California Montessori Project

Family Handbook

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Mission Statement and Core Values

The mission of the California Montessori Project is to offer a quality, tuition-free Montessori education to every child in the state of California.

California Montessori Project (CMP) offers an environment which has the tools, programs, resources and support to enable students to become educated to high international academic standards and to develop themselves to their fullest capacity as competent, happy, productive individuals, family members, workers, and contributors to a better society and a peaceful world.

This is achieved through a commitment from the community: parents, teachers, community groups, the legislature and, most importantly, the individual child.

The California Montessori Project provides a Montessori curriculum, integrated with the California state standards, for students ranging from Kindergarten through eighth grade. ***The California Montessori Project is committed to serving the best interest of the student.*** Parental participation is a requirement and highly valued in terms of the contribution it makes to the child's education and the school community.

Internationally high academic standards and expectations of achievement, with emphasis on core subjects, are maintained through adherence to these values:

- Small total school populations and low student/teacher ratios
- Creative, passionate, progressive teachers who are committed to Montessori philosophy
- Responsibility, accountability, and freedom for individual student progress within the academic framework
- Challenges to develop critical reasoning, openness to encourage creativity, and opportunities to facilitate service
- High, unwavering standards of conduct, emphasizing respect for self and others, honesty, responsibility, and courtesy
- Emphasis on collaboration, peer governance, problem-solving, and goal-setting according to developmental readiness
- High parental involvement and collaboration in education and governance

Core Beliefs

Dr. Montessori's fundamental goal was to prepare the child for the "real world" and recognized that each student is a unique individual with unique personal, social, and educational needs. As a result, interactions with individual students may be unique in nature. In response to this, CMP has chosen to adopt a "principles-based" approach to professional conduct and school-wide behavior management. Under such an approach, CMP staff members have met and agreed upon a common set of principles, which shall serve as the basis for all interactions and decisions that may arise within the school community.

Empirical research has shown us that people learn in two ways: Through experience and by modeling. Recognizing that each person comes to our community with a different personality and a different set of life experiences, it is almost impossible to achieve total consistency of beliefs and actions within a staff. As we strive to acknowledge the unique nature of each student and staff member, consistency is achieved when social, academic and professional decisions are handled in a manner consistent with an agreed set of principles. Thus staff members are encouraged to approach situations and decisions with the understanding that the coaching, counseling, and/or consequence implemented shall be consistent with the set of values and principles agreed upon by the staff as a whole.

The following list of core beliefs outlines the professional attitudes and actions of all staff members of this school:

1. Our professional attitude is a mindset with a core belief that our actions and our words should always maintain the dignity and respect of both child and adult.

2. Adults will model appropriate and respectful behavior for students and will guide students to solve their own problems in any way that does not create a problem for others.

3. Students will be given opportunities to make decisions and live with the consequences, both positive and negative. These experiences shall serve as valuable learning opportunities for our students.

4. Students will be given the opportunity to make decisions about issues that affect themselves. Outcome of choices, including misbehavior, will be handled with natural and/or logical consequences instead of punishment, whenever possible.

5. Outcomes of choices and misbehavior will be viewed as opportunities for individual problem solving and preparation for the real world. Staff acknowledge that misbehaviors are not necessarily a personal attack on school or staff and acknowledge that other underlying personal or emotional issues may need to be considered.

6. In the event a consequence appears to be unfair, students are encouraged to request an opportunity to fully communicate their viewpoints and any additional facts regarding a situation with which they were involved.

7. School problems will be handled by school personnel. Criminal activity will be referred to the proper authorities.

Academic Program and Overview

Who was Maria Montessori?

Maria Montessori was a doctor, research scientist, and educator from the late 1800's – early 1900's who made observations about how children learn. The Montessori Philosophy of Education is based on Dr. Maria Montessori's observation that children have a natural desire to learn and that stages of development exist for which there should be corresponding educational environments and trained adults who prepare these environments. Children can learn independently in a prepared environment with teachers who guide and serve as the links between the student and the environment. By providing freedom of choice, this enriched learning environment cultivates individuals who learn to make independent decisions and to solve problems creatively. They learn to develop healthy social relationships, to develop skills in concentration, and to master basic academic and life skills. At CMP students are challenged to create, explore and imagine.

