

Employee Handbook

Montessori Ivy League

October 2025

STAFF POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Introduction

Each member of the team is also a part of the Montessori family and a part of the Montessori environment. As a result, we must strive for excellence in our performance and appearance as teachers, assistants and staff. There are no second chances for first impressions. The following set of rules is implemented at to help all employees know the exact and expected protocol for all aspects of our school. In addition, we expect all employees to use a certain common sense, regarding the security and privacy of the children. For example, not to open the rear emergency doors, when children are present on premises, not to leave the children alone in the classroom, etc. An employee failing to follow and adhere to these rules will be subject to dismissal.

Each staff member is expected to attend Parent Night, faculty meetings, school functions and workshops and seminars for professional growth and education unless otherwise instructed; no reimbursement is given for time in attendance of school-related activities.

Each employee must submit the required fingerprints, forms and affidavits required by and the Department of Children & Families (DCF) before the first day of employment. Each employee must attend the mandatory state child care course within the first year of employment. Fees for prints, tests and courses are reimbursed by Montessori Ivy League (MIL). Each employee must complete 10 hours of continuing education each year. MIL does not discriminate in admission or employment on basis of race, sex and national or ethnic origin.

Actions & Attitudes

Maria Montessori said that the teacher and the assistant should be secondary to the Montessori materials. As a result, teachers and assistants should dress in a simple and comfortable manner with minimal jewelry and makeup. Please bear in mind that we are professionals and should dress as such. We serve as role models to the children. Hair and nails should be kept neat and trimmed.

Always maintain a positive attitude in the children's environment. Being happy, energetic, kind and nurturing will create a recipe for success in the classroom and at school in general. We are here because we love children. Let the world know this. Hold you head high and be full of life. All those around you will feel your positive energy.

The following rules relate to the general protocol for behavior:

- No gum chewing during the school day
- No smoking anywhere on campus
- Poor language skills are not accepted; English is the preferred language
- When sending a letter or note home to the parents, it must be written correctly in regards to grammar and spelling; ***all letters and notes sent home must be approved by the director or assistant and in the office two days prior to release to allow for sufficient time for review***
- Refrain from idle conversation with fellow staff members during class time or playground time; the safety of the children is the primary concern of all staff

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- No child will be left unsupervised at any time; if a child is unsupervised, it is your duty and responsibility to bring the child back to supervision even if the child does not belong to your class
 - Teachers and staff must exercise care with regard to invitations to parties and children's homes; in order to avoid the appearance of favoritism, recommends that teachers, assistants and staff refrain from accepting invitations to children's homes and birthday parties
 - If a gift is received personally or on behalf of the classroom, please be prompt in writing a thank-you note
 - **Do not release a child to anyone other than the primary pick-up person;** if there is any doubt whatsoever, contact the office immediately and call the parent to receive authorization before the child is released; unknown persons attempting to pick up a child must produce a photo identification that will be kept on file
 - **Never use physical force with a child;** children are asked to sit in the "thinking chair" and review their actions and behavior; the peace table or peace rose are great examples of solutions to behavior problems; if improper behavior becomes a daily issue, the director must be notified and a conference between the director, teacher and parents will be scheduled to discuss courses of action
 - **By law, it is the duty of any caregiver to report any instance of child abuse;** please review your child abuse pamphlet supplied by DCF and know when to place the call; the director of the school must be notified immediately of any suspected abuse; not reporting suspected child abuse may result in your arrest
 - Always be courteous and cheerful with parents; **do not** have a confrontation with a parent; if an issue arises, calmly guide them to someone who can help them or the director of the school; under any circumstances, do not argue with a parent
 - Be aware of your surroundings; for instance, look for broken material, sharp edges, strangers on property; if you notice anything unsafe, suspicious or dangerous, contact the office immediately to report the problem
 - During children's birthday parties at school, soda, piñatas or entertainment are not allowed; pizza may be ordered for the class and a cake may be delivered; the office must be notified three days in advance in order to modify the catering schedule
 - It is everyone's duty to ensure the cleanliness and proper appearance of in both the indoor and outdoor environments
 - Most importantly, use common sense
 - Employees are prohibited from bringing to the campus during business hours children who are not enrolled in Montessori Ivy League

Absenteeism

Each employee is expected to be at the workplace at the time specified on the employee contract. If you need to be absent, the director must be contacted the night before the morning of the absence. Excessive tardiness and absenteeism may result in termination. Employees are expected to leave at the end of the day as specified in the employee contract. Should an employee need to leave early, prior approval from the director is required. Please try to schedule personal appointments either before or after school or on teacher work days.

