

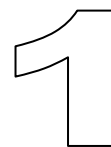


Parent Handbook

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: About Our School.....	1
Mission Statement.....	1
Educational Philosophy	1
Religious Affiliation	1
General Information.....	2
Organizational Chart.....	2
Chapter 2: Enrollment and Financial Information.....	3
Admission.....	3
Application and Registration.....	3
Tuition.....	3
Extended Care.....	4
Late Payment Charge	4
Returned Check Fee.....	4
Withdrawals	4
Temporary Withdrawals	4
Parent Volunteer Program.....	4
Volunteer Opportunities for Parents.....	5
Children’s Records	6
Chapter 3: Your Child at School	8
Visitor Log	8
School Schedule	8
School Year Calendar	9
Attendance	9
Absence	9
Extended Care	10
Arrival & Departure Procedures.....	10
Arrival.....	10
Departure.....	10
Rainy Day Dismissal	11
Early Dismissal	11
Transportation.....	11
Parking.....	11
Late Pick-Up Procedure.....	11
Chapter 4: Montessori Education	12
Montessori Philosophy	12
The Time Environment—The Work Cycle	12
Montessori Curriculum and Classroom.....	13
Practical Life	13
Sensorial.....	14
Language.....	14
Math.....	14
Cultural	14

Geography	14
History.....	15
Science.....	15
Technology	15
Arts	15
Health, Wellness and Physical Education.....	16
Home and School Connection	16
Chapter 5: Medical and Safety Information.....	17
First Aid and CPR.....	17
Illness.....	17
Medicine	17
Allergies	18
Emergency Procedures	19
Outdoor Play.....	19
Child Abuse and Neglect	19
Exclusion Guidelines	19
Emergency Health Care Plan	20
Safety	21
Substance Abuse.....	21
Fire	21
Tornadoes, Hurricanes, and Natural Disasters	21
Incident/Accident	21
Inclement or Excessively Hot or Cold Weather.....	22
Identifying Where Children Are During the Day	22
Emergency Action Plan	22
Chapter 6: Policies and Procedures	24
Birthdays.....	24
School Attire	24
Slippers.....	25
Items from Home	25
Lost and Found.....	25
Lunch.....	25
Television.....	25
School Staff/Parent Relations	26
Discipline	26
Dismissals.....	27
Chapter 7: Parent Involvement and Communication	29
MSEO Community Association.....	29
Adjustment to School.....	29
Classroom Observations.....	30
Conference and Progress Reports	30
Newsletter.....	30
Bibliography	31



About Our School

The Montessori School of East Orlando Mission Statement

We dedicate ourselves to promoting each child's individuality and uniqueness while celebrating their differences. Our ultimate goal is to nurture each child's spirit, while providing an enriching, positive climate in which the children will grow academically, socially and spiritually and through this, understand and appreciate the unity of all people and things.

Educational Philosophy

The Montessori School of East Orlando (MSEO) is dedicated to providing a classroom environment where children discover life as a whole. Through the academic curriculum, the daily emphasis on tolerance, peacefulness, compassion and kindness, we hope to provide an environment in which each child is free to grow and develop to his/her potential.

Our philosophy is based on the teachings of Dr. Maria Montessori who emphasized the development of all facets of a child's unfolding personality—social, emotional, cognitive, and physical. The scientifically prepared, child-centered environments contain a wide variety of materials from which a child may choose an appropriate learning tool. The Montessori Directress (Teacher) acts as a monitor and guide to encourage individual exploration, discovery, trial, practice and success. Each achievement opens a new and exciting challenge. Awareness of, and concern for the welfare of the group, is an integral part of learning. It is important for children to know their role in the scheme of life; therefore, the curriculum focuses on the interdependence of all living things. Freedom with responsibility is basic to Dr. Montessori's method.

Religious Affiliation

While The Montessori School of East Orlando is not affiliated with any specific religion, we honor the religious beliefs of all our families. We acknowledge the rich and diverse heritage of our school through classroom studies and celebrations of traditional and cultural holidays.

General Information

The Montessori School of East Orlando is a private school according to the Florida Department of Education.

Currently, we are offering primary, lower and upper elementary at 2526 Percival Road. The Montessori School of East Orlando admits students of any race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, family structure, national and ethnic origin, or ancestry to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded, or made available, to students at the school. It encourages diversity and strives for economic, ethnic, cultural and individual diversity. We embrace our non-discrimination policy and do not treat people differently based on race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, or marital status.

We use the following criteria for accepting individual students:

Primary (Ages 3-6)

1. The child must be at least 3 years old by September 1st and meet all requirements for placement.
2. Children age 4 and older who have begun their Montessori experience at other Montessori schools may be considered for admission as transfers.
3. Children age 4 and older who have no prior Montessori experience may be considered for admission after a review by the Admissions Committee.
4. If a child has previous school experience, copies of school records will be required.
5. Children must be toilet trained. Diapers or pull-up diapers are not permitted. Cotton training pants are permitted.

Elementary Program (Ages 6-12)

1. Children entering the elementary program must be over the age of 6 by September 1st and meet all requirements for placement.
2. Children who have begun their Montessori experience at other Montessori schools may be considered for admission as transfers.
3. Children who have no prior Montessori experience may be considered for admission after a review by the Admissions Committee.
4. All candidates, as part of the interviewing process, are required to spend at least a half-day (and up to three half days) in the elementary classroom.
5. Official records from the present school are required prior to classroom visits and acceptance to the program.

