



STUDENT/FAMILY HANDBOOK

School Year 2016-17

3025 4th Street, NE
Washington, DC 20017
202-779-9740 (T)
202-318-0763 (F)

www.leemontessori.org

WELCOME TO LEE MONTESSORI PCS!

Welcome to Lee Montessori Public Charter School. Here at Lee Montessori PCS we are all one family and we share the same mission.

The mission of Lee Montessori Public Charter School is to foster a lifetime love of learning and cultivate independence among DC schoolchildren, using the student-centered Montessori method, an evidence-based approach to closing the opportunity gap.

We believe that Lee Montessori PCS will be instrumental in closing the achievement gap by laying the foundation for academic success using the Montessori method. Lee Montessori PCS will:

- Inspire academic success by providing an authentic Montessori curriculum in a holistic and developmentally responsive environment;
- Nurture student creativity, curiosity and efficacy by promoting self-directed education;
- Offer individually paced academic instruction and activities;
- Engage students in purposeful and collaborative community building activities;
- Foster students use of inner discipline, concentration and task completion for lifelong critical thinking and discovery; and
- Preserve and cultivate the innate capacity of students so they can reach their full potential as contributing global citizens.

LEE MONTESSORI PCS FAMILY HANDBOOK

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ABOUT LEE MONTESSORI PCS

Lee Montessori PCS's mission is to create a peaceful, multi-age learning environment for public preschool and elementary aged children that fosters the physical, social, emotional, and academic growth and development of students and produces life-long learners.

Dr. Maria Montessori began her world-renowned method and research over a century ago with children in Italy's lowest-socioeconomic neighborhoods who were considered the most at-risk youth. We know at-risk children here in Washington, DC will benefit greatly from this individualized, constructive-based curriculum that Lee Montessori PCS offers.

Lee Montessori PCS is a newly chartered, grass roots organization founded in Washington, DC in 2011 by Montessori teachers, parents and District of Columbia community members. It was conceived as a neighborhood Montessori school alternative for Ward 5 residents who would otherwise attend traditional schools.

Lee Montessori PCS is dedicated to providing a challenging and enriching education through the dynamic partnership of child, teacher, family, and community, and by developing a consistent Montessori framework for learning while adhering to the standards set forth by the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI).

Lee Montessori PCS is passionate and committed to providing a creative and adaptive environment that responds to the needs of the children. Lee Montessori PCS seeks to balance social, emotional, physical, and academic development to foster responsibility, commitment, and cooperation within a supportive learning community. Through the dedication of a talented staff, the students of Lee Montessori PCS will see themselves as contributing members of a global community by respecting and valuing differences.

LOCATION

3025 4th Street NE
Washington, DC 20017

Phone: 202-779-9740

Email: Info@LeeMontessori.org

Fax: 202-318-0763

SCHOOL HOURS

BEFORE CARE:

Monday-Friday 7:30-9am

ENRICHMENT

Monday: 1:30- 4pm

ACADEMIC DAY

Monday: 9am-1:30 pm

Tuesday-Friday 9am-4pm

AFTER CARE

Monday-Friday: 4-6:00 pm

STAFF MEMBERS 2016-2017

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Chris Pencikowski
Head of School

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Megan Hubbard
Principal

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TEACHING STAFF

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Babbs Bergner
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STUDENT SUPPORT STAFF

Suzanne Holstein
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Amina Koroma
Special Education Assistant

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Deborah Lopez
Special Education Assistant

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CALENDAR

School days will follow the schedule outlined on Page 4, except for on the following days:

August	September	October	November
	Mon 5: Labor Day (School Closed) Tues 6: First Day of School for Returning Students Tues 12: Phase-in begins for PK3/PK4 Thurs 22: Back to School Night	Fri 7: Professional Development (No school for students) Mon 10: Columbus Day (School Closed)	Wed 9: Parent Teacher Conferences (half day for students) Thurs 10: Parent Teacher Conferences (No school for students) Fri 11: Veterans Day (School closed) Wed 23-1:30 Dismissal, No Aftercare Thurs 24: Thanksgiving (School closed) Fri 25: Thanksgiving (School Closed)
December	January	February	March
Wed 15: End of Term Fri 17: Progress Reports Issued Winter Break starts on Dec 22nd	Winter Break ends after Jan 2nd Mon 16: MLK Jr. Day (School closed) Mon 20: Inauguration Day (School closed)	Fri 17: Professional Development (School closed) Mon 20: President's Day (School closed)	Fri 3: Professional Development (School closed) March 20: Parent Teacher Conferences (half day for students) Mon 21: Parent Teacher Conferences (No school for students) Wed 23: End of Term 2 Fri 25: Progress Reports Issued
April	May	June	July
Spring Break from April 17 - April 21	Fri 5: Professional Development (No school for students) Mon 29: Memorial Day (School closed)	Fri 23: Last day of School, Final Reports Issued (Half day for students) Mon 26: Staff Work Day	

DAILY SCHEDULE

Mondays Only	
7:30 – 8:30am	Champions Before Care Program
8:30 – 9am	Morning Drop-Off
9am – 1:30pm	Academic Day
1:30pm	Optional Pick-Up
1:30-4pm	Afternoon Enrichment
4-5:45pm	Champions After Care Program
5:45pm – 6pm:	Final Pickup

Tuesdays - Fridays	
7:30 – 8:30am	Champions Before Care
8:30 – 9am	Morning Drop-Off
9am – 4pm	Academic Day
4 – 4:15pm	Afternoon Pick-Up
4:15-6pm	Champions After Care Program
5:45 – 6:00pm	Final Pickup

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, District of Columbia Official Code Section 2-1401.01 et seq. (Act), Lee Montessori Public Charter School does not discriminate (including employment therein and admission thereto) on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an interfamily offense, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination, which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above-protected categories is prohibited. Discrimination in violation of the aforementioned laws will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Lee Montessori PCS is an independent non-profit 501(c)3 that seeks to create a peaceful, multi-age learning environment for public preschool and elementary aged children that fosters the physical, social, emotional, and academic growth and development of students and produces life-long learners using an authentic Montessori approach to education.

Lee Montessori PCS is seeking accreditation through the American Montessori Internationale's (AMI) school recognition program. Lee Montessori PCS is authorized by the DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB), the sole authorizer within the charter sector of Washington DC.

Lee Montessori PCS is required to submit documents and make periodic reports (governance, finance, operations, etc.) to the PCSB. Under the School Reform Act (SRA), the PCSB is responsible for reviewing the fiscal management of charter schools. Accordingly, Lee Montessori PCS must submit an annual independent audit to the PCSB, which in turn assesses the financial well-being of the school. The SRA also prescribes a review of charter schools at least once every five years to determine whether they should continue to stay open. Another component of Accountability is submission of quarterly reports and annual reports, which include governance curriculum, instruction, school climate, and assessment. The majority of these reports along with a host of others regarding service to students with special needs, English language learners, teacher quality, attendance, facility, truancy, and expulsion rates, among others, are completed and submitted to the PCSB, OSSE, and funders, including the local and federal governments. Lee Montessori PCS must adhere to local and federal laws and comply with all of the terms and provisions of its charter agreement.

