



September 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to Capitol Hill Montessori at Logan School and to the 2015-2016 school year!

This handbook is intended to give you information about Capitol Hill Montessori philosophies, policies, and programs. This handbook is supported by the teachers, school staff, Parent Teacher Student Organization, and the Local School Advisory Team. The school handbook will be revised annually with input from the CHML community.

All of the policies are thought of with children's safety, welfare, and success in mind. We encourage you to read the whole handbook, then discuss and reinforce the information with your child(ren). Together, we can create a safe, welcoming environment that educates every child well.

Respectfully,

Brandon Eatman
Principal

Yolanda Nashid
Assistant Principal

Vision

We are a caring community helping all students reach their full potential in preparation for becoming productive members of society.

Mission Statement and Montessori Philosophy

The mission of Capitol Hill Montessori at Logan (CHML) is to educate the whole child for the whole world. Our concept of whole child encompasses and celebrates the social, emotional, physical, spiritual, and intellectual aspects of being human.

Montessori is a philosophy of education and teaching method that was founded in 1907 by Dr. Maria Montessori, the first woman in Italy to become a physician. She based her educational methods on scientific observation of children's learning processes. Guided by her discovery that children teach themselves, Dr. Montessori designed a "prepared environment" in which children could freely choose from a number of developmentally appropriate activities. Montessori education is found all over the world, spanning ages from birth to adolescence.

In Montessori classrooms, each child learns at his or her own pace without rigid expectations and without limits to their progress. The children in the classroom display respect, manners, and social skills. There is an abundance of learning materials in the classroom that teach children concepts that are building blocks for what they will be learning in the future.

Montessori focuses on teaching for understanding. There are many instances where children are taught to memorize correct answers or methods of arriving at the correct answer but do not truly understand the concept. Montessori creates a concrete sensorial experience that gradually allows the child to form a mental picture of concepts like: How big is a thousand? How many hundreds make a thousand? What is really going on when we borrow or carry numbers in a mathematical equation?

The classrooms provide a prepared environment where children are free to respond to their natural tendency to work. The children's innate passion for learning is encouraged by giving them opportunities to engage in spontaneous, purposeful activities with the guidance of a trained adult. Through their work, the children develop concentration and joyful self-discipline. Within a framework of order, the children progress at their own pace and rhythm, according to their individual capabilities.

Primary Program (ages 3-6)

At three years of age, the mind becomes "conscious" or aware of those things which are presented to him. A Montessori primary classroom is a child-sized world. The outside world is incorporated meaningfully into the classroom. The teacher carefully selects material so that a child can explore life on a level he can understand. Materials and curriculum center around practical

life, sensorial, language, math, geography, history, science, art, and music. Teachers model behaviors that students learn to master such as graceful movement, speaking with inside voices, and acting with dignity and courtesy. Children learn to work independently and explore concepts deeply at their own pace. Children are given individual lessons on specific materials that explore key concepts in math and literacy, as well as other subjects. They learn early concepts in understanding the universe, basic geography and the path of human development.

Elementary Program (ages 6-12)

In the elementary program students are expected to deepen their understanding of key concepts and sharpen essential skills. They begin to analyze more, explore more and work on small-group projects.

The elementary children shift their focus from family and home to their peer group. Learning how to live in the small community of the classroom is a central part of their work during this six-year period. It is through this work that they build the strong social skills we often associate with Montessori such as how to lead and follow, how to take responsibility for oneself and others, how to publicly present and perform, and how to care for others. The child enters the elementary program between six and seven years of age. The curriculum is organized into subject areas including math, geometry, language arts, history, geography, biology (botany/zoology), music, theatre arts, and art. Lessons are given in small groups, with occasional lessons given to an individual or to the entire class. Students are required to read, write, organize their work, work productively with others, and master math facts and concepts.

Middle Grades Program (ages 12-14)

The CHML middle grades program serves seventh and eighth graders. The Montessori middle grades program includes:

- Meaningful experiential learning and practical management outside the classroom through integrated partnerships with local agencies, businesses and organizations.
- A rigorous core academic program with a strong focus on integrated science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education as well as social sciences, geography, language arts, and fine arts.
- Small group seminars and projects that allow for both independent and collaborative learning and prepare students for the demands of the real world.
- Curriculum aligned to Common Core and based on the modern middle grades curriculum—the Montessori National Curriculum Framework for the Adolescent Program—with an emphasis on both the natural world through the study of the environment and local ecosystems, as well as the progress of human civilization.

- A warm, diverse and supportive community that takes a holistic approach to middle grades students' academic, social, emotional, physical and spiritual development.
- Foreign language instruction
- A purposeful focus on the transition to high school, including a conscientious approach to preparing the Montessori student for traditional high schools.

Role of the Montessori Teacher

The role of a Montessori teacher is that of an observer and guide whose ultimate goal is to intervene less and less as the child develops. The teacher creates an atmosphere of calm, order, and joy in the classroom and is there to help and encourage the children in all their efforts, allowing them to develop self-confidence and inner discipline. With the younger students at each level, the teacher is more active, demonstrating the use of materials and presenting activities based on an assessment of the child's requirements. Knowing how to observe constructively and when, and how much, to intervene, is one of the most important talents the Montessori guide acquires during a rigorous course of training at American Montessori International centers.