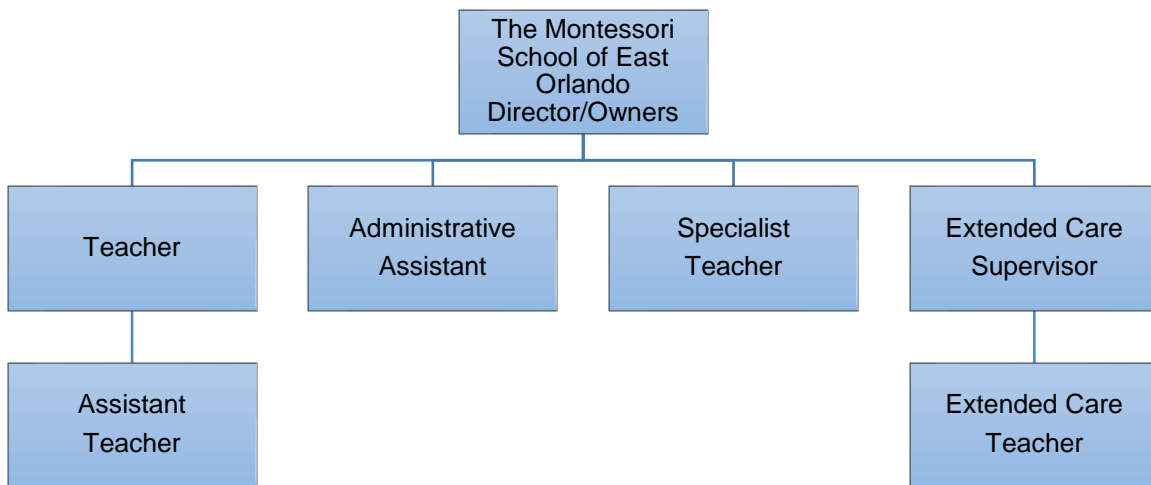
Siblings of current or former MSEO students and Montessori transfer students have priority in our pool.

The program at The Montessori School of East Orlando is under the direction of Marcia & Ingrid Hurlbutt. Please refer to the following chart for the school organizational structure.

The Montessori School of East Orlando
2526 Percival Road
Orlando, FL 32826
Phone 407-447-5860 / Fax 407-737-1087

Tax ID # 54-2138065

The Montessori School of East Orlando's Organizational Chart



2

Enrollment and Financial Information

Admission

The Montessori School of East Orlando is open to all children aged 3 years to 12 years. The Montessori School of East Orlando admits students of any race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, family structure, national and ethnic origin, or ancestry to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded, or made available, to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, athletic and other school administered programs. Children with learning disabilities or handicaps are accepted on a case-by-case basis according to The Montessori School of East Orlando's ability to fully meet their specific needs.

Application and Registration

To make an application to The Montessori School of East Orlando there is an application fee (per child). There is also a Tuition Deposit equal to one regular monthly tuition payment required annually from all families. All fees are non-refundable.

Tuition

- The tuition may be paid on an Annual, Semi-Annual, or Monthly payment plan. Payments are based on a ten month school year, from August through May.
- All tuition payments and fees must be paid through Smart Tuition.
- New families make the first installment payment when the Application and Admission Contract is accepted. The first installment serves as a tuition deposit and becomes non-refundable after close of business on June 30th of the current school year. The other nine tuition installments are paid from September to May.
- Tuition will be prorated for any student enrolling after October 15. Please note that because tuition is a fee for the entire academic year, pro-rated tuition payments may be more or less than the monthly installment fees depending on your child's start date.
- Enrolling siblings will receive a 20% tuition discount. The discount is applied to the lesser of the tuitions paid.

Extended Care

Occasionally, parents need to have their children stay at school beyond the contracted hours. For this reason, The Montessori School of East Orlando offers the option of EXTENDED CARE. These hours are billed on a monthly basis. An Extended Agreement Form must be on file before the student will be accepted into the program.

Late Payment Charge

A \$25.00 late fee is charged for tuition received after the 5th of the month. For tuition received after the 15th of the month, a \$50.00 late fee will be charged. If tuition has not been paid by the end of the month, the child will not be able to continue his/her enrollment.

Returned Check Fee

A \$25.00 fee will be charged for each “bounced” or returned check.

Withdrawals

From June 1st to January 1st, in order to be released from further tuition obligations, a thirty (30) day WRITTEN NOTICE is required to withdraw your child from the school. If withdrawal notice is not received by January 1st, you are responsible for tuition for the remainder of the school year. This is according to the terms stated in the Enrollment Contract. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Temporary Withdrawals

A child withdrawn for illness, vacations, or any other reason will lose his/her space unless tuition payments are continued during the period of the child’s absence.

Parent Volunteer Program

All parents are obligated to volunteer their time and talents or make a donation to the school in lieu of this obligation. Each family is expected to contribute at least thirty (30) hours of volunteer labor to assist with the operation of the school during the course of the year—twenty (20) hours if a single parent.

The Parent Volunteer Program is a vital part of our school. This program ensures that all tasks necessary for the successful operation of MSEO are performed and permits the teaching staff to concentrate on their classroom duties. All families have the opportunity to give their share of time towards these ends.

Throughout the school year, parents will be asked to do certain jobs. Families credited with the fewest hours will be given first opportunity to respond to the school’s needs. The Volunteer Interests surveys will be consulted before requests on your time are made, in an attempt to match your interest and skills with the school’s needs. This information will assist in making fewer requests for duties which are less interesting to you. Below are descriptions of various tasks. We ask that each parent fill out a Volunteer Interests survey indicating tasks you feel you could perform. This survey is available during Meet

Your Teacher and Open House events. We must have these surveys returned to the office when your child begins school.

It is the parent's responsibility to document volunteer hours. Please remember to report the nature of volunteer work done and the number of hours spent. Forms for recording Parent Help hours can be obtained from the school office. Only those hours reported by the parents will appear on the office records. Reminders will be sent periodically to update volunteer hours.

Volunteer Opportunities for Parents

During School Hours

- **Playground Duty:** Help on playground for primary and elementary classes.
- **Garden Work with Children:** On any cool, sunny or appropriate day, plan to work with the children in the garden. Plan and schedule with the Directress.
- **Field Trip Driving/Chaperoning:** Drive our children on occasional field trips (not necessarily all of them), and assist as necessary.
- **Substitute Classroom Help:** Assist Directress or Assistant with class when one of the classroom staff is absent.
- **Special Projects Assistance:** Help Directress guide children in art or other special activities or bake for special occasions. Each project would require 2 to 3 hours.
- **Classroom Enrichment:** Give short presentations on art, music, crafts, etc. Demonstrate science experiments, etc. Plan and schedule with the Directress.
- **Library Maintenance:** Catalog and file books for school library.

At Your Convenience

- **Board Membership:** Serve a one- to two-year term attending monthly meetings to help make decisions regarding the school. Time may be required to serve on special committees such as Finance, Long Range Planning, and Executive Committee. Supervision of certain fundraising activities or grants may be necessary.
- **Fundraising Committee:** Help fundraising chairman organize and assist at fundraising events. Work in conjunction with Administrator.
- **Special Events Committee.** Help with special events such as the Multicultural Potluck, Open Houses, Talent Show, and Field Day. Work in conjunction with Administrator and Directress.
- **Classroom Materials Fabrication:** Assist teaching staff in making additional classroom materials such as laminated language cards, etc. Task involves cutting, pasting, sewing, etc.