ADMISSIONS

ENROLLMENT

Lee Montessori PCS is open to all students in the District of Columbia who have entered into the MySchoolDC lottery.

AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR PREK₃ AND PREK₄

In order to be eligible for PreK₃, children must turn 3 years old by September 30 of the school year. In order to be eligible for subsequent grades, children must turn the appropriate age by September 30 of the school year or have completed the previous grade.

Exceptions to these dates are made only when the prerequisites of the DC Public Charter School Board are met.

LOTTERY

Lee Montessori PCS participates in the common lottery through MySchoolDC.

If a student applies to Lee Montessori PCS after the lottery and there is still space available in the grade in which the student has applied, he or she will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. If there are no spaces available, then the student will be placed on the waiting list for that grade.

COMMUNICATION

SCHOOL WEBSITE

Lee Montessori Public Charter School website at www.leemontessori.org contains the school calendar, parent forms, and general information.

URGENT ANNOUNCEMENTS BY TEXT

Receive urgent all school announcements such as school closures by text message on the Lee Montessori cell group:

Join via SMS by texting **@leemont to 81010**

FACEBOOK PAGE

“Like” the Lee Montessori Facebook page at www.facebook.com/LMPCS to receive information from Lee Montessori in your feed.

GENERAL INFORMATION

STUDENT ARRIVAL POLICY

Class instruction begins at 9:00am for all students. Children not attending before care should arrive at the drop-off circle between 8:30am and 9:00am.

Lee Montessori PCS will implement a morning drop off policy. Please know that school parking lots are not designed to handle the number of vehicles that come to campus at the beginning and end of each school day. Lee Montessori PCS staff will do everything we can to encourage parents to follow the parking lot rules and maximize the flow of traffic. The staff knows that your time is precious, but the safety of every student is our first priority.

Please follow the law; do not park illegally (crosswalks, handicapped parking without a place card, etc.).

EARLY DISMISSAL

Students are not permitted to leave the school during the school day unless picked up by a parent, guardian, or designated adult. Students leaving before the end of the school day must be signed out in the front office. Please note that frequent early dismissals have a negative impact on student academic achievement. Thus, unexcused early dismissals are counted in the same way as tardies and are reported as such.

If your child has five (5) or more unexcused early dismissals, a parent conference will be held to discuss concerns and possible consequences.

DISMISSAL

Full day students are dismissed at 4:00pm daily, with an optional 1:30pm dismissal on Mondays, and should be picked up from the designated area. PK3 and PK4 students that wish to be dismissed at 1:30pm must arrange their pick-up schedule with the classroom teacher ahead of time and are asked to commit to a regular early pick-up schedule in order to create a consistent routine for their child(ren).

Children should be picked up promptly and signed out at dismissal if they are not participating in aftercare.

SCHOOL CLOSURES AND DELAYS

Lee Montessori PCS takes the safety of our students, staff, parents and community extremely seriously. Lee Montessori staff vows to make decisions in the best interest of

In general, Lee Montessori PCS will follow any school delay or closure decisions made by the District of Columbia Public Schools. Lee Montessori PCS will also notify all major television news stations and post to the Lee Montessori, Facebook and Twitter pages.

STUDENT ABSENCE

If your child will be absent from school, please send an email to info@leemontessori.org and your child's classroom teacher. Please refer to our Attendance Policy for guidance on excused absences.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found is located near the front entrance of the school. In an effort to reuse and recycle, unclaimed items will be distributed and/or donated on the last day of each trimester.

CLOTHING GUIDELINES

Children learn best when their clothing is clean and comfortable, encourages freedom of movement, and does not present any elements that could be distracting to themselves or others. **Lee Montessori PCS has a dress code of blue, green, or white collared shirt with solid colored pants, skirts, jumpers, or jeans.** Shirts with the logo can be purchased directly from Risse Brothers School Uniforms but are not required.

Only on Fridays or during special events, may children wear an alternative Lee Montessori T-shirt.

All children wear slippers in their classrooms. The slippers should fit securely, and have closed backs and rubber soles. Families may send plain colored slippers (no cartoon or other characters please) of their choice to school.

When getting dressed for school, we ask parents and children to be mindful of the following:

- Clothing should be clean, appropriately sized, and suitable for work and play.
- Children, particularly those in the primary classrooms, should come to school in clothing that is easy for them to put on and fasten themselves.
- Children work and play in a variety of settings. We recommend comfortable, supportive shoes and weather-appropriate clothing (sun hats, rain gear, boots, gloves).
- Children and staff should avoid excessive jewelry and strong perfumes or scents. Hair should be out of the eyes, with long hair pulled back from the face.

Children who come to school not in uniform will receive a loaner from the office or from their extra clothes bag. If a child is sent home with a loaner uniform from the office, families will be invoiced for the uniform unless it is returned to the school.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Lee Montessori PCS believes that regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communication between teachers and students and establishes regular habits of dependability. The purpose of this policy is to encourage regular school attendance. It is intended to be positive not punitive.

This Policy also recognizes that class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by the student, parent or guardian, teacher and administrators.

- **Parent or Guardians' Responsibility** - It is the responsibility of the student's parent to ensure the student is attending school, to inform the school in the event of a student absence, and to work cooperatively with the school to solve any attendance problems that may arise.
- **Teachers' Responsibility**- Teachers are responsible for taking daily attendance and maintaining accurate attendance records. Teachers responsibilities also include being familiar with procedures governing attendance and applying these policies uniformly. Teachers will work cooperatively with students' parents or guardian to solve any attendance problem that may arise.

Absences are recorded and reported to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education and the DC Public Charter School Board because attendance is a vital factor in a student's performance. Vacations are not considered an excused absence. Parents and guardians are

responsible for sending their children to school and those that fail to do so may be subject to court action under the Compulsory Attendance Law of the District of Columbia 8-247.

What are Excused Absences?

- Illness or medical reason (A doctor’s note is required for an absence greater than 2 days)
- Doctor’s appointments or other medical reason
- Death in the student’s immediate family
- Observance of a religious holiday

The school will excuse an absence if proper documentation is provided within **five (5) school days** after absence for the reasons listed above. Proper documentation includes: a note from a health care provider and/or a signed letter from a parent/guardian for family emergencies and/or observance of religious holidays.

If your child has five or more unexcused absences, a parent conference will be held to discuss concerns and possible consequences.

