Caroline, is currently in Upper Elementary.

Mrs. Schriver lives in Reisterstown with her family, their dog, Winston, and three chickens. In her free time, she enjoys gardening, cooking, reading, and spending time with family and friends.

SHANNIN SHEASBY

Spanish Language Instruction Events & Logistics Coordinator

Mrs. Sheasby joined MSW as Spanish instructor during school year 2012-2013. 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 son, Noah, graduated from MSW in 2020 and currently attends the Friends School of Baltimore. Her daughter, Ella, is in Mrs. Neiko's Upper Elementary class.

Mrs. Sheasby loves spending time with her family, hiking, reading, traveling, playing the flute, and working at MSW.

TRISH ST. MICHEL

Director of Development

A native of North Carolina, Mrs. St. Michel earned a Bachelor of Arts from the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and returned to UNC a few years later to earn a Master's in City and Regional Planning. She worked in public relations and marketing communications for corporations and associations, primarily in Washington, D.C., and Silicon Valley, and for the past several years has supported a few small business clients on marketing projects.

Mrs. St. Michel lives outside of Mount Airy with her husband, Jay, daughters Hannah and Charlotte, a Middle School student at MSW, and two dogs. When not working, Mrs. St. Michel enjoys hiking, baking, and exploring rails-to-trails with the family on their bikes.

DAWN STRINE

Primary Guide

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.

KRISTIN THOMAS

After School Care Aide

Ms. Thomas is a native of the Westminster area and attended Westminster High School where she played lacrosse. She graduated in 2019. She is looking forward to working at MSW and furthering her education.

WANDA WELLER

After School Care Senior Staff

Mrs. Weller is retired from Carroll County Public Schools where she spent 32-plus years as an instructional assistant. She is a member of the National Education Association, Maryland State Retired School Personnel Association, National Association for the Education of Young Children, and Maryland State Childcare Association – Carroll County Chapter. She has received her Senior Staff credential from the Maryland State Department of Education Office of Childcare. Additionally, she has been trained in the administration of CPR, first aid, and medication.

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

Mrs. Welsh-Baer graduated from St. Catherine University with a Master's degree in Education and from Juniata College with a Bachelor of Science degree 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.

COVID-19 ADDENDUM
to the
2020-2021 MSW Parent Handbook

*Adjustments to the MSW Parent Handbook are required due to the impact of COVID-19. This addendum will reference subtitles within the main Handbook that are altered for the 2020-2021 school year. Altered items within the main Handbook are in **red** print. For further details, please reference the particular amended section, below.*

MSW Parent Guidelines

For the safety of MSW's students and staff, visitation to the school is temporarily suspended except in certain controlled situations. The 30-hour Parent Volunteer Commitment (PVC) to the school is not in effect for the current school year.

Admissions Process

For the safety of MSW's students and staff, visitation to the school is temporarily suspended except in certain controlled situations.

Student Placement

To maintain distinct groups within the school and in compliance with limitations on group sizes as mandated by the Maryland State Department of Education's Office of Child Care, multi-age grouping in the Primary level is replaced with age-based classes.

School Operations

MSW's Before School Care program is not in operation this year. After School Care is limited to certain age groups.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up of Students

Drop-off times are extended and/or altered to accommodate daily temperature checks of students upon arrival. Staff assisting during drop-off and pick-up will limit touching students as much as possible. Hand sanitizer is used throughout drop-off and pick-up. Students are to remain in vehicles until a staff member approaches with the exception of Middle School students.

Students arriving late will be met outside the front door by a staff member for the student's temperature check. Please use the signal buzzer to alert a staff member to your presence.

The School Day

Before and After School Care programs are limited or suspended. Before School Care is not offered during the current school year, and access to After School Care is limited.

The School

The configuration of classes is altered. See "Student Placement," above.

Classroom Observations

For the safety of MSW's students and staff, visitation to the school is temporarily suspended except in certain controlled situations.

Conferences

For the safety of MSW's students and staff, visitation to the school is temporarily suspended except in certain controlled situations. Conferences with guides will be via online Zoom or Office 365 Teams technology.

All Day Care

To maintain distinct groups within the school, All Day Care is suspended for the current school year and will not be offered on In-Service Days.

Schedule Changes

To accommodate distance learners and in-school learners during the current school year, classroom schedules may be altered. Please contact your child's guide should you have questions regarding the classroom schedule.

Absenteeism

We ask families whose children are absent due to illness to maintain contact with the school throughout the illness. Your communication provides important information to your child's class and the school regarding potential viral outbreaks. If an illness with two or more COVID-19 symptoms occurs, you will be required to provide a note from your child's doctor to return to school. Depending on the symptoms, your child may be required to have a COVID-19 test.

Illness

Children with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher are considered to have a fever and will be sent home. Students must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines before returning to school. It is imperative that you follow this requirement.

Volunteers

For the safety of MSW's students and staff, visitation to the school is temporarily suspended except in certain controlled situations.

School Clothing

For the current school year, each child is asked to bring a face covering mask to school each day. Families are required to have two additional face masks for the child that will remain at school. Please label your child's masks. Face masks should be washed at the end of each day.

Snack

Students in Beginnings and Primary classes will be offered a snack provided by the school. Students in Elementary and Middle School levels should check with the classroom guide to verify the established snack policy for the current school year.

MSW Website and Parent Access

No PVC Opportunities or Parent Organization events are offered this year. Each family's annual PVC obligation is suspended for the current school year.

Development & Family Involvement

No PVC Opportunities are offered this year. Each family's annual PVC obligation is suspended for the current school year.

Special Days and Events

For the safety of MSW's students and staff, visitation to the school is temporarily suspended except in certain controlled situations. Parent Education Nights will take place via Zoom technology. Parent Visits and Grandparent Days are currently suspended. Field Trips will be limited to in-house no-contact presentations.

Parent Volunteer Commitment (PVC)

No PVC opportunities are offered this year. Each family's annual PVC obligation is suspended for the current school year.

OTHER INFORMATION

Extended School Closures

If for any reason the school must close for an extended period of time, the school will continue to deliver its academic instruction through distance learning.

COVID-19

It is your responsibility to alert the school if your child or anyone in his or her household has tested positive for COVID-19 or had come in contact with someone who has tested positive. This information will be shared with the Carroll County Health Department. If your child is in the Beginnings program, or is three or four and in the Primary program, or in After School Care, suspected COVID-19 will also be reported to the Office of Child Care's licensing specialist. The Office of Child Care is the licensing division of the Maryland State Department of Education for pre-school-age children.

Temperature Screening

Your child's temperature will be taken by a staff member before entering the building. Your child will not be admitted to the school with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher.

Each day, you are asked to answer the following questions on behalf of your child. Should you need to answer "yes" to any of the first three questions, you will need to contact MSW's administration before bringing your child to school.

- *Has your child had close contact with or cared for anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days?*
- *Is your child showing any signs of one or more of the following symptoms or been exposed to anyone showing these signs: temperature of 100 degrees or higher, new cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, or tiredness?*
- *Has your child traveled in the past 14 days?*
- *Did your child follow safe practices while traveling (wear a face covering, keep physical distance, frequent hand washing, etc.)?*

Symptoms Indicating Your Child Needs Care at Home

- Fever
- Sore throat
- Nasal congestion
- Runny nose
- New or worsening cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue/malaise
- Headaches
- Body aches
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Loss of taste or smell

Visiting School

If you need to conduct any business with the school, please call ahead so we can prepare for your visit. We will take your temperature and require you to answer the same questions as those listed above.

COVID-19 ADDENDUM: School Year 2020-2021