- **Maintenance Committee:** Organize volunteers to perform necessary maintenance including: carpentry, painting of furniture, inside of building, materials, upkeep of playground; building bookcases, shelves and playground equipment as needed.
- **Publicity/Historian Committee:** Take pictures of various school activities, and keep a scrapbook of the current year up to date.
- **PR/Marketing Committee:** Write news releases, public service announcements, speak at community events, promote positive image of MSEO.
- **Development Committee:** Investigate the possibilities of various corporate and foundation grants, to aid the school financially, investigate the possibilities of offering scholarships to students who cannot afford the tuition at MSEO with Administrator.
- **Gardening Committee:** Help maintain the flower and vegetable gardens. Work in conjunction with Directress.
- **Laundry and Shopping:** Wash cloths and towels used in the classrooms on a weekly basis and wash mats and rugs on an as needed basis. Do shopping for supplies (tissues, toilet paper, soap, etc.) on an as needed basis.

Children's Records

According to the Florida Department of Education and the Department of Children and Families, the following documents must be on file at the school before your child enters the school.

- Application/Contract
- Transportation Form
- Emergency Data Card
- Emergency Form
- School Entry Health Examination Form: Department of Health Form DH 3040
- Immunization Form: Department of Health Form DH 680
- Ill Child Compliance Form
- Child Identification Form
- Trip Permission
- Parent Resource Information
- Signed acknowledgement of receipt of Parent Handbook

It is the parents' responsibility to keep all forms updated with all necessary telephone numbers and any new information pertinent to their child's well-being.

If these documents are not on file within 30 days of enrollment, your child will not be permitted to attend school until all such documents are provided.

Your Child at School

Visitor Log

The safety of all students and staff is of the utmost importance to the School. With that in mind, MSEO has implemented rules to ensure the safety of our students and also to limit any distractions or confusion. *All parents, volunteers, and visitors are required to sign-in to the Visitor Log located in the office before they are permitted to enter any classroom.*

School Schedule

Daily Schedule for Primary Students

8:45	Students can be dropped off at school.
9:00	Class begins. Students are considered late after 9:15AM and must be signed-in by parent in office.
11:45-12:00	Part Day Primary students are dismissed.
12:00-12:30	Lunch
1:00 – 1:45	Recess
1:45 – 2:45	Extended work period
2:45 – 3:00	Dismissal of Full-Day students

Daily Schedule for Elementary Students

8:15	Students can be dropped off at school.
8:30	Class begins. Students are considered late after 8:30AM
12:00-12:30	Lunch
1:00 – 1:30	Recess
1:30 – 3:00	Extended work period / Specialist Teacher instruction period
3:00-3:10	Dismissal of School-Day students

The school day ends at 3:00. Teachers or an authorized staff member will bring your child to your car in the pickup line. Drivers—PLEASE DO NOT exit your vehicle in the pick-up line. Please park if you need to talk with someone or otherwise remain on the campus. Students not picked up by 3:15 will be charged for Extended Care.

School Year Calendar

The Montessori School of East Orlando gives your child the opportunity to participate in the Montessori environment while offering working families the advantage of a full-day program.

Although we offer this advantage, we are first and foremost a school. Therefore, we do have time off during the school year for holidays, preparation for the new school year, conferences, etc. The tuition has been calculated to include these times.

The Montessori School of East Orlando generally follows the calendar of Orange County Public Schools. Please refer to the Montessori School of East Orlando School Calendar to verify exact dates and schedules. Although we do our best to plan the calendar properly, unforeseen events may cause changes to the schedule. We will try to give as much advance notice as possible if changes are necessary.

Attendance

Any child of compulsory school attendance age, who is enrolled in a private school pursuant to Section 232.02, Florida Statutes, shall be deemed to be in compliance with the compulsory attendance requirements of Section 232.01(1)(a), Florida Statutes, provided the child maintains regular attendance during the entire school term of either:

- 1) One hundred eighty (180) actual school days determined as prescribed by Section 228.041(13), Florida Statutes, or
- 2) A minimum of one hundred seventy (170) actual school days and the hourly equivalent of one hundred eighty (180) actual school days, determined as prescribed below:
 - a) Kindergarten: Five hundred forty (540) net instructional hours.
 - b) Grades 1-3: Seven hundred twenty (720) net instructional hours.
 - c) Grades 4-12: Nine hundred (900) net instructional hours.

Absence

We ask that you call us by 9:00AM when your child will not be coming to school. In the event that you have verification that your child has a communicable disease (strep throat, pink eye, chicken pox, scarlet fever, etc.) please call the school immediately so that other parents can be informed and we can help stop the spread of the disease.

Extended Care

Extended Care is available for both morning and afternoons. Morning Extended Care is available beginning at 7:30 a.m. until class begins. Afternoon Extended Care is available between the hours of 3:15 – 6:00 p.m. The parent(s) will be billed separately for this service. A monthly rate schedule can be obtained from Administration.

Pick-up after 6:05 p.m. is considered late. There is no grace period. A \$1.00 late fee will be assessed for each minute after 6:05 p.m. payable to the Extended Care Staff on duty. Excessive tardiness in picking up your children after 6:05 p.m. may warrant loss of the Extended Care service.

Extended Care may be denied to students for disruptive behavior. It is especially important for all Staff to have access to work and cell phone numbers, in order that the parents may be reached in an emergency. **Please make sure the emergency form in your child's file is kept current.**

Arrival & Departure Procedures

Arrival

All students are to be dropped off from the car line in front of the school. They are to walk through the office and from there they either go to Morning Extended Care or to their classroom. Parents and guardians can walk their student to the classrooms – please follow sign-in procedures if your student arrives after Morning Meeting.

It is important that your child arrive on time to ensure that he/she receives full benefit from the program. Latecomers disrupt the atmosphere in the classroom and cause much distraction for the children already engaged in personal or group activities. If your child does arrive after the start of class, they must be signed-in by a parent or guardian.

Departure

All those authorized to pick-up students must have their car tag displayed in the window upon entering the parking lot. For the safety of everyone, drivers are not allowed to use cell phones while in the car line. Your child will not be released until he/she has shaken hands with the dismissing staff member. This is done for two reasons: first, it helps us keep track of the children; and second, it helps foster self-esteem. Everyone is asked to remain in their cars at all times during pick-up. If a parent or guardian needs to speak with a staff member or another person, they will be instructed to park their car.