# of Unexcused Absences	School Response
1-3	ATTENDANCE ALERT Phone call home from Operations Associate to parent/guardian to remind family of what defines an excused absence and to send in documentation within 5 school days.
4-7	ACADEMIC IMPACT ALERT Plan for Improvement Phone call home from classroom teacher reminding family of negative impact of excessive absences.
7-9	“CONTINUING TRUANT” STATUS Meeting with parent/guardian and Student Support Coordinator and/or School Social Worker to develop Attendance Intervention plan.
10	Report to D.C. Child and Family Services for educational neglect per School Attendance Clarification Emergency Amendment Act of 2016.

TARDINESS

Students are considered late after 9:00 am and parents must sign in late students at both the front office. If a child is late, their parent/guardian must sign them in at the front office and children will have to wait to enter their classrooms until a classroom assistant comes to retrieve them.

Tardiness is recorded and reported to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education and the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board as it can adversely impact student performance.

LATE PICK-UP

Students not enrolled in after care and who are present 15 minutes after dismissal will be escorted to the aftercare program. Parents are responsible for any fees incurred.

If your child has not been picked up by the designated time and we are unable to reach you or an emergency contact, we are required to notify Child and Family Services. Your child will be picked

up by a Metropolitan Police Department officer and taken to the Child and Family Services Agency. Please make sure that you call the front office in the event of an emergency.

LUNCH, RECESS, AND NAPPING

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Lee Montessori PCS offers standard, dairy-free and vegetarian lunches each Children must be enrolled in the lunch program in order to receive school lunch. Each meal comes with the option of cow's milk or soy milk (other milk choices will not be accommodated). Some students may be eligible for the free or reduced lunch program; all families should complete the lunch form regardless of their eligibility.

BRINGING LUNCH FROM HOME

Families also have the option of bringing lunch from home. We all know that our children learn better when they eat healthy, whole foods. Growing minds and bodies need plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, healthy fats and proteins, and properly prepared whole grains. Many of our families and staff members are passionate about healthy eating habits, and Lee Montessori is committed to providing children with access to healthy snacks throughout the day. When preparing your child's lunch, please support our efforts to promote healthy lifestyles and sustainable living by packing healthy, whole foods (see suggestions, below). **Remember that Lee Montessori is a peanut-free and tree nut-free school.** Please balance your child's midday meal with foods from a variety of different food groups and help us to minimize waste by using reusable containers. Whenever possible, enlist your child's participation in lunch preparation, and eventually, have your child to pack his/her own lunch with these guidelines in mind. Please remember that children will not be able to keep their lunches refrigerated and they will not have access to a microwave oven.

Please mark your child's lunch containers with his/her name.

SUGGESTIONS FOR HEALTHY LUNCH ITEMS

We hope you will find some inspiration in the following suggestions for a healthy lunch:

- All varieties of fresh fruits (berries, grapes, apple or orange wedges, watermelon cubes, etc.) and fresh vegetables (carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes, snap peas, celery broccoli florets, etc.), with yogurt-, cottage cheese-, or seed nut-butter-based based dips, black bean dip or hummus
- Whole wheat mini bagels with cream cheese or seed nut butters
- Whole wheat tortillas stuffed with fun fillings and sliced into pinwheels (filling ideas: refried beans and cheese, seed nut butter and banana, cream cheese and berries, etc.)
- Beans and legumes (chick peas, black or kidney beans, dried peas, edamame) left whole or blended into spreads for sandwiches or dipping
- Cooked whole wheat pasta (spirals, letters, tortellini, or other interesting shapes)
- Brown rice cakes with sliced banana and seed butter
- Cubed cheese
- Hard-boiled eggs
- Shredded carrot and raisin salad
- Build-your-own-salad: send a large container of greens with a variety of interesting toppings
- Dried fruit (raisins, apricots, apple rings, bananas, cranberries, cherries)
- Whole grain pretzels or crackers, or baked chips
- Natural or organic granola bars or fig bars

- Fruit leather (made with real fruit puree, not fruit roll-ups)
- Plain popcorn (without artificial flavorings)
- Unsweetened applesauce and other fruit purees
- Healthy baked goods (blueberry muffins, banana bread, corn)

Together with your child, prepare a list of favorite lunch items you can refer to when it's time for lunch preparation. Adapt tasks (peeling, chopping, spreading) so that children of all ages can help prepare their own lunches. Please pass along your family's healthy lunch ideas, recipes, and tips to share with the rest of the school community

LUNCH IN THE CLASSROOM

Lee Montessori upholds Maria Montessori's belief that meal times are an extremely valuable learning opportunity for children. Thus, all of our students will eat lunch in their classroom with their classroom teacher. Children learn grace of movement by setting the table with breakable, child-sized dishes and glasses. They practice courtesy by using please and thank you, chewing with their mouths closed, serving others first and through conversation.

SNACK AND FOOD PREPARATION ITEMS (PRIMARY ONLY)

Families will have the opportunity to sign up to provide snacks or needed food preparation items for their child's classroom based on a rotating schedule that will be posted by the teachers.

Remember that Lee Montessori is a peanut- and tree nut-free school. Suggested snack lists are similar to our suggested lunch list and will be sent out individually by each classroom teacher.

NAP AND REST TIME

All younger primary students (3- and 4-year olds) who stay at school after 1:30pm will have the opportunity to rest and/or nap according to the biological needs of the child. It is important that you send a small blanket, crib size sheet, and optional pillow (all clearly labeled) in a bag that your child can carry independently. These items will be sent home weekly for washing. Even if you do not think your child will rest during the day, please send these items in as all primary children may need to take a nap or rest at some point.

Until a primary child is invited to join the afternoon work period, they will participate in a period of rest for approximately 45 minutes. Children who are not asleep after that time period will be invited to join small group or individual activities such as reading, singing, playing outside, arts and crafts, etc.

EXTRA CLOTHING AT SCHOOL

Young children's clothes can become dirty or soiled in the course of the school day and a change of clothes may be necessary for the comfort of the child. Parents are required to leave an extra set of clothes at school. The extra clothing should meet the standards of the clothing policy and each article should be labeled with the student's name. An extra set of clothes includes:

1. Underwear
2. A pair of socks
3. A bottom
4. A top

Teachers will bag up the dirty clothes so that they go home with the child that day. If a child uses his/her emergency change of clothes, parents must send a new set of emergency clothes the

following day. If a child needs to change and does not have an emergency change of clothes, parents will be contacted and expected to bring a set within an hour. We have a limited number of extra clothes kept at the school. If you borrow clothes from the school, please wash and return the next day.

Parents should check weekly to ensure that their child's emergency change of clothes fits, particularly as seasons change.

Lee Montessori is not responsible for lost or stolen children's items

TOILET TRAINING

Children learn to use the toilet independently at different ages. In order to support children, families, and teachers with toilet training, Lee Montessori PCS implements the following processes and procedures to support all parties and help children achieve age and developmentally appropriate self-help skills. In order to achieve success in this process, it is crucial that all parties maintain open, honest, and supportive communication so that children feel comfortable and can be successful. Please remember that toilet training has to be reinforced at home as well as at school.