Montessori Education provides children with a lifetime gift – the opportunity to fully develop their innate intellectual, physical, social and emotional potential. CMP encourages parents to be an integral part of their child's education by learning about the Montessori philosophy, observing in the classrooms, and volunteering in the school.

Montessori: "A Cosmic Approach to Education"

The Montessori philosophy was originally developed in the early nineteen hundreds by Dr. Maria Montessori to enhance a child's opportunities for learning, relevant to the student's relationship to the world around him/her. Over the years, the philosophy has evolved to challenge the whole child's personality and intellect in a variety of multicultural settings. Her teaching system is based on a strong integration of adult to child observation and practical hands-on activities. From her observations, she designed functional learning environments created to support and enhance a child's innate desire to learn about the world around him/her. Classroom materials offer learning experiences in a clear, concrete manner. Students are encouraged to use motor and intellectual discovery when working with these materials. There is an emphasis on the sequential and orderly acquisition of both motor and cognitive skills. This ordered work method also allows for individualization and usually offers a two to three year age span within the classroom; enabling students to work and learn at their own pace, as well as in group settings. The integration of varied age spans allows older students to gain confidence by working and role modeling materials with younger students. Collaborative learning and projects completed in groups encourage students to teach and learn with each other. This combination of order and freedom is facilitated by what is called *"the prepared environment"*.

A well prepared Montessori learning environment is given careful attention, allowing and encouraging the child accessibility to all materials she/he needs in performing and experiencing the step-by-step process of individual work. The classroom is thus arranged in a series of easily accessible shelves designed to accommodate specific work areas. This framework of organization gives accessibility to the necessary learning materials and frees the student to concentrate on the work, allowing an increase in independence and responsibility. This, in turn, decreases the need of direction from the teacher. As a result, children develop internal rather that external referencing. The teacher is also better able to observe the total classroom environment. Within the California Montessori Project, each classroom follows Montessori's concepts and is carefully designed to provide for the developmental needs of its students.

The areas of the classroom consist of materials to support learning in the core subjects of language arts (reading and writing), mathematics, and geometry while also providing concentrations in the areas of history, geography, and natural sciences (biology: botany, zoology; astronomy, etc). Cultural subjects such as art, music, second languages and physical education are interwoven. Each class contains materials that teach specific concepts for the particular age range. The materials are designed in a logical sequence of skill acquisition and concept building while reinforcing the development of abstract thinking. In this way, the students observe and experience a movement toward self-set goals. The learning materials initially isolate knowledge to one concept at a time in a concrete manipulative style. Eventually, the child progresses toward an abstract, more divergent level of evaluation.

The Montessori teacher acts as a facilitator of information and is always responsible for what is called "making the match". Through observation and standardized assessments**,** the teacher assesses the needs and level of each student to guide him/her towards a path to meet his/her individual interests, maturity levels, capabilities and educational needs. As a result of these assessments, teachers can make adjustments in individual learning plans, both academically and behaviorally. The student who is in a period of self-directed activity can be given much freedom regarding choice. All students can work at their own speed and must demonstrate mastery of material before moving on.

The California Montessori Project offers these prepared classrooms in a variety of age/grade combinations. In the early grades, students receive the foundation of the Montessori curriculum by learning and practicing the cornerstone concepts of:

- Care of Self,
- Care of Environment,
- Control of Movement, and *very importantly*,
- Grace and Courtesy

The elementary or cosmic approach to learning introduces educational opportunities in a new and exciting light. It is designed to begin with the aspects of impressions. For the first six years of life (first plane of development), the child has absorbed the world around him/her: visually, auditorally, and tactually. Mastery of concrete experiences has taken place. Moving into the second plane of development, we can now begin an adventure of building abstractly on these early concrete experiences.