Your child will not be released to any adult not listed as authorized to pick up on the Pick-Up Form. A note written in the message book is necessary if someone other than a listed authorized person is to pick up a child. If, in an emergency, a parent calls and says someone not listed as an authorized person will pick up, then we will make a return call to that parent to confirm these arrangements. If we are unable to confirm the arrangements, we will not release the child. When filling out the Pick-Up and Emergency Forms, put as many emergency numbers as may be needed so that you will be covered

in all situations. In the event that a child is not picked up, and an emergency contact cannot be made, the Department of Children and Families will be notified.

Rainy Day Dismissal

In the event of inclement weather, the School may alter the normal departure procedures. Students will not be allowed to walk or ride their bikes home if there is lightning in the area. Additionally, parents may have to come into the school office to pick up their student from their classroom if it has been deemed unsafe to allow students outside.

Please be patient during rainy day dismissals. Our main goal will always be the safety of all students and staff at the school.

Early Dismissal

State regulations require that parents sign their children out for any early dismissal, including times when the child accompanies a parent out to lunch or to a doctor's appointment or any other activity during the day.

Transportation

Transportation is the responsibility of the parents. A transportation form must be on file in the office and should be updated, if necessary. If someone other than the regular driver is to transport your child, proper written notification must be provided to the school office as well as to the classroom teacher.

Parking

To ensure your child's safety, we require that you park in designated parking spaces only. Please do not leave your car running or leave children unattended in your car while you are in the school. You must park your car if you need to come onto campus or to speak with a teacher or another parent.

Late Pick-Up Procedure

Children should be picked up promptly at the close of their school day or no later than 3:15PM. Children whose parents are more than 10 minutes late at 11:45AM or 3:15PM will be charged the extended care fee \$10.00 per hour. If you know you are going to be late, please call the school. The late fee still applies, but the staff will avoid calling to locate the parent, and can reassure the child. Staff members will make accommodations for children waiting for their parents, but parents need to be aware that in many cases, staff members are unable to follow their normal schedule until all children are picked up.



Montessori Education

Montessori Philosophy

Montessori education is a preparation for life, not a search for intellectual skills.

The children have one intuitive aim in their self-development: they want to develop their inner resources and ability to cope with a strange and complex world. The child who accomplishes this, moves into harmony with this world and becomes a whole person.

Dr. Montessori tells us that the only really important thing in education is to teach the child how to learn. The motivations for learning must come from within the child. Human beings are born with the desire to know, the urge to explore and the need to master the environment—in short, to achieve. Thus, the Montessori environment is carefully prepared to train the senses, to stimulate curiosity, to satisfy the child's need to know and to protect him/her from unnecessary failure. Maria Montessori observed that when children grow up in an environment that is intellectually and artistically alive, warm and encouraging, they would spontaneously ask questions, investigate, create, and explore new ideas. She argued that learning can and should be a relaxed, comfortable and natural process.

Dr. Montessori found that at every level, students learn in different ways and at different rates. Studies have shown that most people learn more effectively from direct hands-on experience than from studying a textbook or listening to a teacher's explanations. All students, though, respond to careful coaching with plenty of time to practice and apply new skills and knowledge. Like the rest of us, children tend to learn through trial, error, and discovery.

The Montessori Method, as an educational approach, is not designed to simply teach children basic skills and provide information. Children need to learn to trust their own ability to think and solve problems independently. Montessori education encourages students to do their own research, analyze what they have found, and come to their own conclusions. The goal is to lead students to think for themselves and become actively engaged in the learning process.

The Time Environment—The Work Cycle

One of the interesting aspects of Montessori education is that Montessori sets up an environment for children in which they reveal characteristics that do not appear under other circumstances. One of these characteristics is the ability to work for long periods

of time in concentrated activity. For this to occur, it is necessary that children arrive at school in a timely manner.

Many children will enter the classroom and choose something relatively simple and stay with it for a short time, almost as if they are re-establishing feelings of competence. Their next activity is generally more difficult and they stay with it for a longer period of time. This is followed by a “false fatigue,” a time when many children have put their work away and have not, as yet, selected another activity. If the teacher allows the children to take the time they need to experience the restlessness of the false fatigue, they will soon settle into their most difficult work choice of the cycle and stay with it for the longest period of time. During this time, their concentration is the deepest and they make the greatest strides in the development of skills and in the acquisition of knowledge. Montessori called this the “great work period.” As the cycle nears its completion, the children put away their work and they appear to be refreshed and relaxed as they talk with one another.

When the time available is less than three hours, the great work period does not occur and the work cycle does not complete itself. To protect themselves from the frustration of having their work period interrupted, the children either do not choose any work after the false fatigue or they choose something that involves only superficial involvement.

Montessori Curriculum and Classroom

The Montessori curriculum is organized as an inclined spiral plane of integrated studies rather than a traditional model in which the curriculum is compartmentalized into separate subjects, with given topics considered only once at a given grade level. It is an integrated thematic approach that ties the separate disciplines of the curriculum together into studies of the physical universe, the work of nature, and the human experience. Literature, the arts, history, social issues, civics, economics, science and the study of technology all complement one another in the Montessori curriculum. The physical environment is carefully prepared, orderly, precise and attractive. It invites learning without being over-stimulating and allows the children to experience success that becomes truly meaningful to each child in the following areas of the classroom.

Practical Life

These exercises aid in the child’s development of order, concentration, coordination, and independence. They relate to the care of self and the environment and emphasize development in a step-by-step approach to work activities. These are essential for establishing the good work habits that are necessary for later success in the academic areas of the classroom. Success in school is directly tied to the degree to which children believe that they are capable and independent human beings. Learning how to work and play together with others in a peaceful and caring community is perhaps the most critical life skill that Montessori teaches. Montessori students develop a clear sense of values and social conscience. Montessori education teaches students from the beginning, everyday ethics and interpersonal skills. Even the youngest child is treated with dignity and respect.

Sensorial

The absorbent mind of the child builds intelligence through the use of the senses. Sensory materials allow children to use their senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell as an opportunity to learn, thus aiding in the development of the child's abstract thinking processes. Sensory materials encourage the development of fine motor skills, creativity, 1:1 correspondence and aid in the child's development of perception. The sensorial materials isolate all the different senses and are developmental, leading to finer and finer distinctions.