Our primary classrooms have bathrooms within the classroom and children who are in the process of toilet training will be encouraged to use the bathroom on a regular schedule. In addition, children have the freedom to use the bathroom whenever they need to.

We recognize that as part of the toilet learning process, children may have accidents. In order to ensure we can support your child's toilet needs at school, Lee Montessori will provide the following to ensure proper, sanitary care of your child when they have accidents:

- Latex Gloves
- Toilet Paper
- Bags for soiled clothing
- Trash cans with lids for appropriate disposal
- Training for staff on proper procedures for managing accidents

For children who are not fully toilet trained, families are required to bring the following to school to support the process:¹

- Wipes
- Two changes of clothing (in addition to the standard set of extra clothes)
- Extra socks
- An extra pair of shoes if possible

Protocol for Toileting Accidents:

When a child has soiled him/herself, a staff member will assist the child with changing clothes and wiping with toilet paper and/or baby wipes. If a child is not able to sufficiently clean him/herself, parents will be called to come assist the child or to take them home if necessary.

¹ Families are responsible for ensuring that all of these items are in the child's cubby. If families fail to have these items on hand and the child has an accident, the parent will be required to bring these items to the school within an hour.

MEDICATION

Being physically healthy allows children to learn more effectively. For this reason, regular medical and dental checkups are essential for your child. All Lee Montessori students must have a complete immunization record and physical exam form on file in the front office. Students will not be allowed to attend classes until these forms have been turned in.

Lee Montessori cannot guarantee the services of a full-time nurse. We will have staff certified to administer medicine to your child. If your child requires medication during school hours, please check with the administration as soon as possible to see if it can be administered by a staff person. Otherwise, students should take all required medications at home or, if the child requires medication during school hours, the parent must come to school to administer it. Students are not allowed to have medication (prescription or non-prescription) of any kind in their possession at school.

Lee Montessori PCS strongly encourages families to dispense both temporary and maintenance medications outside of school hours. Ask your physician for a medication schedule that will accomplish this. In those few cases where this is not possible, please bring in the medication to the front office. The medication needs to be in the original container with the appropriate prescription label and the appropriate Student Health Authorization for Administration of Medication Form. We store the medicine in a secure location. We will administer the medication from the front desk. Please be aware the medication cannot travel back and forth to school – once it's given to us for your child's use, it must remain with us until it needs to be refilled. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to ask for two separate prescriptions when at the doctor's office with your child.

ILLNESS

In order to maintain a healthy school, parents/guardians must not send their children to school with any contagious diseases such as the flu, strep throat, chicken pox, measles, conjunctivitis (pink eye), ringworm, scabies, or lice. Students with any of these conditions will be sent home from school until they are no longer contagious. Parents must pick up their child within two hours of being notified that their child is sick with a contagious illness. Lee Montessori may request that the parent/guardian provide a doctor's note showing that their child is no longer contagious. Please notify the front office if you discover that your child may have been exposed to a contagious disease.

If your child is not feeling well in the morning, particularly if he or she has a fever of 100 degrees or more, do not send him or her to school. **Parents/guardians should not send their children to school within 24 hours of vomiting/diarrhea or running a fever of 100 degrees or higher. Students should not return to school until 24 – 36 hours after beginning the course of antibiotics.**

FIRST AID

If a nurse is not present and a child is hurt or complains of an illness, the teacher or administrator will treat simple cuts or bruises by applying a bandage or ice, but cannot administer more serious medical treatment. The front office or school nurse will call the parent/guardian in the event of a more serious injury or illness and the student will be kept in the office until the parent/guardian arrives to get the child. In the event of an emergency, 911 will be called and a school staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and stay until his/her parents/guardians arrive.

INSURANCE

Students' medical needs, including those that may arise on school grounds, must be covered by parents'/guardians' insurance. Parents/guardians should notify the office if they do not have insurance for their child or have any questions about their child's insurance coverage. The school may be able to provide information to parents/guardians interested in obtaining health insurance.

MANDATED REPORTING

The safety and well-being of our students is our first priority at Lee Montessori. All school personnel are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect, therefore we will be mandated to call the Child and Family Services Abuse Neglect Hotline if there is any suspicion or disclosure of abuse.

Examples may include:

- A student tells a staff member that they are being abused at home, there is drug use in the home, have been sexually abused, are engaging in child pornography or prostitution, have witnessed domestic abuse, are being threatened at home, or do not want to go home because they are afraid.
- A student threatens suicide or threatens to kill or seriously harm another person
- A staff member sees physical signs of abuse such as bruises, burns, fractures, etc.
- A staff member notices signs of neglect including lack of basic food and clothing, inappropriate hygiene, lack of appropriate supervision, lack of medical treatment, or the child is residing in an inappropriate or dangerous environment.
- A student is engaging in risky behavior (including sexual behavior, drug use, etc.) and the parents are not able to or unwilling to intervene.
- A student has 10 or more unexcused absences or an extreme tardy problem.
- A student is being kept from school to care for family members or to do chores or work around the house.
- A student is not attending school because they are holding a job.
- Parents are repeatedly not returning phone calls, responding to notes or letters home, or are not coming up to school for meetings.
- Parents have withdrawn a student and fail to provide documentation of enrollment in another education institution within 10 days.

BIRTHDAYS

Within the Montessori method, a beautiful tradition for celebrating birthdays has evolved: The story of each child's life is told as s/he walks around a ceremonial sun. Each turn around the sun represents a year of the child's life. Your child's teacher will ask you for help in preparing this special event. If you wish, please feel free to send in a special snack in celebration of your child's special day, but please make sure this snack is not excessively sweet. Please consider sending foods from the suggested snack instead (ex. fruit kabobs are a fun treat to make and eat.)

If you are hosting a celebration outside the class and inviting some families from school, please be mindful of the impact of such celebrations on class life. Please do not send birthday invitations to school to be sent out. Please send the invitations through the regular mail, out of sensitivity to children not included in the celebration, and to avoid confusion with school-sponsored events. Joyful celebrations should be part of every childhood, and we thank you for your cooperation in ensuring these celebrations complement our program.

ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

THE MONTESSORI CURRICULUM

Over a century ago, Dr. Maria Montessori developed this comprehensive educational approach based on her observations of children's needs and her understanding of children's natural learning tendencies. The Montessori approach offers a broad vision of education as an aid to life. It is designed to help children with their task of inner construction as they grow from childhood to maturity. It succeeds because it draws its principles from the natural development of the child. The child's innate passion for learning is encouraged by giving him/her opportunities to engage in spontaneous, purposeful activities with the guidance of a trained adult. Through their work, 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.