The following information is an overview of CMP's philosophy for elementary (second plane of development) and middle school (third plane of development) Montessori programs. For this experience to be a successful adventure, it calls for a fully participating and committed team. We look forward to working with your child/ren and your family and we welcome you as a member of this team dedicated to providing the most optimum learning environment for your child/ren.

Planes of Development

Developmental levels consist of distinct planes with certain characteristics that should be considered in formulating a plan for the child's education. These varying characteristics may be considered from four distinct aspects:
Intellectual Social Emotional Moral

Intellectual: Dr. Montessori identified two sensitive intellectual periods during the second and third planes: Imagination and the understanding of the abstract. Imagination is the great power of this age. This special mental ability enables us to imagine what exists or has existed but cannot be seen because of time or distance. Not only can imagination travel through infinite space but also through infinite time. So, the child aged 6 to 12, and then 12 to 16, uses a creative imagination based on reality in order to psychologically conquer the world.

At these ages, the student's need to assimilate concepts using the concrete Montessori materials is still prevalent, and many appropriate materials are provided. The elementary and middle school-aged child develops the ability to move from the concrete into abstraction of a concept, based on this repeated opportunity for concrete experience.

Between the ages of 6 to 16 is the period of life during which the elements of all science should be given. This time frame could be called the "sensitive period of culture." In the early years of life, the child takes in her/his immediate environment. After the age of six, the child becomes involved in the greater community, growing into global awareness. In Montessori education the child is able to do this through "Cosmic Education".

The starting point of Cosmic Education is to introduce a vision of the world as a whole. To offer culture in terms of a cosmic vision means to show the intimate and interrelated relationship between things, living nature, and humankind. It also means the ability to understand the cosmic task of each element and of each force in the cosmos, including our human society and each of us as individual members of society.

Social: In the second and third planes, the group beyond the family, the peer group, now attracts the child. Children begin to form a society of their own peers and resist adult control as far as possible. The basic moral principle in operation during these periods requires a commitment from the individual: The commitment of the individual to the peer group.

Emotional: The child aged 6 to 16 is generally less accommodating to adults. Dr. Montessori explained this developmental change in terms of Nature's logic, whose aim is to arouse in the child not only a hunger for knowledge and understanding but also a claim to mental independence, a desire to distinguish good and evil by one's own power, and to resist limitation by arbitrary authority.

Moral: During the second and third planes, a sensitive period of morality comes to the forefront. A concept of justice is born at this age, together with a growing understanding of the relationship between our acts and the needs of others. Children at these ages will react strongly against anything they regard as unjust or unfair.

According to Dr. Montessori, nature has equipped the children of this age (6-16) with the qualities of loyalty, generosity, a sense of responsibility, a strong sense of justice, admiration for what is outstanding and progressive, and a distaste for trivialities. The children of this age want to become self-sufficient, prove their new independence, and help their neighbor.

One of Montessori's basic principles is that the adult should understand the natural tendencies driving the child at each plane of development and cooperate with those tendencies rather than go against nature.

Basic Academic Areas of CMP's Montessori Educational Program

Montessori education offers a wide variety of academic study for all students, in a way that interrelates each subject to the others, which in turn supports the development of a better rounded individual. One of the classic components of the Montessori approach is to provide uninterrupted units of work time for the students, to allow them ample opportunity to work through various academic tasks each day. At CMP, breaking the academic day into two distinct parts provides these units of work time: Core academics (Language Arts, Math, and Geometry) are most often presented in the morning, and cultural subjects, such as History, Geography, and Science are usually presented in the afternoon. Practical Life lessons are practiced daily (care of self, care of environment, control of movement, grace and courtesy), and subjects traditionally referred to as cultural in nature (fine art, performing art, second languages, etc.) are interwoven throughout the week.

Core Subjects:

Reading and Language are essential for all areas of learning. Children learn phonetically through the use of tactile materials such as sandpaper letters, through auditory repetition and visual identification. Then they progress into reading and working independently through study cards (e.g. Albanesi) that give direction to their individualized program and to their researches. Reading and language are integral parts of all cultural lessons.