Language

These exercises provide the child with the concrete foundation for all further language work. Activities emphasizing auditory and visual perception skills begin with the youngest children. The basis for a phonemic approach to the sounds of our language leads directly to writing and reading. Learning the usage and function of words, with an emphasis on reading for meaning, leads to greater creativity in expression and an enthusiasm for both reading and writing.

We begin to teach the first functions of grammar and sentence structure to students as young as kindergarten, just as they are learning to put words together to express themselves. During the elementary years, the Montessori curriculum increasingly focuses on the development of research and composition skills. Students write everyday, learning to organize increasingly complex ideas and information into well-written stories, poems, reports, plays, and student publications.

Math

These exercises introduce the child to the world of numbers in concrete form. In the Primary program, the students are introduced to the base 10 system with materials that demonstrate it in the most concrete way (the Golden Beads). The children, then, not only learn numbers and counting, but are also introduced to addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. These operations and many more are introduced with the same material that was used initially to count in our base 10 system. Montessori students use hands-on learning materials that make abstract concepts clear and concrete. This approach to teaching mathematics offers a clear and logical strategy for helping students understand and develop a sound foundation in mathematics and geometry.

Cultural

The cultural area of the class provides an introduction to the world through exercises in history, geography, science, art, music, and foreign language.

Geography

The Geography curriculum introduces the world to the child through the use of globes and puzzle maps emphasizing land, water, continents, countries and oceans. The

introduction helps the child position him or herself in relation to the totality of the world. The children also learn about people from other cultures and about the many types of animals that inhabit our world, as well as the biomes in which these animals live.

History

In the Primary program, exercises demonstrating the passage of time and its expression in linear form begin the lessons in history. The children start learning about calendars, dates, and growth charts. They follow that up with divisions of time, such as the divisions of a year, a month, a week, an hour, and so on. Their understanding of time provides a foundation upon which to build at the elementary level.

Everyone has roots which lie in the distant past and history is the story of our common heritage. Without a strong sense of history, we cannot begin to know who we are as individuals today. Our goal is to develop a global perspective. The study of history, the Time-Line of Man, and the study of world cultures form the cornerstone of the Elementary Montessori curriculum.

Science

Science is an integral part of the Montessori curriculum. At the primary level, the students are introduced to zoology and botany through work that provides the answers to a child's multitude of questions: "What is this called?" Through the process of naming the various parts of a leaf, or the parts of a horse, the students are getting a familiarity with nomenclature that will serve to spark a further interest in these familiar objects.

Among other things, science represents a way of life, a clear thinking approach to gathering information and problem solving. The scope of the Montessori elementary curriculum includes a strong introduction to botany, zoology, chemistry, physics, geology, and astronomy.

The program is designed to cultivate students' curiosity and determination to discover the wonder and beauty of the natural world. They learn to observe patiently, analyze and scientifically evaluate the various topics they are researching. Intrinsic to this area, is their uninhibited willingness and desire to ask questions and then find the answers for themselves.

Technology

The computers in the classroom are used as a tool for learning in much the same way as the other materials in the classroom. All software is educational and developmentally appropriate.

Arts

The arts are integrated into the rest of the curriculum. There are modes of exploring and expanding lessons that have been introduced in science, history, geography, language

arts, and mathematics. Art and music history and appreciation are woven throughout the entire curriculum.

Health, Wellness and Physical Education

Montessori schools are very interested in helping children develop control of their fine and gross motor movements. For young children, programs will include dance, balance, and coordination exercises, loosely structured cardiovascular exercise, as well as the vigorous free play that is typical on any playground. With older children, the program challenges each student to develop a personal program of lifelong exercise, recreation, and health management. One important element in the Montessori approach to health and fitness is helping children to understand and appreciate how our bodies work and the care and feeding of a healthy human body.

A child's early years are the foundation upon which the rest of his/her experiences are built. The importance of providing a strong and positive base is paramount. In Montessori education, the child is respected as an individual in the environment with unique potential. This careful and appropriately planned transforming environment provides a wide range of experiences and opportunities that encourages and enhances the child's ability to fulfill his/her potential.

Montessori offers your child a way to grow in an environment which:

- Permits your child to find and participate freely in activities suited to his/her individual level.
- Helps your child become an orderly, integrated person with self-direction, inner discipline, and a sense of responsibility.
- Fulfills your child's need to become independent and to be able to make wise choices.
- Makes it easy for your child to learn social skills as well as cognitive skills.

Home and School Connection

When children enter the Montessori environment, they will be doing many things for themselves. They will want to continue to do these things at home as part of the process of becoming more independent. Help us by letting your children choose their own clothes, dress themselves, brush their teeth, pour their milk or juice from a small pitcher or conduct any other easy household task they enjoy. Do not rush your children as they perform these tasks and allow them to make mistakes. When they do make mistakes, show them how to do the task correctly rather than telling them that they are doing it wrong.

This new environment may also cause changes in your child's behavior. Becoming independent may be a new experience and you may want to discuss this with your child's teacher. We have Education Nights to enhance your knowledge of Montessori and to discuss the concept of independence and how it encourages self-discipline. Though not mandatory, we strongly encourage all parents to participate in these events to better understand their child's progress and development.

5

Medical and Safety Information

First Aid and CPR

The Montessori School of East Orlando requires ALL staff members to be CPR and First Aid certified.

All staff members are required to attend a Health Screening Class, so that they are familiar with the symptoms of common childhood illnesses. First Aid supplies are stored in each classroom and in the office. When on the playground, a first aid kit is always available. If a child is injured, the abrasion will be cleaned with soap and water and an accident report filled out. It is the school policy that if a child receives an injury to the head or mouth, the parent will be notified immediately.

Illness

Contamination is a reality in any group of young children. Please do not bring your child to school when he/she is contagious. If your child exhibits symptoms of illness during a twenty-four hour period prior to his/her scheduled attendance at school, then keep your child at home. In the event that a child shows symptoms of a fever or other illness, while at school, the child will be isolated and the parents will be called immediately. The child must be picked up at this time. It is imperative that emergency forms be kept up to date so you can be reached immediately. Your child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Medicine

Your child must be kept at home for the first 24 hours while on an antibiotic. We discourage the administration of medication during school hours and we request that whenever possible, medication doses be scheduled during non-school hours. However, we realize that this may not always be possible or practical. In the event that your child needs to have a medication administered at school, we ask that you please adhere to the following guidelines:

1. A written authorization must be given to the school and signed by the parent, authorizing staff member to give any medication. A school form containing the following essential information must be obtained from the office or the classroom, and completed by the parent
 - The name of the drug

- Dosage to be given
- Time of administration
- Proper storage, i.e., refrigeration
- Any special instructions or concerns

Any changes to the above require a new written note. The child must have had the first dose of the medication at home.