MIXED AGE GROUPS

One of the hallmarks of the Montessori method is that children of mixed ages work together in the same class. Age groupings are based on developmental planes. Children from 3-6 years of age are together in Primary classes, 6-12 year olds share the elementary classes, often grouped as Lower Elementary for 6-9-year-old children and Upper Elementary for children ages 9-12 years. Because the work is individual, children progress at their own pace; there is cooperation rather than competition between the ages. Younger children learn from the older children and older children naturally become classroom leaders.

THE PREPARED ENVIRONMENT

The "prepared environment" is Maria Montessori's concept that the classroom environment should be designed by the adult to facilitate maximum, independent learning and exploration by the child. Attributes of a prepared environment include order and reality, beauty and simplicity. Everything is child-sized to enhance the children's independent functioning.

In the Montessori classroom, learning materials are arranged invitingly on low, open shelves. Children may choose any materials they would like to use and may work for as long as the material holds their interest after they have been given a lesson on the material. When they are finished with each material, they return it to the shelf from which it came.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

The District of Columbia has adopted the Common Core Standards; a set of high-quality academic standards in mathematics and English language arts/literacy (ELA). These learning goals outline what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade. The standards were created to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college, career, and life, regardless of where they live. Forty-two states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) have voluntarily adopted and are moving forward with the Common Core.

HOMEWORK

A growing body of research suggests that giving homework as a matter of course does not necessarily benefit children. Homework can also be a source of stress and conflict for families. Montessori students work very hard during their work periods and at the end of a long day are ready for a rest. At times, a guide or special education teacher may work with the parent and student to practice specific skills at home. For ways to support your child and the work they do in the Montessori classroom, consider using out of school time to do the following activities instead.

- Making a game with a deck of cards to practice math facts
- Play board games
- Make games out of learning new vocabulary or solving problems
- Research a topic of interest
- Keep a journal
- Read together
- Spend time with family and friends.
- Regardless of how old your children are, set aside time for reading aloud every day.
- When schedules permit, eat meals together, and encourage your children to help with meal planning and preparation.
- Visit the library, parks, and local museums and galleries, even if it's just for a short time.
- Try to spend time enjoying the outdoors.
- Start a family project: Interview grandparents and other family members, make a family timeline, or plant a garden or a flowerbox.
- Encourage your children to share by asking your children questions like, "What was the best thing that happened to you today?" or "Did anything funny (or sad, or unusual...) happen at school today?"
- With your guidance, encourage your children to take care of transactions at the bank, grocery store, and other shops.
- Educate yourself and your family about the Montessori method and incorporate its approach into your home.

ASSESSMENTS

The teachers and administrators at Lee Montessori use a computerized record keeping system, Transparent Classroom, in order to monitor each student's significant work, social and emotional development, and academic growth and to record their observations. Students are assessed throughout the year using various assessment methods including formative and summative assessment, both formal and informal. Formative assessments are those that provide teachers with information needed to adjust individual and group lessons while they are happening. Summative assessments are used to determine student's knowledge base. Standardized assessments are required by the District of Columbia and the Public Charter School Board's Performance Management Framework.

Students at Lee Montessori PCS will participate in the following assessments:

Assessment	Grade/ Domain	Issued
<p>Teaching Strategies Gold Early Childhood Assessment grounded in 38 objectives organized into 10 areas of development and learning, including broad developmental areas, content areas, and English language acquisition. Based on research, include predictors of school success, and are aligned with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, Common Core State Standards, and early learning standards for each state</p>	<p>PK3-PK4 Reading Math</p>	<p>Fall, Winter, Spring</p>

Assessment	Grade/ Domain	Issued
	Social/ Emotional	
<p>DRA2 The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA2)TM is an interim benchmark assessment that is designed for students in kindergarten through third grades. It allows teachers to systematically observe, record, and evaluate change in a student's reading performance over time. The DRA2 provides teachers with information that helps them determine a student's independent reading level and to focus on specific goals that the student needs to learn next.</p>	K-3 Literacy	Fall, Winter, Spring
<p>NWEA MAP MAP stands for Measures of Academic Progress. MAP is a computer-adaptive benchmark assessment in reading and math. It provides a different, personalized test for each student. Depending on how a student answers each question, the test adjusts in difficulty. This allows students with widely varying skill levels – from struggling to advanced – to take a test that is well-suited to their needs. Teachers are able to access student scores immediately after students complete a test. Each test provides detailed teacher reports that show the skills students are proficient in and what they are ready to work on next.</p>	K-3 Math	Fall, Winter, Spring
<p>PARCC The PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career) is computer-based and matches the expectations of the Common Core standards, requiring students to think critically and solve real-world problems.</p>	3-6 Math Literacy	Spring

STUDENT PROMOTION POLICY

Student promotion will be viewed from a holistic approach, and will be mindful of social and emotional as well as cognitive development. The classroom teacher will make a recommendation for each child's promotion, based upon many factors that include:

- Prior retentions
- Portfolios
- Mastery-based checklists
- Observations
- Classroom and district approved assessments
- Narrative-based report cards
- Reading comprehension and decoding skills

The child's teacher will have the responsibility of assessing each child's proficiency and ability to be successful in the next age grouping.

It is anticipated that children will show mastery of the Montessori curriculum within the three-year cycle. Children will need to demonstrate proficiency in the areas of language and math, as well as in the area of social and emotional development to be promoted. Children enrolled at Lee Montessori will be promoted to the next level /grouping when the following skills and content have been mastered by the end of each three-year cycle (primary, lower elementary, upper elementary).

STUDENT SERVICES

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

Lee Montessori PCS implements a Response to Intervention (RTI) model that includes science and research-based instruction, universal screening, progress monitoring, and where necessary, remediation strategies and testing for exceptionality based on a tiered system of intensifying support.

We use a Montessori RTI program called Child Study that was developed by National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector (NCMPS) in addition to universal screening, progress monitoring, data-based decision making, and prevention techniques through effectively identify and manage behavioral and learning challenges for all individual students.

All students entering the school are considered Tier 1. Based on data collection regarding student progress with respect to response to instruction it may be deemed that additional student support is needed. These students will be referred to Tier 2 status of RTI, a classification that will determine the continuum of services necessary. A student entering Tier 2 will have a Child Study Team (CST); this is the second part of our identification system. The CST includes an administrator, teachers, and support staff members if necessary. This team meets in order to identify the student's needs and provide an action plan for intensified intervention and support and further monitoring. In the event that data still does not indicate success in a specified time period, students will progress to Tier 3 of RTI. At this tier additional out of classroom resources may be deemed necessary, which may include further testing for exceptionalities.

IDENTIFICATION FOR STUDENT SUPPORT

Lee Montessori PCS is committed to meeting the needs of all children in the least restrictive environment possible. Any child will be considered for specialized instruction and/or supports through one of the following processes:

- Any student identified at Tier 2 or Tier 3 of the RTI model;
- A student referred by parents/families (If families wish to receive the services of the CST, they should contact the principal or their child's teacher for a referral form); and/or
- A student referred by teachers (a teacher should contact the principal for a referral form).