Attendance & Participation



Occasionally, a staff meeting will be held. Attendance at these meetings is mandatory. Throughout the course of the school year, the school will be hosting fundraisers, Holiday shows, special school-wide projects, etc. Participation in these events are mandatory for all classes and all teachers.

Compensation

All employees are paid twice a month. Check the payroll calendar for the schedule. Errors will be addressed on the following paycheck. All employees are required to clock in and out on a daily basis.

Uniforms

A hunter green polo shirt with the school logo is required. They can be worn un-tucked unless they are too long to do so. Khaki slacks must also be worn. Shoes shall be appropriate in color. You can purchase your own uniforms or subscribe to the Cintas Uniform Program. Uniforms must be worn at ALL times while you are on campus (i.e. when you arrive and depart).

The following attire is not acceptable at events—

- Torn jeans
- Bare midriff t-shirts
- Plunging necklines
- Hanging or oversized earrings
- Graphic t-shirts
- High-heeled shoes
- Open-toe shoes
- Visible thong underwear
- Dirty sneakers
- Heavily studded attire

Where applicable, an injury sustained while violating the attire guidelines may void any Workers' Compensation claim.

Supply Requests and Reimbursements

Each teacher is responsible for submitting their classroom supply list and budget one month prior to needing the supplies. The administration will review and order the materials, assuming they approve and the items and models are clearly listed. If you must purchase additional material, you must still fill out a Supply Request Form and it must first be approved. ***We will not reimburse teachers who purchase supplies without first filling out a form and having it approved.***

Causes for Possible Termination

Each employee is hired on a 6 months probationary basis and both tardiness and absenteeism are strongly discouraged. This probationary period is also used to qualify the employee for benefits, if any are offered.

- Being late or absent

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- DCF requirements must be submitted before and no later than the first week of employment along with proof of the 45-hour DCF courses or proof of enrollment for the next available course; proof of compliance must be supplied each academic year
 - Failure to adhere to any of the Policies & Procedures is also cause for immediate termination

Playground procedures

Teachers and assistants should position themselves at all corners of the playground so that all areas are in someone's line of vision. Do not sit and engage in idle conversation while children are on the playground; lack of supervision may result in accidents that could have been avoided. PREVENTION IS THE BEST RULE OF THUMB ON THE PLAYGROUND. Always be aware of your surroundings in order to prevent an incident before it happens.

The following are the rules the children must adhere to on the playground and staff must enforce -

- Throwing or kicking balls at fellow students, walls, windows or over fences is prohibited
- No breaking branches, leaves or flowers from plants/trees
- No kicking or throwing rocks, mulch or sticks
- No excessive yelling
- No punching, pushing, kicking or other harmful personal contact
- No kissing or hand holding is permitted; while it may appear "cute", this is not appropriate behavior at the school
- No fantasy play that encourages violence (with or without pretend weapons) will be tolerated

Always redirect the children's behavior when you notice something inappropriate or prohibited.

Check for trash on the playground and encourage the children to help care for the outdoor environment. Place trash in the appropriate receptacle.

Never permit trash to accumulate on the playground. Direct children to place litter in an appropriate container.

A staff member must precede each line of children with one staff member bringing up the rear. One child may hold open the door.

Arrival and Dismissal Routine

Children need to be helped from the reception area to the classroom quickly while the parent signs them in. This is not the time to engage in conversation or answer concerns the parents may have. Parents are to be politely directed to schedule an appointment to discuss any open issues.



When the children arrive in the classroom, ALL children Everyday are to be greeted and welcome in a friendly and cheerful way at the doorstep. If the parent has walked the child to the room, do not permit the parent to enter the room. In the true Montessori tradition, encourage the parent to leave the child at the doorstep. Do not permit the parent to engage in a conversation with you at this time either. Your responsibility at this time is to engage the child in the lessons.

During dismissal, keep all children in your view. This is not the time for the children to use the rest room or get a drink of water. The children need to be seated quietly in order to hear their name called for dismissal. Do not permit the children to run around or play games at this time.