2. The medication must be in the original container with the pharmacy label affixed including the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage amount, and the time to be administered.
3. In addition, it is beneficial that you speak to the teacher about the medication in general.
4. Parents are responsible for bringing their child's medicine either to the office, or to their child's teacher. Children may not have any medication (inhalers, cough drops, and aspirin) in the classroom or in their backpacks. All medications will be kept under lock and key and administered at the appropriate time.
5. Please send the proper device to administer the medication.
6. It is imperative that parents monitor the expiration dates on Epipens, inhalers and nebulizers medications.

If any of the above guidelines are not complete or written directions are unclear concerning the administration of the medication, the staff will not administer the medicine. We will attempt to contact you in this event.

Please be advised that the above stated guidelines are intended for medications that are given on a "short term" basis (i.e., less than 10 days). All other long-term medications require that a physician fill out the information concerning administration of the medication.

Sunscreens and bug repellents must be clearly marked and kept out of the reach of the children. Please deliver these items to the staff, along with instructions for their use.

Allergies

All allergies should be reported to the school administration and your child's teacher. It is helpful if you will indicate all allergies on a 3x5 index card so that it can be posted in your child's classroom. If your child has a milk or food allergy, parents should provide an alternative for the child. Due to the high incidence of nut allergies in our school, we do not permit any nut products to be served in the school. This is a life-threatening

allergy for many children and we take it very seriously. Please help us ensure the safety of all children.

Emergency Procedures

In case of serious illness/injury, the rescue squad will be called and parents notified. Otherwise, you will be called immediately and first aid will be administered to your child. If you cannot be reached, the emergency telephone number you listed will be called. If that person is not available, your child's physician will be contacted. For this reason, we require that you sign an emergency form before your child enters school. It is essential that emergency names, telephone numbers and work information be current and accurate.

Outdoor Play

The children will be outside for a portion of each day except in extremely inclement weather. Be sure that your child is dressed properly for the weather. A child who is not well enough to play outside should not come to school. It is difficult to make accommodations to watch the children in the classroom when the staff is needed to supervise on the playground.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Under Florida law, teachers are required to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the local Department of Children and Families.

Exclusion Guidelines

Appearance/Behavior

Child looks or acts differently; unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, difficult to awaken or just not "themselves."

Chicken Pox

Until all blisters have dried into scabs, about 6 days after rash onset.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

Bacterial – until 24 hours after treatment begins

Viral – until a letter from a physician is provided to verify that the child does not have bacterial conjunctivitis. In both situations, the child should be well enough to participate in normal daily activities.

Diarrhea

An increased number of abnormally loose stools in the previous 24 hours. Observe the child for other symptoms such as fever, abdominal pain, or vomiting.

Eye/Nose Drainage

Thick mucus or pus draining from the eyes or nose

Fever

Oral temperature 100 degrees F or higher, especially if accompanied by other symptoms such as vomiting, sore throat, diarrhea, headache and stiff neck or undiagnosed rash. The child should have no fever for 24 hours before returning to school.

Head Lice

Until first treatment is completed and no live lice are seen.

Respiratory Illness

Until child is without fever for 24 hours and is well enough to participate in normal daily schedule

Respiratory Symptoms

Difficult or rapid breathing or severe coughing; child makes high-pitched croup-y or whooping sounds after she/he coughs; child is unable to lie comfortably due to continuous cough.

Skin Problems

Rash-skin rashes, undiagnosed or contagious

Sore Throat

Sore throat, especially when fever or swollen glands in the neck are present.

Streptococcal Sore Throat/Scarlet Fever (with rash)

Until at least a full 24 hours after treatment begins and the child is without fever for 24 hours.

Vomiting

One or more episodes of vomiting within the previous 24 hours.

Emergency Health Care Plan

If your child suffers from any chronic health problems that require special procedures or medications, there must be an Emergency Health Care Plan on file with the school. The form can be obtained in the school office and must be updated on a regular basis. It is

the responsibility of the parents to ensure that the staff of the school is informed of potential emergency situations.

Safety

Substance Abuse

- No smoking is allowed on Montessori School of East Orlando premises.
- No narcotics or any other controlled substances may be consumed or possessed on Montessori School of East Orlando premises.
- No alcoholic beverages are permitted on the premises when children are present.
- Prescription medication is not allowed in the classrooms. All prescriptions should be given to the Administration and clearly marked with your child's name.

Fire

The children will practice fire drills once per month. Each classroom has the emergency evacuation exits posted. In August, we spend a lot of time discussing fire safety and practicing the fire drill procedure. Children will walk in silence and in single file to the door and are led outside by the teacher. The classroom assistant is responsible for securing the room and is the last person to leave the class. The teacher is responsible for bringing the attendance book, calling the roll and ensuring that all children are accounted for.

Tornadoes, Hurricanes, and Natural Disasters

In the event it is determined that there is a significant risk to the safety of the children if they are removed from the school building, there will be a weather lockdown. Children are moved from their classrooms away from windows and doors to areas designated safe areas within the building. Children practice this drill to ensure they are prepared for such emergency.

Incident/Accident

Given the nature of children, accidents will happen. Hopefully, they will always be minor bumps and bruises. In case of an accidental injury, the staff member present will care for the child and notify other staff members and the Director. We will attempt to make a determination as to the severity of the injury, and if indicated, a parent will be notified as to the possibility for medical treatment or the child will be sent home. If necessary, emergency aid may be called.

An incident report will be filled out when a child's behavior is out of the ordinary, but there is no bodily injury. An accident report will be filled out when there is bodily injury. A copy of the report will be given to the parent. It should be signed and returned to the

office. The parent will be given a copy of the signed form and a copy will be kept on file with the school.

Inclement or Excessively Hot or Cold Weather

If it is raining, thundering, or lightening, hotter than 95 degrees or colder than 20 degrees outside, the children will remain within the building and will engage in various activities of learning and play.

Identifying Where Children Are During the Day

At the beginning of the class session, attendance will be taken to determine the children in school each day. As the day progresses, a count of the children will be taken when they return from the playground or move from their classroom.