Writing is used in almost every academic experience. Printing and cursive are developed in the early years, as the child is ready. Later, students develop formal writing and composition skills.

Basic Math facts (counting, addition and subtraction) are stressed as the prerequisite for accomplishing the more-advanced math that follows: fractions, long multiplication and division, powers of numbers, systems of numeration, squaring, and cubing.

Geometry is studied as it assists in the development of a creative capacity in the child. It is the foundation toward the construction of reality. This progression flows naturally from the 3-6 year old experience with sensorial materials.

Cultural Subjects:

S*ubjects such as History, Geography, and Science are referred to as Cultural Lessons* and are studied as interrelated aspects of the same world.

History begins with the concept of time and evolves each year through a study of the Fundamental Needs of Humans, the Timeline of Life, and Stages in the Progress of Civilization. *Geography* continues from the preschool period with completed work in maps. Successive work includes a study of landforms and their classified nomenclature in conjunction with the study of the earth as our home. *Geology* continues this study of the earth and its historical relationships.

Science encompasses units of study in areas such as Biology, Astronomy, and Chemistry in the later grades, and is presented in a way that allows the student to explore and observe the world around him/her. *Biology* is initially presented to younger students through dual studies divided between *Botany* and *Zoology*; beginning with Botanical and Zoological Classified Nomenclature. These units of study continue with experiments on vital functions of the plant kingdom and a comparative study of the vital functions of the different phyla and classes of the animal kingdom, progressing into a study of human functions and structure, and culminate in the later years with family life studies and sexual health education.

Research and Projects:

Within the Montessori method, opportunities for study and projects on various levels of thinking are essential. Critical and creative-thinking skills are an integral link to the Montessori Cosmic philosophy and curriculum. Furthering a child's study and understanding of concepts is accomplished by applying their learning in research projects and presentations.

Homework Policy

Homework is not necessarily a traditional component of the Montessori philosophy because it is difficult, at best, to re-create the Montessori classroom environment in each student's home. However, CMP acknowledges that homework is a valuable way to extend the classroom lessons, giving students more time to practice and review concepts they have learned. Homework benefits the student by developing good study skills, discipline, and responsibility. It also provides parents the opportunity to be involved in and stay current with their child/ren's education.

Homework assignments may consist of weekly math drills, spelling practice, reading or research projects. It should relate to classroom instruction, reinforce and extend learning, promote immediate recall of basic skills, and match the student's needs and academic level. CMP teachers have developed their own homework practices that will be shared with parents during orientation at the beginning of each school year. When there is no assigned homework, we recommend that you encourage your child to read.

Character Education and Peace Education:
Teaching Students to Become Contributing Members of Their Society

CMP recognizes that the role of the parent/guardian is paramount in developing civic values and ethical behavior in their children. Montessori curriculum is developed to encourage and support students in the further development of the civic values and ethical behaviors that support them to become responsible and caring citizens, family members, and workers within society. Character education is interwoven throughout the educational program and fosters qualities such as: honesty, respect for self, others and property, morality (understanding what is right, legal and ethical), responsibility, human dignity, empathy, justice, civility, courage, and concern for the common good. CMP encourages all students to participate in community service projects to learn the importance of giving back to their community.

CMP believes in the dignity of all and that everyone, including students, families and staff, should be treated with dignity and respect. There is a great deal of diversity in the families we serve, and we strive to ensure that everyone feels welcome within our schools. Differences are celebrated! As a part of Cosmic Education (a study of each cosmic unit in relation to the whole), Maria Montessori was an advocate of Peace Education: the idea that the study and understanding of different cultures and societies would lead to acceptance and peace between nations. The breadth of the Montessori curriculum is designed to provide students with this exposure to a variety of cultures, societies, and beliefs, and to support students to be good citizens, as well as, progressive and compassionate thinkers and high-level communicators.