Bring the child to the reception area while the parent signs them out. If you do not recognize the person, DO NOT release the child and take them back to the classroom. Have the person sit in the reception area while the office determines the appropriate pick-up person.

During arrival and dismissal, it is your duty to keep the traffic moving smoothly. Do not allow the parents to engage you in any matter or discussion. If an office visit is necessary, instruct the parents as politely as possible, to call the office in an hour and set up their preferred time over the phone.

Lunch Routine

Each teacher and assistant must attend to the children's needs at mealtime; this includes the opening of containers and pouring of drinks for students who bring their own meal. Never permit the children to share each other's lunch. Check each child's lunchbox before it is closed and returned to the cubby. Ensure that containers are closed tightly. For children who receive a catered lunch, the staff is responsible for ensuring that each receives the correct food. All staff members are responsible for maintaining cleanliness and order in the lunch area, while encouraging the students to assist when appropriate i.e. sweeping of floor, wiping and cleaning the table, etc.

If teachers and assistants are eating with the children, they must model the appropriate eating etiquette.

Bathroom Routine

Please instruct each new student on proper bathroom protocol that covers the following topics – urinating in the toilet and never on the seat or floor, wiping with toilet tissue until clean, never clogging toilets, flushing after use and washing hands with soap and water after using bathroom.

Teachers and assistants must monitor the bathroom for –

- Children requiring assistance
- Running water from fixtures
- Toilet paper & paper towels are in ample supply
- Used paper towels are in the trash can
- Excess use of soap



Care of Children

At Montessori Ivy League, teachers, assistants and staff must treat and respect each child as if he/she were their own! If there are any doubts, ask for assistance or inform management before making a decision.

In case of accident or injury, do not panic or use a loud voice. Remain calm and comfort the affected child. Other children must immediately be distracted and directed away from the injured or ill child.

Children are to be sent home should they show any sign of a communicable disease, yellow, runny noses, fever over 100°, vomiting, diarrhea, excessive crying or excessive coughing. The parents are to be contacted immediately and asked to pick up the child. The child is to be separated from the class and brought to the conference room where he/she may rest while supervised by staff until the parent arrives. Director must be informed. If parents insist that a child is suffering from an allergy and not a communicable disease, the parent must ask the pediatrician for a note stating same.

Do not put another child's clothes or underwear on a child who has had an accident. If the child has run out of extra clothes, the parent must be notified and asked what they would like to be done. You may advise the parent of available clothing, but let them make the final decision. Always call the parents when in doubt.

At the end of the day, please make sure children have used the bathroom and have a glass of water before the dismissal. Also, ensure that the hands and face of each child are clean. Do not send home a dirty child. This does not represent as a loving and caring environment.

Medication

According to DCF standards, only prescription medication may be brought to the child care facility by the parent or guardian and must be in the original container with the name of the child, physician and medication directions written on the label. A written authorization signed by a parent or guardian must accompany any type of medication stating the time and amount of dosage and the name of the medication to be given to the child. Use the medication forms provided and record the time that the medication was administered accompanied with the signature of a staff member.

Discipline

is a DCF-licensed facility. As such, the school strictly adheres to the standards set forth by the State of Florida Department of Children and Families. As such, the following rules apply to discipline at the school.

- Children will not be subject to severe, humiliating or frightening discipline
- Discipline shall not be associated with food, rest or bathroom functions
- Spanking or any other form of corporal punishment is banned
- Our "time out" is referred to as the "thinking chair" where a child can think about appropriate behavior



Taking Care of the Environment

Teachers, assistants and staff are responsible to maintain an attractive, clean and organized environment. Teachers are expected to acquire resource materials and library books for their classroom. They are expected to rotate the lessons in the environment, take care of their plants and pets and bring their classroom to life. If certain materials need to be purchased, the teacher must complete a Supply Request Form that is submitted to the office for review and either accepted or denied. If the form is approved, the school will reimburse upon submission of the receipt attached to the approved form. If the request is denied, the school will not reimburse any funds spent.

Teachers and assistants are expected to plan for daily lessons, holidays and themes. They are to come prepared for the next day. Morning work time should not be dedicated to collecting materials, typing poems or making photocopies.