CHML School Pact

Student Commitment

- Arrive on time to my classroom by 8:45 a.m. every day
- Come to school ready to learn and do my best
- Respect myself and others
- Respect classroom materials and school grounds
- Act with grace and courtesy at all times
- Follow school and classroom rules

Parent/Guardian Commitment

- Ensure that my child(ren) is punctual and strive for 100% attendance
- Discuss and reinforce school and classroom rules with my child
- Pick up my child on time
- Respect drop off and pick up procedures to ensure safety of all students
- Attend parent-teacher conferences
- Read school handbook and discuss with your child(ren)
- Participate in the PTSO through volunteering and giving

Policies and Procedures

Admission

CHML is a specialized city-wide program and is designated as "100% out of boundary." Sibling preference is the only preference to admission. Admission into CHML is done through the DCPS

lottery process. Lottery applications are made available by DCPS in December/January of the year preceding entry into the next school year. Placement is made on a space-available basis through the lottery process. More information on the application procedure can be obtained by calling the school's main office or visiting DCPS website.

Children are accepted at three years old by September 30th of the year they start. Transfers are accepted for grades PK through 6 if there is space available. Transfers from an Association of Montessori International accredited school are preferred. There are special enrollment requirements for new parents. Parents are required to attend the mandatory new parent orientation and a two-part parent education night—The Silent Journey and Discovery of Materials. In addition, parents must observe in a primary classroom. The orientation, educational nights, and observation are designed to familiarize new parents to Montessori and the methods used. Failure to attend these mandatory sessions and observation will result in the child losing their spot in the program.

Registration

Only residents of the District of Columbia are eligible to receive a free public education in the District. Consequently, all public school students in the District are required to provide proof of their residency in the District or pay tuition. The current Residency Verification Rules governing the process of residency verification are designed to ensure that only those students who are District residents attend public schools in the District without paying tuition (Title 5 DCMR Chapter 50). Persons enrolling a student must show original documents as proof of residency. Annual verification of residency must take place after April 1, and prior to October 5 each year, or within ten (10) days of the time of initial enrollment.

In addition, health documentation forms must be submitted. DCPS requires that students provide completed physical and dental examination forms. DCPS also requires proof that students have had the following immunizations: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (DTP), Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) Hepatitis B and Chicken Pox. Students who do not provide immunization records may be excluded from school. Parents can find information about free, year-round clinics to assist with immunization in the office at each school, by calling DCPS at 576-7130, or by visiting the DC Department of Health website, <http://doh.dc.gov/>.

Attendance

The District of Columbia has a mandatory attendance policy in accordance with the Compulsory School Attendance Law, under which all students are required to regularly attend the school in which they are enrolled (DCMR2102.1). The District of Columbia Compulsory School Attendance Law requires that children from the age of five be enrolled in and attend school regularly. Student attendance is monitored daily. The Connect Ed system, an auto-dial system, is used to

notify parents of unexcused absences. We also enforce that every student should be on time daily. All enrolled students count toward our school's attendance goals.

Absences

If your child will be absent or tardy, please contact the attendance counselor and your child's teacher by 8:30 a.m.. DCPS specifies the following as valid reasons for absence from school:

- Illness of the student (a doctor's note is required for an absence of more than five days)
- Medical reasons such as a doctor's appointment (a doctor's note should be provided for medical appointments scheduled during the school day)
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Death in the student's immediate family
- Necessity for a student to attend a judicial proceeding
- Absences approved in advance by the principal upon the written request of a parent/guardian

In the cases of frequent or prolonged absences, a written note from the parent must be given to the front office upon the student's return to school. The note must state the dates, the reason for the absence, and if necessary, include doctor's documentation.

Invalid reasons for absence

When a school-aged student is absent from school without a valid reason, with or without parental approval, these absences are considered unexcused and the student is considered truant. Some examples of unexcused absences include:

- overslept
- babysitting
- running errands
- vacations

Tardy Arrivals

Please help your child(ren) arrive at school on time as tardiness compromises work time and affects the classroom climate. A child who arrives late will miss instruction and cause disruption to the class.

School starts at 8:45 a.m.. Any students arriving to school after 8:45 a.m. must report to the attendance counselor to obtain a "late slip" before going to the classroom. Tardy arrivals are reported on a child's school record. Excessive tardiness will require a parent conference, could have an adverse impact on achievement in the classroom, and possibly result in legal action under DCPS truancy laws.

Truancy

Truancy is the unexcused absence from school by a minor (5-18 years of age) with or without approval, parental knowledge, or consent. Students who have unexcused absences will be asked to participate in: individual or group counseling to address attendance needs; the creation and monitoring of an Attendance Intervention Plan. Parents of students with five unexcused absences will be requested to participate in a conference regarding their child(ren)'s attendance. Elementary and middle school students with 10 or more unexcused absences will be referred to the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) for suspected educational neglect. For more information on truancy, please visit the DCPS website or contact the school attendance counselor.

In addition, in the event of excess of tardies (20) and absences (10) pursuant to the DCPS attendance guidelines, students can risk losing their spot at CHML. In coordination with the attendance counselor and principal, students can be asked to leave CHML to attend their neighborhood school for the following school year.

School Operations

School hours are from 8:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Monday through Thursday for primary students and 8:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Monday through Thursday for elementary and middle grades students. On Fridays, school hours are from 8:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. for all students. Children may arrive no earlier than 8:15 a.m. unless they are enrolled in Springboard before care. Please adhere to the following schedule:

7:30 a.m.-8:15 a.m.: Springboard before-care available

8:15 a.m.: Universal free breakfast in cafeteria.