CHILD STUDY TEAM

The Child Study Team (CST) at Lee Montessori is comprised of the principal, relevant teacher(s), support staff, and the individual student's parent(s).

The CST will meet regularly to review referrals and to schedule and execute observations of students in question. The CST will determine if and when a student will be evaluated for special education and other related services such as speech and occupational therapy. It is important to note that students may also be referred directly by a parent in writing.

At the point that a student is deemed eligible for special education and/or related services, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting will be held with the parents, teachers, and the special education coordinator to discuss the student's needs and the plan to support them. This meeting will result in the writing of an IEP plan that contains the specific services the child will receive from instructors and the annual goals set for progress. The student's progress will be

monitored throughout the year, and the IEP team will reconvene yearly to evaluate progress and to update the goals and services laid out in the IEP. After three years, the student will be reevaluated to determine what, if any, services are still required.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), students with disabilities will receive special education in the least restrictive environment. These students will be educated with their nondisabled peers to the maximum extent possible. As the three-hour work cycle is integral to the success of the Montessori method, we will work to preserve that time period for the student with disabilities to stay in the classroom with his nondisabled peers and target special education pullout time from the classroom will occur during other periods of the day. Lee Montessori PCS will provide a continuum of services consistent with the Montessori model to include support in the general education classroom, modification of the general education curriculum, and pullout special education services if appropriate as deemed in the IEP.

RELATED SERVICE PROVIDERS

When necessary, Lee Montessori PCS will use the services of outside agencies to provide qualified staffing for necessary services outlined in a student's IEP. These related service providers may include, but are not limited to: counselors, behavior specialists, speech/language therapists, and occupational therapists.

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Our approach to discipline at Lee Montessori is based on a mutual respect between adults and children and the belief that Lee Montessori must be a safe place, both physically and emotionally, for children to explore the limits of their current capacities and knowledge and stretch to new abilities, while refining their social and emotional skills. The purpose of our Student Behavior Policy is to aid children in developing self-control and respect for the rights of others. The Montessori Method supports helping children (without rejecting them as people) understand why certain behaviors are considered inappropriate. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects respect for people and property. Students are taught that Lee Montessori is a peaceful community based upon mutual respect. Physical abuse, verbal abuse and intentional violence will not be used and/or tolerated. Appropriate use of non-violent communication and frustration tolerance skills are expected and modeled. Lee Montessori requires all employees, and encourages Parents, to report any known incidents of bullying or willful or deliberate violence to their child's Teacher and/or the Principal within 24 hours of witnessing or observation. When such an incident is observed, employees are required to complete an Incident Report and to send a copy to the Principal. Families of the children involved in bullying or willful violence will be notified. Incidents of Normal Peer Conflict may or may not be reported, depending on the details and events.

Lee Montessori PCS has adopted the District of Columbia Office of Human Right's District Wide Bullying Prevention Policy. A copy of the policy can be obtained from the office or found online at <http://ohr.dc.gov/bullyingprevention/policy>.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

All Staff are trained in the Positive Discipline Model. Positive Discipline is a program designed to teach young people to become responsible, respectful and resourceful members of their communities. Children who feel a sense of connection to their community, family, and school are less likely to exhibit disruptive or defiant behaviors. To be successful, contributing members of their community, children must learn necessary social and life skills. In addition to the Positive Discipline Model, all Staff use 1-2-3 Magic, an effective discipline tool providing redirection and verbal reminders. When verbal reminders are not sufficient to elicit change in conduct, students will be dismissed from the general activity area to a quieter place in the room for a brief break. They will return when preparedness to join the group and self-control are demonstrated. If, in his/her actions, a child puts him/herself, others, or property in jeopardy, he/she will be removed from the classroom. The Lee Montessori community assists children in developing the skills necessary to control their own actions and develop self-discipline. Natural or logical consequences are used as a means of helping the child to develop inner limits. The following rubrics are implemented as a result of any unacceptable classroom and/or school-wide behavior. Rubrics vary based on developmental stage. All Staff members involved, observing and/or interacting with the students will be required to document incidents in a Behavior Log and follow the standard procedures outlined in the rubrics below. Expectations, policies, and procedures may be adjusted on a case-by-case basis for children.

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE RUBRICS

The following tables describe the standard practice for responding to undesirable behaviors in Lee Montessori classrooms. Responses may be adjusted on a case-by-case basis for children.

BEHAVIOR RUBRIC FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS

Behavior	First Time	Second Time	Third Time	Severe Disruptive Behavior Pattern
Classroom Disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Reminder • Redirection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redirection • Independent workspace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incident Report • Buddy Classroom • Email/phone call to Parent • Plan for in-class interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent workspace • Incident Report • Conference with Parent/Guardians, Principal, Student Support Coordinator (SSC), School Social Worker (SSW) • Possible Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
Teasing/ Exclusion: the act of verbally causing any social or emotional distress to another student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal behavior reminder • Guided conflict resolution with Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal behavior reminder • Guided conflict resolution with Teacher • Reflection with Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided conflict resolution with Teacher • Buddy Classroom • Reflection with Teacher • Incident Report • Email/Phone call to Parent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided conflict resolution • Reflection with Teacher • Incident Report • Conference with Parent/Guardians, Principal, SSC, SSW • Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

Behavior	First Time	Second Time	Third Time	Severe Disruptive Behavior Pattern
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible individual or group in-school counseling
Physical Aggression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided conflict resolution with Teacher • Incident Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided conflict resolution with Teacher • Buddy Classroom • Incident Report • Email/Phone call to Parent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed from classroom for remainder of work period • Buddy Classroom • Incident Report • Email/Phone call to Parent • Conference with Parent/Guardians, Principal, SSC, SSW • In-classroom interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incident Report • Email/Phone call to parent • Conference with Parent/Guardians, Principal, SSC, SSW within 48 hours • Possible FBA/BIP • Referral for mandatory in-school or out of school support services
Severe: Threats of serious violence to self or other or severe harassment (Crisis Intervention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incident report • Email/ Phone call to parent • Authorities may be contacted (e.g., MPD, CHAMPS) • Conference with Parent/Guardians, Principal, SSC, SSW within 48 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incident report • Email/ Phone call to parent • Authorities may be contacted (e.g., MPD, CHAMPS) • Conference with Parent/Guardians, Principal, SSC, SSW within 48 hours • Possible FBA/BIP • Referral for mandatory in-school or out of school support services 		

BEHAVIOR RUBRIC FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Behavior	First Time	Second Time	Third Time	Severe Disruptive Behavior Pattern
Classroom Disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Reminder • Redirection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redirection • Independent workspace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent workspace • Incident Report • Buddy Classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent workspace • Incident Report • Conference with Parent/Guardians, Principal, SSC, SSW