In accordance with this aim, CMP will not tolerate behavior by students, families, staff or visitors which is insulting, degrading or stereotyping of any race, religion, gender, disability, physical characteristics, ethnic group, sexual preference, age, or nationality.

The Montessori Classroom Environment

In Montessori education, the total child must always be considered. Thus, it is in the best interest of the student that home and school environments are consistent. For positive development of the body, mind, and spirit; the physical, mental, emotional, social, and academic needs of the child must constantly be taken into consideration. At CMP, this is our first priority. To be successful, staff AND parents need to be committed to the following precepts:

- CMP has chosen to implement the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori versus a traditional educational approach. Therefore, CMP classrooms and school environment will operate using the concepts and methodology of Montessori.
- CMP believes that children need pro-active and positive affirmation regarding self-image and esteem.
- CMP provides guidance in the area of behavior and attitudes; and recognizes that each child has a unique personality, likes and dislikes, values, strengths and challenges. Uniqueness of the child will be honored while providing guidance.
- Each class establishes rules within the first week of the school year. It is the expectation that these rules are set with the understanding that everyone will respect and follow them.

This provides the child with ability to reason and think for her/himself and to experience natural consequences for her/his choices.

- At CMP, children are encouraged to communicate in a respectful, assertive and socially acceptable manner. An atmosphere in which students feel safe to express their differing viewpoints will be provided, as well as guidance with conflict resolution.

- All levels and styles of learning are encouraged. CMP schools reference both Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theories and Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Thought Process structures to enhance the critical thinking skills of all students.

- CMP conducts Albanesi inventories to assist in making academic assessments. Placement, pretests and posttests are conducted in language arts, mathematics, and geometry. Reading assessments will be conducted for reading readiness.
- At CMP, personal responsibility and accountability is taught and practiced. Guidelines, limits, freedom of choice, and consequences will be made understandable to the students.

- CMP will provide clear and timely communication to families in all areas of the educational program.

Kindergarten Program: (culmination of ages 3-6)

Kindergarten is the culmination of the early childhood program which addresses the needs of the child during the first plane of development. Within the Kindergarten class, students transition from parallel play to an attitude of cooperative play. During this stage of development, the child gravitates toward a desire to work along with her/his peers. The Kindergarten classroom allows these concepts to develop naturally through the role modeling of the teachers as well as the integration of age levels and interests.

In the Kindergarten environment, the students *explore Montessori materials*. In mathematics, the Golden Bead Material is used to introduce the decimal system and progresses into the four mathematical operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) in a concrete fashion. The Sensorial area concentrates more on geometry that eventually ties in with concepts in math. Language and reading materials guide the child toward recognition of the alphabet both by letter name and phonetically. "Sight words," those words in the English language not phonetically pronounced, are introduced gradually.

Upon mastery of the above foundational tasks, pre-reading and reading skills are integrated with the use of small primer books designed to allow the child to read successfully at their own level. Writing extensions are now integrated to strengthen the interest in reading. D'Nealian style manuscript handwriting is incorporated in all areas of the classroom, both in pre-writing or tracing activities, along with actual experience stories. The students move through writing of lower case letters first, and follow with the upper case, capital, letters.

The Practical Life area of the classroom enables the child to extend her/his concentration, coordination, and independence into a stronger sense of order for the future. In Kindergarten, the

cultural lessons explore the areas of zoology, botany, geography, history, art and music. Within each area, specific units of study are presented. Physical Education is also explored within a group process, both indoors and out.

Junior (Lower) Elementary Program: First through Third Grade Levels (ages 6 to 9)

The California Montessori Project focuses on the aspects of the Cosmic Curriculum of the Montessori philosophy. We work toward continuously increasing self-direction and independence of the junior child, age 6-9 years. In achieving these goals, the students gain strong self-concepts and effective roles of direction in self-responsibility. Our staff believes that in order to provide an appropriate learning environment for the child, we must encourage opportunities for reflective thinking, problem solving, and critical evaluation. Our environment provides opportunities for creative expression and encourages divergent thinking skills. We are able to allow and encourage your child's personal rate of learning, and can vary our teaching strategies to accommodate the needs of each individual student.