Students who are not eating breakfast can report to the playground where they will be supervised by a staff member. On inclement weather days, students must report to the cafeteria.

8:35 a.m.-8:45 a.m.: Students in the cafeteria and playground will be directed to their classroom by a staff member. Parents arrive to school and begin to escort students to the classroom.

Please wait outside of the classroom for either the teacher or assistant to receive the students. It is helpful for parents to take their children to the restroom before coming to the classroom. Please say good-bye to your child outside the classroom door. Adults are not to enter the class or wait at the windows while the child is inside the room. Children begin work as soon as they enter the class. Taking care of undressing, greeting friends, helping others, and getting ready to choose work are part of class work. Adults in the class distract the children and hinder their independence.

Dismissal

The school day ends at 3:15 p.m. on regular days for primary students and 4:15 p.m. for elementary and middle grades students, except on Fridays when all students are dismissed at 3:15 p.m.. Sometimes the school day ends at 12:15 p.m. for all students on scheduled half-days.

Please avoid picking up your child before the scheduled dismissal time as it disrupts the class. Parents are to pick up their child(ren) from the classroom after the dismissal bell. If the student needs to be dismissed early, parents must sign the early dismissal log in the main office. Elementary students are called to the office for early dismissal. The parents are sent to the classroom to pick up the primary students. If someone other than the child's parent or guardian must pick up the child early, the parent must notify the school, in writing, of the change. Children who are late being picked up will be taken to Springboard for drop-in aftercare.

Drop-off and Parking

Parents who drive to school are to observe the 'No Parking' and '15 Minute Parking' signs along the streets bordering the school. Double parking is **never** allowed in front of the school. Cars will be ticketed when they violate the parking restrictions. If all the street parking spots are occupied, parents are encouraged to park in the parking lot in designed parking spots for both drop off and pick up. All parents are asked to be especially cautious when driving and parking near the school, to look out for the safety of children arriving at or leaving the building, and to respect neighbors who also need access to parking on streets surrounding the schools.

Breakfast, Lunch, and Recess

Chartwells Food Services provides all school meals. Parents may choose to send children to school with lunch made at home.

Breakfast

Breakfast takes place in the cafeteria from 8:15 a.m. until 8:35 a.m.. Breakfast is free to all students. Students are not allowed to take food, drink, or utensils out of the cafeteria.

Lunch

The first Primary lunch period is held in the cafeteria. The second Primary lunch period is held in the multipurpose room (one group eats lunch while the other group has recess and then the groups switch). Elementary students eat lunch in the cafeteria. Middle grades students have lunch in the Annex. Staff supervision is provided during all lunch periods.

School lunch is provided at a cost determined by DCPS which is currently \$2.10 per meal for elementary (Preschool-5th grade) and \$2.60 per meal for secondary (6-12 grade). Payment can be made to the Food Service Manager in the cafeteria or by using the online service myschoolbucks.com. Applications for free or reduced price meals can be picked up in the school front office or downloaded from the DCPS website.

School breakfast and lunch menus are on display in the cafeteria, in the school front office, and are available online (<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/Beyond+the+Classroom/Food+Services>).

For students who bring their lunch, please respect the following general rules: no sodas and no sweets/candy. We strictly monitor and discourage food sharing at lunch because of food allergies and difference in family food preferences; with the exception of special class or school occasions, there is no need for your child to bring extra for their friends.

Food allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must report it to the school nurse with doctor's instructions. In addition, please report the condition to your child's teacher. In addition, parents must fill out and turn in appropriate DCPS forms to the school.

Recess/Playground

Students have 30 minutes of outdoor active recess period every day (indoor recess on inclement weather days). During school recess time, children are supervised by teachers or assistants. Students may receive tutoring or choose to participate in voluntary club activities during their recess.

Students are welcome to play on the playground before school starts between 8:15 a.m. and 8:40 a.m. when teacher or staff supervision is provided. After school, CHML does not provide staff supervision on the playground, but parents and caregivers are welcome to supervise their own children in play. Please do not eat food on the turf and do not pull the strands of turf out; we need to keep our playground sanitary and in good condition for years to come. Place any trash in the trash can on the playground.

Please remember the main office closes at 4:30 p.m., so people who are still on the playground after this time may not be allowed inside to access the restrooms or water fountains.

Recess Rules

Rule 1: Students shall respect other students and teachers/staff members that are on recess duty. Each child shall listen to and follow rules given by those on duty. Failure to do this can result in disciplinary action (e.g., time-outs and/or being sent to an administrator).

Rule 2: Students shall respect the personal space of others. No physical contact involving hitting, kicking, punching, pushing, or shoving.

Rule 3: Each child must inform a teacher or an adult on recess duty if there is an emergency, an injury, find anything on the grounds that can pose harm, or a need to leave the playground for any reason.

Rule 4: Students shall respect the playground equipment and school materials that they are using.

Nap

There are two nap rooms for three-year old primary students. Nap time is after lunch and recess from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.. Students are encouraged to bring a blanket or nap mat. Cots are provided. No stuffed animals or other lovelies are allowed. At the end of each week, students take home with their blanket or nap mat to launder. Nap rooms are supervised by the classroom assistants.