Emergency Action Plan

In the case of an emergency situation, the Director and Staff will protect the safety of the children in the school and rejoin them with their respective parents/guardians as quickly as possible.

The plan is frequently reviewed by the School Directors to insure that it still reflects the current situation, is consistent with the plans of the local government agencies and realistically can be executed.

The following chart provides a description of the emergency responses available to the Director.

Emergency Response	Description
Early Closure	<p>This will always be the first level of response.</p> <p>In any situation that may arise, the Director will evaluate whether there is sufficient time to call parents and notify them that the school is closing early. The children remain in the classrooms until their parents arrive to pick them up.</p>
Fire Evacuation	<p>This response will be implemented if there is an emergency situation within the school, but it is not necessary to leave the school grounds. The school practices this on a monthly basis. The children leave the classroom and go directly to the predetermined fire evacuation location/s. The building is cleared by the staff and roll taken by individual teachers and reported to the Director.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Weather Lockdown and Crisis Lockdown</p>	<p>This response will be implemented if the Director determines that there is significant risk to the safety of the children if they are removed from the school. In this situation the children are moved from their classrooms away from the windows and doors of the building and access to the building is controlled in order to maintain the integrity of the “safe area” within the building. There are two levels of lockdown response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hurricane / Tornado (Weather Lockdown) ▪ Nuclear / Chemical / Biological (Crisis Lockdown)
<p style="text-align: center;">Evacuation</p>	<p>This response will be implemented only if the following situations exist: (1) the immediate evacuation of the building is ordered by authorities; or (2) there is a strong indication that the safety of the children would be at risk if they remained in the building and on the premises of the School campus.</p>

Policies and Procedures

Birthdays

We love to celebrate birthdays at school. Each classroom has a special way to celebrate a child's birth date and the classroom teacher will inform you of the classroom procedure. Your child is welcome to share a birthday treat—we encourage special snack items such as homemade cookies, muffins, Jell-O, frozen yogurt or ice cream, fruit salad, etc for the Elementary students and non-food treats for the Primary students. If you would like to commemorate the day in a very special way, we recommend that you give a book to the school library in your child's honor. The book will be appropriately inscribed and his/her picture placed on the inside.

School Attire

MSEO has a daily student uniform which is as follows:

- All Students: Maroon uniform polo shirt with khaki pants, shorts, or skirts
- P.E. Uniforms are required for Lower and Upper Elementary students. Primary students are not required to wear P.E. uniforms.
- Monday-Thursday: Lower and Upper Elementary students are to come to school wearing their P.E. uniforms. They are required to change into the standard uniform immediately after the morning physical activity is over.
- Friday: Students are to wear their school uniform (polo shirt and khaki bottoms) and bring their Ballroom Dance shoes to school.
- All students must wear socks and closed toe shoes daily.
- During the winter season, students may wear a solid colored long sleeve shirt under their P.E. uniform and polo. They are also allowed to wear leggings under their regular uniform bottoms.

Girls' skirts or shorts must be no shorter than two (2) inches above the knee.

Students are expected to wear appropriate shoes for PE and play. Flip-flops, Crocs, and shoes with heels more than half an inch high are not appropriate for school. Please keep hair, makeup, and jewelry appropriate for school setting. Students without a uniform shirt or those who have a colored shirt under the uniform shirt are not considered in uniform, and will be asked to change. Parents will be called if a student does not come to school in the proper uniform or does not change into the proper uniform.

Slippers

Please check with your child's classroom teacher for the policy in your child's class and for the rationale for wearing slippers.

Items from Home

Do not allow your child to bring money, candy, gum, toys, any electronic devices, cell phones, cameras, crazy bands, or other possessions to school. We cannot be responsible for them and they invariably cause friction among the children or get lost. If a student needs to bring a cell phone to school, for whatever reason, please remind your child that all cell phones must remain turned off and concealed during school hours. Violations of this policy will result in the confiscation of the cell phone—to be returned to the parent/guardian at pick-up.

Please return everything your child may bring home that does not belong to him/her—even the smallest bead or shell may mean the loss of a whole activity.

Lost and Found

The Lost and Found Box is located in the school office. Articles left over 60 days will be donated to Goodwill.

Lunch

Research has shown that good nutrition during a child's early years is important, not only to ensure healthy growth, but also to instill beneficial eating habits and healthful attitudes toward foods—habits and attitudes that will stay with your child throughout his/her life.

Students are required to bring their own lunches each day. Please make sure that the lunches do not require either refrigeration or heating and that the lunches provided are nutritious. The Montessori School of East Orlando promotes healthy eating by encouraging students to eat proteins, whole grains and fresh fruits and vegetables.

Television

During the course of the week, children may have the opportunity to view videos. The videos should have educational value. The school policy is that children are only able to view videos one day per week and the limit is 30 minutes. In the event of extended inclement weather, this time can be extended with the school director's approval. The children will be supervised in the same manner as when they are taking part in the activities in the classroom. Children may not bring videos from home for viewing at school.

School Staff/Parent Relations

Staff members are occasionally asked to transport children and/or provide childcare for children outside school hours. The Montessori School of East Orlando does not support or prohibit this type of activity. The agreement is strictly between the staff member and the family. The Montessori School of East Orlando claims no responsibility for the services provided. The Montessori School of East Orlando does prohibit the transportation of students to or from school by a staff member without legal documentation for “release of liability” from the parents to the school. Staff members can be dismissed for failure to follow school policy.

Discipline

The Montessori classroom is a very special environment designed to meet the child’s needs. When a child is happily engaged in his/her “work” there is no need for adult intervention. Each child is able to gain a greater feeling of self-worth. Within this environment, children are expected to treat each other, the staff and the materials with respect.

In searching for ways to help each child’s self-esteem, and ability to respect others, we strive for a calm and satisfying environment. Children learn behavior from adult guidance and observation of other children. It is our responsibility as adults to foster healthy and happy interactions. Social attitudes are learned at home as well as at school. The teachers are continuously demonstrating to the children, by our smiles and manner that we like what we are doing. Usually, all that is needed to stop any disruptive behavior is a look from the adult in charge.

The children have seven simple statements of behavior:

- Be kind to others
- Talk quietly
- Walk slowly
- Be responsible for yourself
- Do your best
- Listen
- Be polite

Classroom rules are centered on respect for others and our environment. The children are not permitted to do anything that will disturb someone’s work. A disruption usually happens by accident. The child who was disturbed will tell the other child what he/she has done to disturb the work. This is usually sufficient. If the behavior continues, the child is to enlist the teacher’s assistance and together they will talk to the child involved.