The curriculum is specifically designed with the elementary child in mind. We integrate the structure of Dr. Montessori's methodology, by using the core subjects of Language Arts, Mathematics, and Geometry, within the Cultural Subjects (including but not limited to: History, Geography, Zoology, and Botany) as our foundation of knowledge. Exposure to computer technology to familiarize students with the workings of a computer, keyboarding skills, and simple research are available in each classroom. Physical Education is based on California standards and occurs within the school week.

CMP integrates the expectations of the California state academic standards for this age and developmental stage and has paid careful attention to aligning the Montessori curriculum with state standards across the board. If you would like to view the curriculum for a particular level, please feel free to ask the teacher.

Upper Elementary Program: Fourth through Sixth Grade Levels (ages 9 to 12)

The philosophy of Montessori education is to encourage the student to classify, analyze, and evaluate information based on the introduction of any given academic subject matter from an impressionistic viewpoint. The goal for the student is to take information and apply it to real life experiences. These experiences then create opportunities for critical thinking and logical analysis.

The upper elementary curriculum continues to be specifically designed with the elementary child in mind. Core subjects of Language Arts, Mathematics, and Geometry are integrated throughout the Cultural Subjects (including but not limited to: History, Geography, and Science) as they remain the base for further knowledge and deeper exploration. Computer technology and research skills are taught to enhance the students' academic experience and prepare them for future academic and professional applications. Physical Education is a regular component of the curriculum, as well.

The upper elementary expectations of the California state standards for this age and developmental group serve as a minimum standard, with the Montessori curriculum often surpassing these minimum standards and offering students personal challenge toward academic excellence.

Middle School Program: Seventh and Eighth Grade Levels (ages 12 and older).

According to Joan Lipsitz, a leading adolescent psychologist, "Young adolescents undergo more changes during the middle school years than at any other age except for the time between birth and age 3. If the social and emotional needs of children this age are ignored, little happens cognitively." A strong part of the Montessori philosophy is to consider the unique developmental stages of adolescent students in order to support their changing needs.

In addition to continuing the acquisition of core academic information, Montessori Middle school students extend their grasp and stock of abstract interpretive concepts. Our students use a form of Socratic discussion to interpret core data in terms of the social and environmental issues of the world, past and present.

Classes are taught in cycles of 6-week durations. Each cycle emphasizes a specific part of the curriculum and provides students with the opportunity for in-depth study, exploration, and research. During the last week of each cycle, the students participate in an "immersion experience" in which they spend time away from the classroom participating in applicable hands-on learning in the real world (known as field lab trips).

Class structure is based on collaborative learning and research based projects. The Middle School program structure guides each student to develop his/her own abilities to become highly effective young adults. Technology based multi-media is also integrated throughout this period of learning.

"Normalization"

Dr. Montessori used the terms "normal" and "normalization" to describe a unique process she observed in child development. When children are allowed freedom in an environment suited to their needs, they blossom. After a period of intense concentration, working with materials that fully engage their interest, children appear to be refreshed and contented. Through continued concentrated work at their own academic level, children grow in inner discipline and peace. This progression of self-development and harmony is what Dr. Montessori referred to as the "normalization process". Dr. Montessori cited "normalization" as "the single most important result of our work" ("The Absorbent Mind", by Dr. Maria Montessori, 1949).

At the beginning of each school year, you will hear teachers and other staff members refer to the period of normalization. This is a time when students are acclimating to their new environment, their new teachers, and their new classmates. This is also the time when students will be learning how to use the bulk of new classroom materials and working to establish expectations and order within their classroom peer group. Once students have had a chance to "normalize", parents will begin to observe a very wonderful routine and structure to the daily and weekly classroom activity.