Dress code

CHML does not have a mandatory uniform policy. Students are expected to wear weather-appropriate clothing and footwear for recess and physical education. Hats and hoods are not to be worn in the school building. Students should not wear shorts or skirts that do not pass the fingertip test. When students places the palms of their hand against the outside of their thighs, their shorts or skirt should not be above the tip of their longest finger. Clothing should be simple, washable, and sturdy. It should allow for freedom of movement and participation in occasional messy activities. Clothing for primary children should be easily handled by children so they can take care of restroom needs independently. Sneakers and rubber soled shoes are recommended. Flip-flops and open toed sandals are not allowed because they are dangerous and a deterrent to active participation in all aspects of school activities. Crocs are discouraged. Please no light-up shoes as they are very disruptive in the classroom. In addition, no character apparel (i.e. no superhero's, Disney characters which includes backpacks, lunch boxes, and nap bedding).

Emergency Situations

DCPS has an emergency management plan that each school must follow. The designated safe place for CHML is Ludlow Taylor Elementary School at 7th and G NE. If schools must close due to an emergency or bad weather, the principal will notify parents via robo-call. Parents can also register free of charge with DC Alerts at <https://textalert.ema.dc.gov> and receive school-specific emergency alerts via, email, text message or page. Parents can monitor local news sources for emergency information and updates such as WTOP 820 AM or 103.5 FM.

Students participate in fire drills and earthquake drills and learn and review appropriate evacuation procedures throughout the school year.

School Events and Activities Notice Policy

CHML has a strict policy of requiring at least **two weeks advance notice** for all school-wide special events and activities. Proper advance notice requires that **all of the following** (where relevant) be done at least two weeks before the event or activity:

1. Obtain principal's signature on any required permission slips.
2. Ensure that permission slips are sent home with students.

3. Post a notice of the activity on the Friends of Montessori listserv and/or relevant class listservs.
4. Put the activity on the school calendar.
5. Notify Cafeteria Management, if the event will impact lunch.

Please note that this rule and these requirements apply to all school-wide events regardless of who is doing the planning (teachers, parents, staff or students). After the initial two-weeks advance notice is provided, event planners will also ensure that reminders are regularly communicated to families and staff via our regular communication channels.

At the classroom, club or small group level there will be exceptions to this rule. Sometimes two-week advance notice is not possible because opportunities arise within that window through outside channels that the school and teachers/staff do not control. This is especially true of Montessori where “going-outs” are an integral part of education particularly in upper elementary and middle grades.

At the beginning of each school year, CHML faculty and PTSO work together to map out a school calendar, including both school-wide events and any known classroom events with their approximate dates/weeks. The resulting calendar will give families a way to plan, with the understanding that as the dates for the events approach there may be some scheduling changes. Changes for major school-wide events will not occur within the two-week window. The only person who can make exceptions to this rule is the principal and such exceptions will be made rarely and only in special circumstances.

Any item intended for all students—or related to a school-wide event—must be approved by the Principal or Assistant Principal prior to distribution or posting.

Security

DCPS provides security guards at schools to ensure safety of students during school hours. All visitors must sign in and show photo ID to the security guard when entering the building. To ensure the safety of everyone in the building, you must enter and exit through the doors in the main lobby only.

School Closings

School might open late, close early, or close for the entire day due to bad weather or emergency situations. Families will be notified via robo-call. Information about school closing is also posted on the DCPS website (www.dcps.dc.gov). If school is dismissed early, all after-school activities will be cancelled. No child is dismissed unless a parent or emergency contact person has been contacted and arrangements have been made for pick-up.

Bicycles and Scooters

Students are encouraged to ride bikes and/or scooters to school. According to DC law, properly fitting helmets must be worn by all riders under the age of 16, including riders on bike seats or bike trailers. CHML requires that bikes and/or scooters be firmly locked to the bike racks in front of the school building during the day to prevent thefts. Scooters that cannot be locked outside maybe be kept during school hours behind the security desk in the front lobby. Parents are invited to register their child's bike with the National Bike Registry, with which the DC Metropolitan Police collaborates. The school is not responsible for damage or theft. Please do not ride bikes on the playground on school days; they are never appropriate on the turf surface.

Students Using Public Transportation

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) offers fare assistance through the School Transit Subsidy Program. This program provides free or reduced fares for DCPS students who use Metrobus, Metrorail, or the DC Circulator to travel to and from school. We have enrolled all of our students in the DC ONE program, which will provide the DC-issued student photo identification card that students must use for free or reduced-fare public transit. New students will receive their DC One card prior to the end of September. It additionally provides access to other DC facilities like libraries and recreation centers. For more information, please visit the school main office or visit <http://ddot.dc.gov/page/school-transit-subsidy-program>.

Health Services

A registered nurse is on duty from 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The nurse is available for first aid, health screening, and to promote the health and safety of the entire CHML school community. Confidentiality on all health matters is respected. The nurses office is located on the first floor, room 100 and the number is (202) 698-3797.

Administration of Medication

DC policy requires that appropriate forms be completed by both parent and physician before any prescription or over-the-counter medication can be administered to a child. These forms are available from the school nurse. No child is permitted to carry medications with the exception of an asthma inhaler.

Chronic Illness

Parents of children with a history of any chronic illness (food allergy, asthma, etc.) that may affect school performance should contact the school nurse to develop an individual health plan.