Music should be a crucial part of every day. Singing songs and listening to rhymes helps children's language skills develop more fully.

Calendar time should occur on a daily basis. Children need to be introduced to the names of the days of week, months of the year and the seasons.

The **Red Line** lessons should be done consistently. Children will be able to fine tune their gross and fine motor skills with this amazing material.

Grace and courtesy should be a big part of the environment. Teaching children by role playing and using words rather than hands is a crucial part of Montessori learning.

The **ABC board** can be introduced outdoors or in an area of the classroom that is away from main activity. Use both the sounds and names of the ABC's, sing the provided rhyme and pronounce the sounds according to the handout.

Keep to the 100-year old, tried and true Montessori Method. DO NOT dilute the Montessori curriculum with conventional or superfluous ideas. A good rule to follow – if it does not appear in your Montessori album, then it probably should not appear in your classroom.

It is each teacher's duty to delegate in writing the responsibility for each assistant.

Do not think that things should be common sense and understood; write down exactly what is to be done, when and how. Do not expect your assistant to read your mind. It is the teacher's duty to guide, instruct, inform and remind the assistants of their duties and responsibilities. All issues should be settled with the teacher and the assistant within their rooms. Should an amicable solution not result, the school administrator should be notified immediately. The Montessori learning environment is very unique; it requires work and dedication. Teachers and assistants are encouraged to spend additional time at school and away from school preparing this special environment.



Record Keeping

Assistants must take **attendance daily**. Adults who bring and/or pick up children must sign in and sign out on the appropriate sheet. Accurately record the time each child arrives at Montessori Ivy League.

Teachers and assistants are responsible to report each **accident** or incident. An original report on the designated Accident Report Form must be provided to the director for placement in the child's file.

All teachers are required to keep a progress report on each child using the **Montessori Xpress**. Toddler teachers may want to keep running records on their children instead.

Each teacher must complete a **monthly lesson plan** in advance of the coming month; the plan should address art, music, line activities, holiday observances, and etcetera. Teachers will be given a list of holidays and themes for each upcoming month, so they can begin planning afternoon enrichment activities, collecting books and other resources. Supplemental materials are permitted as long as they enhance the theme.

Each teacher is responsible for **submitting a monthly newsletter and uploading the newsletter** onto our website by the FIRST of each month. The newsletter should outline activities planned for the coming month, themes that will be covered, special meetings or events, and any birthdays that will occur within your classroom. *The office administrator will not be available to complete, upload, or accessorize your newsletters in any way.*

Each teacher is responsible for establishing a means of communication between themselves and the parents within their classroom. Examples might include a notebook that is used solely for teacher/parent correspondence, email address only for school purposes, or the web site on the Learning environment can be used.

Each teacher is responsible for a **classroom website** on Our Learning Environment. The teacher is responsible for updating the website, uploading classroom pictures and events.

Record every conversation, conference and phone call conducted with a parent; refrain from volunteering information or discussing other students.

If a child's behavior raises a "red flag" or if behavioral issues are observed on a consistent basis, these activities must be noted in writing in the child's file for reference during parent conferences.

Write-Ups

We will be implementing the use of write-ups to help staff realize when modifications need to be made.



Art

Teachers should introduce one new art project/lesson on a weekly basis and instruct the assistants how to supervise. As part of the Montessori philosophy, strongly encourages the display and rotation of famous works of art and the introduction of famous artists. All preparation must be done during non-classroom hours.

- Keep art paper stocked in appropriate containers; cut and supply before each session.
- Never use the paper cutter near children.
- Keep containers neat and clean.
- Be creative with collage material – recycle ribbon, wrapping paper, construction pieces of paper, etcetera.
- Keep caps on markers.
- Keep containers clean and attractive.
- Remind children to use dots of glue sparingly.
- Write each child's name neatly on all art projects.

Parent Conferences/Parent Nights/School Events

Each teacher is expected to have an entrance conference with the parents and an exit conference with the parents. The teachers need to fill out the Conference Form as well as progress reports. Each conference should last no longer than 20 minutes and should address such issues as development progression, yearly goals, any red flags observed, etc. If a problem or issue arises during the year, the teacher is expected to request a conference with the parents. Teachers must also make themselves available when parents request an appointment.