If the problem persists, the teacher may ask the child to “take a break” from working or being part of the group. This time gives the child an opportunity to talk about what is bothering him/her and to find a solution to the problem at hand. There is no special place for this in the room. Any chair, mat, or floor space serves the purpose. The child is invited to return to work or group when he/she is ready.

Establishing this good feeling continues on the playground. Acceptable play is discussed with the children, while teaching them to understand what “unacceptable play” is.

The children are encouraged to first handle the problem by discussing it with each other. If the children are unable to solve the problem, guidance from the teacher will be sought. If a decision is made that a child needs to be removed from the playground, he/she will be required to come inside for a determined amount of time.

Consistency is the golden rule of any disciplinary action and the emotional ability of each child to solve the problem is always considered.

If the behavior continues, parents will be asked to explore, with the assistance of the teacher, the reason for a child’s behavior. A decision will be reached on how to handle any further disturbance or harmful activity. If necessary, professional guidance will be suggested and the school will make every effort to work with the professionals to be sure that the individual child’s needs are met while ensuring the safety of other children.

Dismissals

The Montessori School of East Orlando reserves the right to dismiss a child who is not suited to our individualized program, not benefiting from the school environment, or who exhibits behavioral patterns which we are not set up to handle (this includes, but is not limited to, chronic, uncontrollable biting, hitting, pinching, and punching). The following procedures have been established for all serious, repeated, inappropriate behaviors including biting, hitting, or otherwise hurting another individual, abusive language, excessive teasing or lying, theft, bullying, chronic disrespect of students and/or staff and destruction of property during the course of the year:

- 1st Offense Parent Informed in Writing
- 2nd Offense Parent Conference Required
- 3rd Offense Child is suspended from school for that day
- 4th Offense Child sent home for the day and is placed on 30-days probation
- 5th Offense Child is sent home and a final warning is issued to parents and child.
- 6th Offense Child is Dismissed

A Letter of Release will be sent to parents should the incidents stop and when 30 days of probation is completed.

A child may also be dismissed if it is determined that parents are not willing to support the philosophical approach of the school should at-home assignments be required to reinforce or contribute to the child's progress at The Montessori School of East Orlando.

The school reserves the right to dismiss any family delinquent in tuition or fees.



Parent Involvement and Communications

MSEO Community Association

The Montessori School of East Orlando's Community Association (MSEOCA) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization. When you enroll your child in MSEO, you become a member of the MSEOCA. Active involvement in your child's education is one key to his/her success, and membership in the MSEOCA and participation in some of the many enrichment activities we sponsor will provide you with the opportunity to share in the learning experience firsthand. The MSEOCA is designed to advance the educational purposes and activities of the school and to support and supplement the educational program for MSEO students.

You will find that there is truly something for everyone – from Board membership to Festival Coordinator – and we would like to encourage each of you to choose one or more MSEOCA activities that is/are comfortable for you and consistent with your interests, talents, and availability.

It is mandatory that you attend three (3) meetings per year.

Adjustment to School

Most new students will adjust to school within a week. A child who is very dependent upon his/her parents or a sitter may experience difficulty for a longer period. A great deal of the responsibility for an easy adjustment rests with the parents: If the parental attitude is positive, the child usually has a positive experience. The first separation should be short and matter of fact. Never leave your child without saying good-bye and reassuring him/her that you will be back. Help your child by being relaxed and supportive. We realize that it is often as hard for parents to separate from the child as it may be for the child to separate from the parent. They may cry as you leave, but seldom for long. It is important that when you and your child have made a decision about going to school that you be supportive, calm, consistent and matter of fact, especially through any insecure periods your child may experience. It is not unusual for the child to have accidents on those first days of school. Best advice: be honest and decisive when leaving your child. Be on time to pick him/her up! Also, bring several changes of clothes. Please trust that we will call you if your child cries in excess of 20 minutes.

Classroom Observations

Parents are always welcome to observe the class. Appointments for observations can be made with your child's teacher. We have observation guidelines in the school office. Please stop by and pick up a copy so you can get the most out of your observation. **No observations are scheduled during the months of August or September.**

Conference and Progress Reports

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled three times during the school year.

- November – Mandatory Conference
- February – Optional Conference
- May – Optional Conference

Formal written progress reports are provided in November and February. A final evaluation report is mailed to each parent in June.

Newsletter

The school newsletter is an important method of communicating with parents at our school. Every Friday, the school publishes a newsletter with important announcements for both the entire school, as well as the individual classrooms. To ensure immediate delivery, newsletters and other important communications are distributed electronically so *it is mandatory to have valid e-mail addresses for all families*. If a family does not have e-mail access, they must notify the school immediately to make alternate arrangements. Please check your child's backpack daily for other notices or information from the school, including daily homework.

Bibliography

The following are books that we recommend for further information on Montessori education, child development and parenting skills. This is a small list considering the number of books that are available on the topics. These are some of our favorites. Let us know if you have a particular book that you think would be beneficial to other parents.

Blessington, John. **Let My Children Work**

Chatin-McNichols, John. **The Montessori Controversy**

Elkind, David. **The Hurried Child**

Elkind David. **Miseducation**

Driekurs, Rudolf. **Children the Challenge**

Lillard, Paula Polk. **Montessori Today**

Lillard, Paula Polk. **Montessori: A Modern Approach**

Lillard, Paula Polk & Lynn Lillard Jessen. **Montessori From the Start**

Lillard, Angelina. **Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius**

Loeffler, Margaret Howard. **Montessori in Contemporary American Culture**

Malloy, Terry. **Montessori and Your Child: A Primer for Parents**

Montessori, Maria. **The Absorbent Mind**

Montessori, Maria. **The Discovery of the Child**

Montessori, Maria. **Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook**

Montessori, Maria. **The Secret of Childhood**

Rambusch, Nancy McCormick. **Learning How to Learn**

Standing, E.M. **Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work**

Wolfe, Aline. **A Parents Guide to the Montessori Classroom**

Wolfe, Aline. **Montessori Insights for Parents of Young Children**

Wolfe, Aline. **Nurturing the Spirit**

Wolfe, Aline. **Peaceful Children, Peaceful World**

Links

Montessori Connections

www.montessoriconnections.com

American Montessori Society

www.amshq.org

The Montessori Foundation

www.montessori.org