Infectious Disease

Parents are required to report immediately any child's infectious illness (e.g. strep throat, chicken pox, lice, flu, etc.) to the school nurse. Students with possible contagious eye infections, undiagnosed skin eruptions, head lice, or illness will be excluded from class. Parents will be notified to

pick up the child. Children should be fever, vomit, and diarrhea free for 24 hours before returning to school. Children being treated for communicable illness should not return until they have been treated with antibiotics for at least 24 hours.

Accident or Sudden Illness at School

The school nurse will contact parents to advise them in case of illness or accident. Please keep the work number record at school current. The school must have the number of a relative, friend, or neighbor in case parents cannot be reached. If emergency transportation is required, the student will be accompanied by a staff member if the parent is not present.

Siblings

The following are the guidelines for siblings being in the same classroom:

- Siblings are sometimes allowed in the same primary classroom, if the older sibling is in their final year of the three-year primary cycle.
- Twins and triplets are not allowed in the same primary classroom.
- Siblings are sometimes allowed in the same elementary classroom as long as their work ethic is not negatively impacted by them being in the same classroom.
- In the case of siblings in the same classroom, the decision will be made in consultation with the parents and teacher, with the final decision coming from the principal.

Grace and Courtesy in the Classroom and Throughout the School

Good manners and kind behavior are an intrinsic part of the Montessori education. Lessons in respect, self-control, and elegance in movement are interwoven through all areas of study and are practiced throughout the day. Some examples of the lessons in grace and courtesy are:

- Saying “please”, “thank you” and “excuse me”
- Sneezing into one’s elbows
- Genuine apologies offered
- Waiting one’s turn with good grace
- Patience, when helping a peer or younger friend with work or with a piece of material
- Compassion and empathy for a classmate who is frustrated/tired/disappointed
- Good posture and attentive manner when sitting during circle time
- Respecting the need for quiet, when a classmate is engrossed in work
- Using a quiet voice and walking while moving through the hallways

Grace and Courtesy During Group Events and Assemblies

In the classroom, Montessori students approach work in a quiet and focused manner and also exhibit kindness and compassion toward each other, teachers, and staff. It is important that students take care to exhibit this behavior outside the classroom, at group events both in and out of school. Teachers, staff and parents, when they are present, must work together to ensure that students speak and behave in ways that are respectful of each other, teachers, staff and people from

outside the school community. This includes sitting quietly and listening attentively when that is appropriate. Teachers will impart this message and their expectations to their students as part of their lessons and preparation for special events. Parents should regularly impart the same message, especially in advance of special events, to ensure that students, even very young students, understand what is expected of them.

Moving Up from Primary to Elementary

In the spring of each school year, primary (Kindergarten) students have the opportunity to visit all of the elementary classrooms to determine their social readiness for transitioning to elementary for the upcoming school year. This process is referred to “voting with their feet” because the children will decide on their next classroom by staying where they feel most comfortable. There are occasions when the teachers collaborate with administration to make sure the classes are balanced in terms of diversity, boy/girl ratio, and number of students. If a child is not ready to move to elementary the primary teacher will notify the parent that the student will need to spend some additional time in primary before transitioning to elementary.

Discipline

At CHML it is our goal to help your child interact with the learning environment and school community in a positive, responsible way. The goal of discipline in Montessori is to develop inner control of self-discipline. Montessori philosophy believes in natural and logical consequences as opposed to “punishment.” In primary classrooms, many behavior lessons are taught through grace and courtesy lessons, including respecting personal space and not interrupting work. Since pre-school age children have problems understanding the ramifications of their behavior, diversion is the first tactic used if a child is misbehaving. A teacher or staff member will redirect the child’s attention from the thing/issue that is causing the issue. If redirection does not work, the child will be removed from the problem (unless danger is present and then the child is removed immediately). On occasion, the child may have to be removed from the classroom for a break or observe in another classroom.

Mandatory physical activity (*e.g.*, running laps, pushups) or the withholding of physical activity (*e.g.*, recess, physical education) will not be used as punishment.

Elementary aged children begin to understand the ramifications of their behavior. They are encouraged to think about how they are behaving and how that behavior will affect others and the things around them. The teacher will let the child know that a certain behavior is not appropriate. If the child continues the behavior, a teacher may take away privileges and/or remove the child from the situation. If problems continue, parent-teacher conferences made need to be set-up to discuss the behavior and how to address it.

CHML also follows and enforces all DCPS disciplinary policies subject to the DC Municipal Regulations regarding Student Discipline and Student's Rights and Responsibilities. To access these documents, please visit: <http://dcps.dc.gov/chapter25>

Resolving Problems

If a parent or child encounters a specific problem or concern during the school year, the following steps should be taken: 1. Contact your child's teacher or other staff member with whom the problem was encountered. 2. If the problem was not resolved in step 1, call or make an appointment with the assistant principal. 3. If the problem was not resolved in step 2, call or make an appointment with the principal.

Home Activities

Homework, in a Montessori sense, is work that the child does at home as an extension of his or her own interests. Generally, traditional homework is not a major part of CHML.

Teachers may suggest activities that are related to academic activities for parents and children to do outside of school hours. Sharing an activity that has great meaning to you will expand your child's outlook and build a bond around that shared activity. Activities that you enjoy together add to your child's experience of enjoyable activities which may serve to enrich your child's entire life. For more information, please contact your child's teacher directly.