Both teachers and assistants must attend parent nights, open houses, teacher planning days and any other school-wide event apart from the regular school hours, unless otherwise instructed.

Field Trips

No field trips are scheduled.

Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida

6B-1.001 Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida.

1. The educator values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
2. The educator's primary professional concern will always be for the student and for the development of the student's potential. The educator will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.

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3. Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of other members of the community, the educator strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical conduct.

Specific Authority 229.053(1), 231.546(2)(b) FS. Law Implemented 231.546(2)(b) FS. History - New 3-24-65, Amended 8-9-69, Repromulgated 12-5-74, Amended 8-12-81, 7-6-82, Formerly 6B-1.01.

6B-1.006 Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.

1. The following disciplinary rule shall constitute the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.
2. Violation of any of these principles shall subject the individual to revocation or suspension of the individual educator's certificate, or the other penalties as provided by law.
3. Obligation to the student requires that the individual:
 - a. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
 - b. Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
 - c. Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
 - d. Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
 - e. Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
 - f. Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
 - g. Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
 - h. Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
 - i. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
4. Obligation to the public requires that the individual:
 - a. Shall take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.
 - b. Shall not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
 - c. Shall not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.

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- d. Shall accept no gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence professional judgment.
 - e. Shall offer no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantages.
5. Obligation to the profession of education requires that the individual:
- a. Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
 - b. Shall not on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background deny to a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization.
 - c. Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
 - d. Shall not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and, further, shall make reasonable effort to assure that each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.
 - e. Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.
 - f. Shall not use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional judgments of colleagues.
 - g. Shall not misrepresent one's own professional qualifications.
 - h. Shall not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with professional activities.
 - i. Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one's own or another's application for a professional position.
 - j. Shall not withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
 - k. Shall provide upon the request of the certificated individual a written statement of specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.
 - l. Shall not assist entry into or continuance in the profession of any person known to be unqualified in accordance with these Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida and other applicable Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.
 - m. Shall self-report within forty-eight (48) hours to appropriate authorities (as determined by district) any arrests/charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale and/or possession of a controlled substance. Such notice shall not be considered an admission of guilt nor shall such notice be admissible for any purpose in any proceeding, civil or criminal, administrative or judicial, investigatory or adjudicatory. In addition, shall self-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion



program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours after the final judgment. When handling sealed and expunged records disclosed under this rule, school districts shall comply with the confidentiality provisions of Sections 943.0585(4)(c) and 943.059(4)(c), Florida Statutes.

- n. Shall report to appropriate authorities any known allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.
- o. Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported any allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.
- p. Shall comply with the conditions of an order of the Education Practices Commission.
- q. Shall, as the supervising administrator, cooperate with the Education Practices Commission in monitoring the probation of a subordinate.

Training Requirement

All instructional personnel and administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on these standards of ethical conduct.

Reporting Misconduct by Instructional Personnel and Administrators.

All employees and administrators have an obligation to report misconduct by instructional personnel and school administrators which affects the health, safety or welfare of a student. Examples of misconduct include obscene language, drug and alcohol use, disparaging comments, prejudice or bigotry, sexual innuendo, cheating or testing violations, physical aggression, and accepting or offering favors. Reports of misconduct of employees should be made to Mary L. Eisenbise or Jeanne Olsen.

Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to the Department of Education

Legally sufficient allegations of misconduct by Florida certified educators will be reported to the Office of Professional Practices Services.

Policies and procedures for reporting misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators which effects the health, safety or welfare of a student are posted in the Faculty Handbook, the office of the Principal, and on our website at www.prew.org

Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment or Neglect.



All employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment or neglect. Call 1-800-96-ABUSE or report on line at: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.

Signs of Physical Abuse

The child may have unexplained bruises, welts, cuts or other injuries; broken bones; or burns. A child experiencing physical abuse may seem withdrawn or depressed, seem afraid to go home, shy away from physical contact, be aggressive, or wear inappropriate clothing to hide injuries.

Signs of Sexual Abuse

The child may have torn, stained or bloody underwear, trouble walking or sitting, pain or itching in genital area, or a sexually transmitted disease. A child experiencing sexual abuse may have unusual knowledge of sex, or act seductively, fear a particular person, seem withdrawn or depressed, gain or lose weight suddenly, shy away from physical contact, or run away from home.