Behavior	First Time	Second Time	Third Time	Severe Disruptive Behavior Pattern
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guided journal reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email/phone call to Parent Plan for in-class interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
Teasing/Exclusion: the act of verbally causing any social or emotional distress to another student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal behavior reminder Guided conflict resolution with Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guided conflict resolution with Teacher Reflection with Teacher Incident Report Email/Phone call to Parent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guided conflict resolution with Teacher Buddy Classroom Reflection with Teacher Incident Report Email/Phone call to Parent Plan for in-classroom intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guided conflict resolution Reflection with Teacher Incident Report Conference with Parent/Guardians, Principal, SSC, SSW Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) Possible individual or group in-school counseling
Physical Aggression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guided conflict resolution with Teacher Incident Report Email/Phone call to Parent Natural consequence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guided conflict resolution with Teacher Incident Report Buddy Classroom Email/Phone call to Parent Natural Consequence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed from classroom for remainder of work period Buddy Classroom Incident Report Email/Phone call to Parent Conference with Parent/Guardians, Principal, SSC, SSW In-classroom interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incident Report Conference with Parent/Guardians, Principal, SSC, SSW within 48 hours Possible FBA/BIP Referral for mandatory in-school or out of school support services
Severe: Threats of serious violence to self or other or severe harassment (Crisis Intervention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incident report and Email/Phone call to parent Authorities may be contacted (e.g., MPD, CHAMPS) Conference with Parent/Guardians, SSC, SSW within 48 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incident report Email/Phone call to parent Authorities may be contacted (e.g., MPD, CHAMPS) Conference with Parent/Guardians, SSC, SSW within 48 hours Possible FBA/BIP Referral for mandatory in-school or out of school support services 		

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Lee Montessori provides all staff with non-violent crisis intervention training through the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI). This training provides the safest means of holding a child in a crisis situation. Selected Staff members have completed additional Physical Restraint Training through CPI and are permitted to use Gentle Safe Holding in the following situations:

- If a child is hurting him/herself or others, or is likely to hurt him/herself or others
- If a child is damaging property
- If a child is physically/verbally out of control, so that all verbal attempts to engage him/her have failed

Such necessary interventions are fully in line with guidelines set out in the government document “New Guidance on the Use of Reasonable Force in School” (DfEE 1998). Without this intervention, the child can be left at risk of actual physical or psychological harm.

RECESS/PLAYGROUND POLICY

Recess is a crucial time that our students benefit from socially, cognitively, emotionally, and physically. In order to promote optimal development of the whole child, recess will not be withheld as a form of punishment from behavior displayed outside of recess. The playground should be a safe, pleasant, friendly environment. Students are expected to follow safe behavior (outlined below) and must show respect for others by using appropriate verbal and nonverbal behavior. Based on the developmental stages of the children, staff members encourage free play. Staff members will monitor all areas of the playground at all times to ensure the safety of all children. If a child displays unsafe or defiant behavior during recess, consequences will be implemented. Interventions will occur at the discretion of whoever is supervising recess at that time. Possible immediate consequences may include: verbal warning, recess privileges contained to an assigned area, a break until student has calmed down, removal from situation, referral to administration, Parent/Guardian notification. Any harmful, threatening, or violent behavior will result in immediate removal from situation, incident report home, and a Teacher, Principal and Parent/Guardian meeting. All classes will be expected to follow Recess/Playground Rules.

Recess/Playground Rules

While classroom teachers, administrators, and/or assistants may enforce additional rules as may be needed, in general, children shall:

Rule 1: 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.

Rule 2: Respect the personal space of others. No physical contact involving hitting, kicking, punching, pushing, or shoving will be tolerated. Positive and safe forms of physical contact are permitted with permission of both children. This may include: hugging, holding hands, linking arms, playing tag, etc.

Rule 3: 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: Respect the playground equipment and school materials that they are using.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION, SCHOOL SUSPENSION, AND EXPULSION

Students who consistently deprive others of the right to a safe learning environment by repeated disruptive behavior will be subject to disciplinary action, including in-school suspension, out of school suspension, and/or expulsion.

In-school suspension is a disciplinary response to student misconduct. The student will be excluded from participating in regular school activities but will remain in the school environment. He or she will be required to do assignments developed by his/her teachers.

No student shall be suspended or expelled unless the conduct for which s/he is to be disciplined is related to school activities and/or attendance. Disciplinary actions will have no bearing on the student's academic standing.

The decision to suspend or expel a student shall be made by the Principal and/or the Head of School with or without the recommendation of the student's teacher or another staff. The Principal and the Head of School will determine the number of days for suspension based on the severity of the infraction, the age of the student, and previous infractions. The suspension or expulsion shall become effective immediately unless otherwise stated by the Principal and Head of School.

Lee Montessori requires that a parent/guardian attend a meeting with the Principal and/or Head of School and the student's teacher before a suspended student may return to school. The decision to suspend or expel a student shall be made in writing and given to the parent/guardian. The student's parents/guardians have five school days to challenge the decision. After three suspensions from school within the same school year for the same or different infractions, expulsion shall be considered.

DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Students with disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities as other students, and may be disciplined for the same behavioral offenses listed above. A multidisciplinary team will hold a manifestation meeting to determine if the incident was a manifestation of their disability.

This meeting will not determine the consequences issued by the school for the recent infraction, though it may inform that decision. Discipline is handled by the school administration, who will hold a separate meeting. This meeting is to determine whether recent behavior was a manifestation of the disability and to review the appropriateness of the school plan.

PHYSICAL CONTACT/SAFE TOUCH POLICY

PURPOSE OF POLICY

Lee Montessori is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment to children in our care. The staff of Lee Montessori will provide guidance and adhere to the Safe Touch Policy. Our policy rests on the belief that each staff member and student must appreciate the difference between safe and unsafe touch and will need to demonstrate a clear understanding of the difference. All staff will annually attend a session on safe and unsafe touch in order to best implement appropriate education and response into the classroom. The parents and community of our school will also be offered workshops annually on this matter.

It is often appropriate for children to be given some physical contact and comfort by a staff member and/or a peer they know and trust. For children within the primary and elementary developmental stages, appropriate social relationships are still being established. There is a greater need for a nurturing environment where it may be more appropriate for closer physical contact during some activities.

DEFINITION OF SAFE TOUCH

Touching that creates a positive emotional and/or social growth in the person touched and/or properly affects the safety and well-being of the person such as:

- Hand shakes
- Shoulder hugs
- Linked arms
- Holding hands

DEFINITION OF UNSAFE TOUCH

Touching that creates improper or negative social or emotional effect on the child. Unsafe touching usually involves coercion or other forms of exploitation of the child, satisfaction of needs at the expense of the child, and physical force.