Classroom Observations

Parents are encouraged to visit and observe your child(ren)'s classroom. Contact your child's teacher to set up a time. Regular classroom observations will begin in November and continue until the end of May. Classes need time at the beginning of the year to settle into their work routines before observations begin. At the end of the year, classes need time for closing down activities. On the day of the scheduled observation, report to the main office first to obtain the classroom observations policy sheet. Parents also need to watch a video prior to observing, if they have not already done so. When entering the classroom please do so quietly without causing disruption. While in the classroom, please do not initiate conversation with the children; if you are greeted, respond appropriately without prolonging the conversation. Sit quietly and observe all of the children; do not follow a particular child around. If you wish to examine the materials more closely, please let your teacher know after your visit is over. Please do not remove materials from shelves and never interfere with the work of the children.

Here are some things to look for when observing: individual choice of work by the children; responsibility for the environment, orderly use of materials, a variety of work in progress from mathematics to geography, language to music, and freedom within limits- the children work on one thing at a time.

Communication

Communication between school and home is critical to a positive educational experience. There are many different ways information is shared at CHML. Including: the Principal Post, school website, social media, the school-wide “Friends of Montessori” listserv, classroom listservs/emails, parent-teacher conferences, and PTSO meetings.

The Principal Post is emailed using a list of email addresses compiled upon registration. If you do not receive the Principal Post directly, please contact the main office. The Principal Post is also shared to the Friends of Montessori listserv. The Principal Post contains CHML news and updates and is emailed approximately every two weeks.

The PTSO, in collaboration with the school, maintains the school website www.capitolhillmontessorischool.org. The website includes information for parents and the community on school policies, programs, and events. In addition PTSO maintains the school Facebook and Twitter accounts. News and updates are shared through these outlets.

Parents are highly encouraged to join the school “Friends of Montessori” listserv which provides a forum to share information and updates on school news and activities via emails. Please note the participation is limited to parents, guardians, and staff to provide a direct link to the school. To subscribe to the Friends of Montessori listserv, please visit https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/friends_of_montessori

In addition to the school wide listserv, individual classrooms maintain email lists. This provides a forum for the teacher and/or classroom parent to communicate specific classroom news and information. It also allows parents to communicate and coordinate for school events. Please make sure you join your class email list as well. This can be done through your teacher and/or classroom parent.

PTSO meetings are held approximately every month (excluding January and December). During these meetings, the principal and PTSO give updates on school events, programs, and fundraising efforts and present information on selected topics including the school budget, testing, student retention, advocacy, and the middle grades program, There is also an open Question and Answer period at the end of each PTSO meeting for parents to engage on any issue or topic.

Teacher Communication

Parents will receive reports of the educational progress of their child(ren) through parent-teacher conferences and report cards/progress reports. Most teachers will communicate more often through informal means: a quick conference, phone call, or email. Teachers use announcements/flyers and even class meetings.

Parent Communication

Parents are asked to inform the classroom teacher of any family changes, household crises, or medication that may affect your child's learning readiness and behavior. In addition, inform the teacher if your child will be late and/or out of school.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

There are two conferences scheduled each school year. Teachers will either use an electronic sign up platform or sign-up sheets that are provided in the front lobby about a week beforehand. Parents sign-up for a 15-20 minute time slot that is convenient for them. All parents are strongly encouraged to attend these conferences; they are an opportune time to discuss the progress of your child(ren). Of course, if at any time you have concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your teacher to schedule a time to talk.

Room Parents

Room parents are an important liaison between teachers, parents, and the PTSO. Parents may volunteer by indicating their interest to their teacher. Each classroom has at least one room parent. They support the teacher and PTSO in many ways. These include but are not limited to: sharing information to the class email list, assisting with raising funds for the classroom, assisting with school wide special events such as Teacher Appreciation Week and International Days. Each teacher will provide direction to the classroom parent and the PTSO will provide information to be shared.

Monarch Minutes

The PTSO publishes a monthly newsletter that is both sent home and posted on the school website. The newsletter is intended to keep parents informed of school news, what is happening in the classroom, and events. If you would like to help or have suggestions for the newsletter, please email newsletter@capitolhillmontessorischool.org

Report cards

Parents will receive quarterly progress reports (pre-school and pre-kindergarten) and report cards (kindergarten-7th grades). Issue dates are on the school calendar.

Out of School Activities

Before and After Care

Springboard provides both before and after care for CHML students. Drop off and pick up are in the main building. In addition to general aftercare, there are free classes and fee-based electives offered. For more information on Springboard, please visit <http://www.springboardafterschool.com>

Before care drop off is available from 7:30 a.m. to 8:15 a.m.. After care starts at 3:15 p.m. for primary students and 4:15 p.m. for elementary and middle grades students, when children are picked up from their classrooms. After care ends at 6:30 p.m..

Sports

Athletics are an important part of a school experience. Beginning in upper elementary (4th grade) students are eligible to represent CHML on sports teams that compete in the DC Interscholastic Athletics Association (DCIAA). Currently CHML has a track-and-field and a cross-country team.

Clubs

There are clubs available for elementary and middle grades students. Information on club opportunities will be provided through classroom teachers or school communications.