Signs of Neglect

The child may have unattended medical needs, little or no supervision at home, poor hygiene, or appear underweight. A child experiencing neglect may be frequently tired or hungry, steal food, or appear overly needy of adult attention.

Patterns of Abuse:

Serious abuse usually involves a combination of factors. While a single sign may not be significant, a pattern of physical or behavioral signs is a serious indicator and should be reported.

Liability Protections

Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by law, or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department or any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action. (F.S. 39.203)

An employer who discloses information about a former or current employee to a prospective employer of the former or current employee upon request of the prospective employer or of



the former or current employee is immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences unless it is shown by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed by the former or current employer was knowingly false or violated any civil right of the former or current employee protected under F.S. Chapter 760. (F.S. 768.095)

Policy for the Use of Technology

I. Introduction

The use of computers, indeed the use of any form of technology, is a means, not an end to education. Teachers and students have a responsibility to use the tools at hand to enhance education. We believe the Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. The Internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers. With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the school setting. MIL has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials, and an industrious user may discover controversial information. We firmly believe that the valuable information and interaction available on the worldwide network far outweigh the possibility that users may obtain material that is not consistent with the educational and moral goals of Montessori Ivy League.

II. Educational Goals

- To provide a variety of information to enhance the curricula areas.
- To help students work effectively with various forms of telecommunication tools.
- To prepare students to become critical thinkers and problem solvers.
- To teach skills that are needed in the electronic and global society.

III. Terms and Conditions

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies, regional and state networks. The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided so that you are aware of the responsibilities you are about to acquire. In general this requires efficient, ethical, and legal use of the network resources. If a user violates any of these provisions, his or her privileges will be terminated and future access could be denied. Violations of this agreement will be referred to appropriate school officials for disciplinary action. Violations of state or federal law will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency. The signatures at the end of this document are legally binding and indicate parties



who signed have read the terms and conditions carefully and understand their significance.

- **Acceptable Use**

The use of the Internet must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of Montessori Ivy League. Use of other organizations' network or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulations is prohibited. This includes, but not limited to: copyrighted material, or material protected by trade secret.

- **Privileges**

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of those privileges. (Each student who accesses the Internet will be a part of a discussion with a faculty member about the proper use of the network.) Montessori Ivy League administration will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final. Also, Montessori Ivy League's administration may request that the school deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges. Montessori Ivy League expects the teacher to monitor the student's access for which he or she is responsible. This may include random checks of Internet history and monitoring of student access to determine whether the accounts are being used in a manner that is consistent with this agreement. Students accessing the Internet consent to such monitoring.

- **Responsibilities**

All persons accessing the Internet from the school locations must accept the responsibility of using the Internet wisely and correctly. Access to the Internet by students will be monitored by faculty member at all times. You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network use. These include (but are not limited to) the following:

- There must be a clear academic purpose for accessing the Internet at the school location.
- Do not use the network for any illegal activity (e.g. violating copyright or other contracts, gaining illegal access or entry into other computers).
- Do not use the network for financial or commercial gain.
- Do not interfere with the proper operation of school systems and networks accessible through the Internet.

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- Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the facilities by other users.
 - Do not use school computing and network resources in a wasteful or frivolous manner (e.g. tying up resources with computer-based game playing such as MUD, sending trivial or excessive messages, downloading excessively large files).
 - Do not reveal your personal address/phone number or the personal address/phone number of another.
 - Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, Internet, or any of the above listed agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet backbone. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.
 - If you feel you can identify a security problem on the Internet, you must notify a system administrator. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users.
 - Respect the privacy of other individuals.
 - Files/data belonging to others are to be considered private property unless explicit authorization is given by the owner of the files.
 - Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.

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Your employment here at is contingent

Your employment here at is contingent on strict adherence to these rules and maintaining a high standard for yourself, but most importantly for the children. Mere adherence to these rules does not suffice. All employees are encouraged to act prudently and follow the norms of society for what is right and what is wrong, whether at school or away.

Teachers should make lists of daily, weekly and monthly responsibilities for their assistants. These lists should be updated as necessary. Assistants are encouraged to leave suggestions for the teachers. It is the responsibility of each teacher to guide,



instruct, inform and remind the assistants of the policies of the classroom in particular and of at large.