UNDERSTANDING TOUCH

Adults must always be aware that all children interpret and react to touch in different ways. Some children might be over-demonstrative and try to demand a great deal of affection and physical contact. Other children may shy away from or have a dislike of physical contact. Lee Montessori staff will always approach each child's individual needs and respond in the best interest of the child.

BATHROOM PROTOCOL

In classroom bathrooms with two stalls, two children may be in the bathroom at a time but each child must be in their individual stall or at the sink. In the hallway bathrooms, students must follow the same protocol. If a child has difficulty following these procedures, he/she may lose the right to go to the bathroom at the same time as another student.

We understand that children may require help with changing or going to the bathroom and it is always done so with the dignity of the child being maintained at all times. An adult will always be closely monitoring the bathrooms to determine if children need assistance and are following bathroom protocol.

PARENTAL GRIEVANCE POLICY

Lee Montessori is committed to creating the strong family-school relationships essential to the success of each Lee Montessori student and to our school as a whole. On the occasion that parents wish to make a complaint, we have established the following grievance protocol to solve disputes or complaints in a fair and prompt manner. Notably, the formal procedures described below may be implemented only *after* the parties have engaged in an earnest attempt to resolve matter(s) informally.

PARENT COMPLAINTS

Parent complaints are taken seriously by Lee Montessori and should proceed as follows:

1. Parents should first schedule a conference with the immediately-involved teacher or administrator to discuss the issue. The school reserves the right to redirect parent(s) to the appropriate personnel if this step has not been followed.
2. If parent(s) conclude that the initial response/course of action was insufficient, a meeting may then be scheduled with the Principal. Prior to the scheduling of any such meeting, parent(s) must first provide the Principal with a Grievance Letter that identifies: (a) the

issue/ concern/ complaint; (b) what steps have been taken to resolve the situation; and (c) proposed solutions. The Principal will attempt to respond to all Grievance Letters within 10 days of their receipt.

3. If parent(s) conclude that the initial response/course of action was insufficient, a meeting may then be scheduled with the Head of School, following the same steps outlined in Step 4.
4. If a resolution cannot be reached through a discussion with the Head of School, parent(s) may submit a formal Parental Grievance Packet to the Lee Montessori Board of Trustees. This packet must include the information and materials discussed below.
5. If a resolution cannot be reached through a discussion with the Board of Trustees, parent(s) may contact the DC Public Charter School Board. More information can be found at www.dcpsb.org/Parents/How-to-Address-Complaints-and-Concerns.aspx

PROCESS FOR BOARD REVIEW OF PARENTAL GRIEVANCES

The Lee Montessori Board of Trustees shall annually appoint a Grievance Committee comprised of two (2) Trustees and the Head of School. The Head of School shall not participate in any grievance proceeding in which s/he is the subject of an original grievance. A Parental Grievance Packet should be submitted in writing to the Board of Trustees within 30 days of the conduct that triggered the grievance and must specify:

- The nature and date of the grievance and any related or supporting documents;
- The results of previous discussions to resolve the conflict, including any correspondence;
- The reason for the parent(s)' dissatisfaction with the decisions previously rendered; and
- A description of the relief sought.

Within 30 days of the submission of a complete Parental Grievance Packet, the Grievance Committee shall:

- Research the nature of the complaint;
- Interview the concerned parties; and
- Recommend a course of action to the full Lee Montessori Board of Trustees through communications by the Board Member serving as Parental Grievance Committee Chair to the Board Chair.

The Board shall render a final ruling on the grievance at its next regularly scheduled meeting following its receipt of the recommendation of the Grievance Committee.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Lee Montessori is a community school working to provide a high equality experience for all of its members. As the adult members of our community, parents and guardians have the responsibility of protecting and nurturing the children. To this end, there are three ways by which parents and guardians are asked to participate in their child's education at Lee Montessori and we expect families to participate in all three activities.

- Participation in the Family Teacher Association (FTA)
- Family education nights and informational meetings (including parent teacher conferences)
- Volunteer service to the school
- Classroom Observations

FAMILY TEACHER ASSOCIATION

The Family Teacher Association (FTA) Founded in 2015, the purpose of the Lee Montessori Public Charter School Family Teacher Association (FTA) is to enhance and support the educational experience at Lee Montessori PCS, to promote a closer connection between school and home by encouraging family engagement and strong family-school communications, and to foster a sense of community among families, teachers and administrators at Lee Montessori PCS through family engagement, volunteerism and financial support. Membership is open to any parent, guardian, or other adult regularly serving in a parent/guardian role for a student at the school and any teachers or staff employed at the school.

To become a member, please sign up during our Fall Registration Drive or email fta@leemontessori.org. The FTA uses the Lee Montessori Google Group to send out announcements and also hosts a families-only Facebook page – please contact us at the address above for additional information.

Please subscribe to the Google Calendar to stay up to date on events at <http://bit.ly/LeeFTAcalendar>

Meeting summaries as well as the FTA bylaws can be reviewed in the archives at <http://bit.ly/LeeFTAreCORDs>

FAMILY EDUCATION

We are aware that the Montessori curriculum may be new to many parents who will be placing their children at Lee Montessori PCS. The teachers and staff will hold monthly family education nights in the evenings where teachers, staff, and family members will come together to discuss Montessori theory, the work your children are doing in the classroom, and strategies for continuing this work at home. These events will provide a great opportunity for parents to get to know one another and gain additional insight into Montessori teaching methods.

SERVICE TO THE SCHOOL

Service to the community is another aspect of the children’s curriculum that can be modeled by its adult members. Lee Montessori gratefully acknowledges all of its members who have offered to volunteer time, energy, and skills to initially organize and create it! Lee Montessori will thrive through the years as each family adds its own energy to its growth. By participating in service to the school, families become a part of the school’s structure and a practical piece of their child’s education. It is expected that most families will enthusiastically want to help the school in whatever way they can. Volunteer opportunities that arise throughout the year will be communicated to all families. These may include classroom cleaning, grounds and building maintenance, field trip assistance, fundraisers, and promotional activities.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Parents are welcome to visit the school and observe their child at work in the classroom. We strongly encourage parents to observe their child’s classroom. Classroom observations will be scheduled directly with the teacher.

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School received a request for access. Parents of eligible students should submit to the School principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identified the record (s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent of eligible student believes are inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School principal (or appropriate school official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent of eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
4000 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER PPRA

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole, or in part, by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;

7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Lee Montessori PCS has developed and adopted policies regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Lee Montessori PCS will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Lee Montessori PCS will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. Lee Montessori PCS will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Lee Montessori PCS Family Handbook. I will read the Handbook prior to the first day of school. I acknowledge that I have access to and can obtain a copy of the Handbook for review at any time. I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with and abide by the policies set forth in the Handbook, and I consent to the provisions and policies described in the Handbook. Furthermore, I understand that if I should have questions or concerns regarding the Family Handbook, I should contact the Principal or the Head of School.

Student Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date