Academic Services

Student Support Services

Student Support Teams (SST) are school-based committees charged with helping schools provide all students with opportunities to learn and progress in the general curriculum. Many factors can affect the learning process and sometimes teachers need assistance in identifying those factors. The Student Support Team consists of you the parent, your child's teacher, the school administrator, and other school support staff. The other support staff can be the school social worker, school psychologist, speech language pathologist, or occupational therapist. Teachers and parents can initiate an SST. SST can address issues such as learning difficulties (e.g. language delays, retention/recall abilities, concerns about socio-emotional growth, etc), poor attendance, discipline and/or behavior concerns, and health related issues. Please contact your child's teacher for more information.

Each student who qualifies for special education services will have an Individualized Education Program (IEP), developed by a team of professionals, which states educational goals and objectives; describes learning needs and abilities; and lists the needed related services. In accordance with the IEP, a student is included in the regular education program to the maximum extent possible, participating in "pull-out" services and/or inclusion as appropriate.

Assessments

DCPS uses an annual assessment to ensure children are performing at or above grade level and interim assessments to measure their progress throughout the school year. The DCPS Unit Assessments (formerly called PIA) are given four times each year. After each one, teachers use the data to assess and then modify instruction to student needs. Unit Assessments are administered to students in 2nd-7th grades.

Since 2014, CHML has used the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Assessment to test on language and math skills (replaced DC CAS). PARCC is administered to students in 3rd-8th grades. Results from both assessments provide an additional tool to help teachers and administrators in instructional planning and goal setting.

Common Core State Standards

DCPS has joined with the majority of states in adopting a set of standards that lay out what students should be able to know and do from kindergarten through 12th grade. From English/Language Arts to Mathematics, the Common Core Standards help you understand what your child should learn each year to be successful. The Common Core Standards will use assessments designed to measure student learning and progress toward mastery of the standards.

Family Engagement and Giving

CHML Staff/Parent Organizations

CHML Local School Advisory Team (LSAT) is an advisory group to the principal and is responsible for signing off on the annual school budget, and works in tandem with school administrators on internal policies affecting school operations and on long-range strategies. Members are elected annually at the end of each school year.

Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO) consists of parents, teachers, and students that partner together to support CHML. A board is elected annually at the end of each school year. The PTSO focuses on supporting the faculty, staff, and students through fundraising, hosting community building events, engaging with the broader community, and working closely with school administration to align activities and spending towards common goals. All parents/guardians are automatically members of the PTSO. We ask for 100% family participation in volunteering and giving in a way and amount that fits each family. PTSO community meetings are held monthly in the evenings, except for December and January.

Ways to Give:

- Give to the General PTSO Fund
- Give to your classroom teacher through the PTSO
- Link your current spending to receive no-cost money back to the school (Amazon, Safeway, Giant, etc.). Please see school website for Easy Giving options.

Gifts

CHML aims to maintain the strongest ethical standards possible at all times. This applies to giving, too. In order to stay within the spirit of the ethics guidelines for all DCPS employees, any gifts to individual teachers should not exceed \$10. Any giving for classroom and school support

should be given through the PTSO which is a 501(c)(3). Parents can designate any PTSO donation for a specific classroom or the general PTSO fund.

CHML Events

Back to School Night. In September Back to School Night is an annual event hosted by the principal, teachers, and staff to introduce the parent community to the school and specific classrooms.

Bike to School/Walk to School Days. CHML participates in International Walk to School Day in October and International Bike to School Day in May events on Capitol Hill. Meet up at Lincoln Park to hear speakers, grab some snacks and be counted; then participate in the biking/walking train to CHML.

Easy Giving. The following partners will give CHML money back when you spend there – at no additional cost to you: Harris Teeter, Giant, Safeway, Amazon, Target, and Fulcrum Properties Group. The CHML website has all the information you need to sign up. In addition, check out whether your employer has any giving programs that can benefit CHML. For example, one parent’s employer provides a donation based on volunteer hours of the parent. If you have any ideas or questions you can email president@capitolhillmontessorischool.org.

Family Fun Nights. The PTSO organizes two Family Fun Nights to have fun together and build community. These events are free and have a theme for all kids to enjoy. They are great opportunities to get to know one another.

Fuel Free Fridays. CHML believes in encouraging exercise while helping the environment. We join others across the nation in encouraging Fuel Free Fridays by inviting families to bike and walk to school with their children.

Garden Work Days. Gardens are a priority to support health and wellness as well as being a core part of the Montessori philosophy. Periodically weekend work days are held to keep our gardens kept up and aligned to seasonal needs.

Haunted Harvest Festival. This unique event is a CHML signature event. It is part fundraising, part fun. In October the Haunted Harvest Festival Committee transforms the school into part Haunted House, part Harvest Celebration with a little bit of mad science thrown in. We also add a low-cost chili and dog dinner that is a hit. The broader community is invited.

Health and Wellness Activities. Health and wellness are a core part of the philosophy and practice both in school and out of school. The Health and Wellness Committee organizes numerous health and wellness activities with parents, teachers and students, including a Family Fitness Night and Field Day.

International Days. International Days is a CHML tradition that celebrates the importance of cultural diversity and strength in our own community and world-wide. This two-day celebration in

May kicks off with an opening event in the morning for students. The in-school celebrations and educational activities culminate in a community celebration of food and culture. In the evening classes organize tables celebrating a specific culture with food and information, and students perform.

Open Houses. The school hosts two open houses for prospective families. The principal organizes the events. The PTSO finds family volunteers to provide refreshments, serve refreshments, and be available to answer questions of prospective parents. Open houses are held December-January.