Parent Observation Days

Parent observation days are scheduled for the last Tuesday of every month. Two parents are invited to visit each classroom. Attendance will be confirmed prior to that day.

During these observation days, as always, refrain from conversation with visitors; you are expected to continue to guide the children with their lessons and supervise students on the playground

Our Montessori Philosophy

Aided by world-renowned doctor and educator Maria Montessori, the Montessori Philosophy naturally blossomed under her guidance. The Montessori Philosophy is not a step-by-step, foolproof educational curriculum devised through vigorous pedagogical training and intellectual contemplation. Rather, the method evolved naturally and without intention based on Maria Montessori's observations of mixed – age children in an optimum environment, the first Children's House.

In this environment, the ideal conditions were created which helped to bring about the development of the child. It encouraged the children to be their own creators, working actively on their environment to create infinite experiences. By observing their experiences, Maria Montessori came to understand the needs (sensitive periods) of each child at their particular stage of development.

Because of her observations, Maria Montessori provided material, which helped to stimulate the children and expand their experiences; thus, developing the Montessori method we use today.

The characteristics of the Children's House, served to bring out the true understanding of the child. It was in this environment that the child's inner nature exposed its true identity and allowed it to be witnessed and understood.

The ideal conditions of a Montessori environment as witnessed at the First Children's House:

- *Proportioned:* objects and materials need to be adapted to children's height, weight, and strength. Tables and chairs need to be child sized. This proportional environment gives the child freedom of movement and allows the child to actively work in his surroundings.
- *Limited:* the environment should offer limited space and materials so the child does not feel overwhelmed nor fear his surroundings. Rather, the child needs to feel comfortable and have control over his/her domain. This limited aspect helps the child with his sense of order and memory.
- *Simple:* everything within the environment should be simple. Things should not be too formal or extravagant or the child will feel s/he does not belong.

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- S/he will feel that they cannot touch things. The environment needs to be adapted to the simplicity of the child; simple yet full of experiences.
- *Washable:* the materials the children use should be washable. It gives them a sense of respect for others knowing that they are returning the objects clean.
 - *Calm:* the ambiance needs to be tranquil, not with too much noise but neither with artificial silence. This tranquility helps the child acquire an inner calm that results in harmony and order. The child feels relaxed knowing he is not rushed through an activity and he can finish what he starts. Also, the order within the room gives confidence and helps him feel at ease within his surroundings.
 - *Inviting and Attractive:* the child should feel welcome in his surroundings. He should want to come to class every day and feel an attraction to the material. The environment and materials should be aesthetically pleasing so that the child will want to use the material to make infinite experiences.
 - *Control of Error:* the materials the child manipulates should be so that he can correct himself. They should serve as a silent teacher whereby the child does not hear the criticisms from an adult but rather realizes errors on his own. Through this system, a child's confidence thrives and is never thwarted. This system is also very advantageous because the child can work independently and not always rely on the teacher to tell him if he is doing the activity incorrectly.

Within this environment, the following four main areas are found:

1. *Practical Life:* these exercises are born from activities of everyday life. For instance, carrying glasses, vases, sweeping, polishing, dusting, setting the table, etc. Through these activities, the child fulfills his need to master and control his movements. The activities respect the child's sensitive period for movement by allowing liberty of action. The reality of these activities and the practical goal they strive towards, bring the child to a true inner cognitive development rather than an artificial intelligence.
2. *Sensorial:* these exercises help a child perfect his senses and as a result, they facilitate the child to gain a more profound contact with his environment. Each of these materials through their use, allows the child to compare, pair, gradate, and reason
3. *Math:* these exercises are introduced to the child in two levels. They help the child with order, precision, exactitude and the knowledge of numbers. They allow for what Maria Montessori called "the formation of the mathematical mind".
4. *Language:* these exercises help fulfill the child's sensitive period for language. They give the child an array of nomenclature so the child can name his environment and dominate it. They also help establish the basis for reading and writing. Activities in Geography, Botany, and Science are extensively found within this area.

"The teacher also must be attractive, pleasing in appearance, tidy, clear, calm and dignified. These are the ideals that each can realize in her own way. The teacher's appearance should be the first step to gaining the



child's confidence and respect. The teacher should study her own movements to make them as gentle and graceful as possible."

Maria Montessori - The Absorbent Mind

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