PTSO Board Meetings. The PTSO Board meets monthly to move forward and coordinate the work of the school and parent communities. Board representatives are expected to attend. Committee chairs may attend.

PTSO Community Meetings. Over the course of the year, the PTSO hosts community meetings. These are important meetings to develop community agreement on the PTSO direction, engage volunteers, and collaborate with the principal on the school strategy. Every family member of students and every staff person and teacher is invited and encouraged to attend. The meetings take place from 6:30-7:30 pm in the multipurpose room and free babysitting is provided.

Teacher Appreciation Week. The National Teacher Appreciation Week is in May. During this week there are special events to recognize the teachers and staff.

Yard Sale. The yard sale is held in the early spring. It has become a community tradition that also raises money for our school. Collect items that you can donate to this important event. We cannot accept those items until the week of the sale, but keep us in mind when you clean closets and basements!

Facilities Use Agreement Process

When a community partner or another entity requests to hold an event or program in a DCPS school building, on DCPS school grounds, or at another DCPS facility outside of regularly scheduled hours, they are required to complete a usage agreement with the Department of General Services Realty Office. The usage agreement and procedures below are the only ways that an outside entity can hold an event in a DCPS building or on DCPS school grounds and therefore must be followed. Usage agreements must be sent to the Department of General Services at least 20 business days prior to the event.

The steps to the usage agreement are outlined below. Detailed Policies and Procedures for Use of School Facilities and Grounds are also on the DCPS website.

Step 1: Event host completes a building use agreement **at least 20 business days prior** to the event.

Step 2: Event host submits the form to the DCPS Principal for review

Step 3: DCPS Principal provides signature of approval on page 2

Step 4: Event host submits the form to the DGS Realty Office

Step 5: DGS-Department of Realty processes the request by working with the DCPS - Office of School Security and the Metropolitan Police Department to determine security cost and availability for the event

Step 6: Confirmation is sent to the requestor within 7 to 10 business days prior to the event

If your event is cancelled or postponed, please notify the following offices immediately:

- DGS – Department of Realty – 202-442-5199
- DCPS – Office of School Security – 202-576-5033 or 5040

Policies and Procedures for Use of School Grounds

Department of General Services (DGS) Realty Office
2000 14th Street, NW, 5th Floor
Washington, DC 20009

School Related Organizations

The following groups may use buildings and grounds, except leased facilities, at a reduced rate during normal hours for purposes not conflicting with the school's operations and not generating any additional costs to DCPS:

- PTA's and HSA's
- Local School Community Boards
- Parental and School Advisory Committees established pursuant to federal and local laws
- City-wide education organizations or local affiliates of national educational associations
- Organizations providing volunteer support services to the school.

HSA/PTA are entitled to four free meetings per year outside of the normal operating hours of their schools.

Current user fees will be charged for anyone not listed above.

Prohibited Uses of School Buildings and Grounds

The following will NOT be permitted in any school facility at any time:

- smoking
- alcoholic beverages
- gambling
- discrimination against any person on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, citizenship status, political affiliation, handicapped condition, or any other basis of unlawful discrimination under the laws of the District of Columbia
- any purpose that violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution

- no user or lessee shall be permitted to erect a sign on the exterior of the premises without prior written approval of the Chancellor

User Fee Schedule

Each classroom

- \$ 35.00/day
- \$ 360.00/month

Gymnasium or Auditorium

- children’s event: \$ 70.00/day
- adult’s event: \$137.00/day
- \$480.00/month

Kitchen: \$ 70.00/day *

Cafeteria: \$100.00/day

Field/Stadium for soccer or other vigorous sport: \$95.00/hour

**A DCPS Food Service worker must be on duty when food is prepared in kitchens or if kitchen equipment is used. There is an additional charge for these services. Please contact the DCPS Food Services Office for current costs at (202) 576-7400.*

Payments are by money orders or certified checks ONLY made payable to the D.C. Treasurer.

Additional Fees:

- Custodial overtime fee - varies (actual costs will be calculated on a per hour basis by the DGS Realty Office)
- Security Services fee - varies according to the contracted services

Student Activity Fund

DCPS has an online payment service for parents and guardians. Payments for student activities such as class dues, field trips, athletic fees, fundraisers, uniform purchases, laboratory fees, etc.*, can now be made using a debit card (with the Visa or MasterCard Logo) or major credit card (Visa, MasterCard, and Discover). Please note there is no fee to use this service!

Here are a few reasons to begin making online payments:

- Safety – you no longer have to worry about your child carrying money to school.
- Convenience - Payments can be made from the comfort of your own home, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Payment confirmations will be sent electronically.
- Efficiency - Make payments for all your children in one step, even though they may attend different schools within our district.

****Payments for school lunch and after school programs are not accepted through this program.***

Student ID and zip code will be required to make payment.

In General

Notice of Non-discrimination

The DC Public School district (DCPS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, physical handicap, matriculation, or political affiliation in its programs and activities. Discrimination will not be tolerated and persons engaging in such will be subject to disciplinary action. The following office has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Equal Employment Opportunity Office, DC Public Schools, 1200 First Street NE, 6th floor, Washington, DC 20002, (202) 442-5424. For general information about DC Public Schools, call (202) 442-5885 or visit www.dcps.dc.gov