Materials in the Montessori Classroom:

CMP has developed a process for carefully reviewing and selecting all of the instructional materials, textbooks, and library books used in our school. Our review process is very important to ensure that your children have the best possible instructional tools and to assure consistency throughout our program.

For the younger students in the Montessori classroom, learning materials are arranged invitingly on low, open shelves. The materials are beautiful and inviting, increasing the child's interest in using them. During specified periods of uninterrupted work time, children may choose from all the lessons that have been demonstrated to them, particularly those that attract their interest, and work with them as long as they hold the child's interest (independence and freedom of choice). When students have finished with each lesson (job), they return it to the shelf from which it came (care of environment and self-responsibility).

Each lesson in a Montessori classroom isolates one specific quality. In this way, the concept that the child is to discover is presented more clearly. Moreover, the materials are self-correcting. When a piece does not fit, or is left over, the child easily perceives the error, thus eliminating the need for adult correction. The child is able to solve problems independently; building self-confidence and analytical thinking skills, and earning the satisfaction that comes from accomplishment.

For the older students, instructional materials are appropriate to their level of learning and a higher level of independent work takes place. New concepts are introduced using the Montessori materials, and as understanding takes place, the students move to abstract work with the concept. Many of the same Montessori materials introduced in the lower grades are utilized once again in the upper elementary classroom, but are used for more complex curriculum.

Movies shown in class

Occasionally educational movies will be shown at school. These movies have been reviewed by staff and are shown specifically for their educational content in conjunction with the relative curriculum. "G" rated non-educational movies may be shown on occasion. Appropriate PG movies will require prior parental permission. No movies rated PG-13, R, X, or NC-17 by the motion picture industry are shown at any grade level.

Instructional Use of the Internet: School Use of Internet Services is a Privilege

CMP recognizes the necessity for students of today to be computer literate, and computers are provided in each classroom for student use. Before students may use the Internet at school, they must have parental permission on file and meet with their teachers to review school policies regarding Internet use, along with the consequences for not following these policies. Students wishing to use the Internet will sign an agreement to abide by these policies. The policy statement details what is expected of anyone using the Internet, email services, designing a webpage, researching, or using education programs online. Content filters are installed by CMP to eliminate exposure to undesirable Internet sites.

School Use of Internet Guidelines include:

- Use of the Internet is a privilege.
- Those under 18 may not reveal their last names, addresses, or phone numbers.
- The user acknowledges that email has no guarantee of privacy and all content on school computers is subject to periodic review.
- Messages related to or supporting illegal activities will be reported to authorities, and messages are subject to the same restrictions as any material prepared for distribution.
- Transmission or reception of copyrighted material; material protected by trade secret; product advertisement or political lobbying; material that is obscene, libelous, slanderous, gang-related, incites students and/or staff to create a clear and present danger by promoting unlawful acts on school grounds, violation of school regulations, or disrupts orderly operation of school are prohibited and will result in termination of the user's Internet privileges. Additionally, the user will be subject to all applicable consequences.
- Acts of vandalism, such as knowingly downloading or uploading computer viruses, will result in termination of the user's Internet privileges and will subject the user to all applicable consequences, including but not limited to financial restitution from the family to repair/replace damaged equipment and resources.

The Technology Use Agreement signed by students, parents, and teachers may be viewed on the CMP website.

Special Education and Services

CMP desires to meet the needs of all of our students. California law requires public schools, including charter schools, to provide a free and appropriate public education to all students, including those with exceptional needs. Although most students' needs are met through the traditional Montessori curriculum, occasionally supplemental services are needed. CMP may arrange for outside agencies or a neighboring school district to provide these services if they are not available at the CMP campus. If your child has special needs, please talk with her/his teacher and with the Principal so we can address these needs.

Section 504 Accommodations

California law requires schools to provide a free, appropriate education to qualified disabled persons. When a student qualifies under Section 504, an accommodation plan is designed to meet the student's special needs.

CMP is committed to providing students with a highly professional environment where they are safe to grow and learn, and which nurtures a love of learning. CMP honors each student's learning style and developmental level.

The Faculty of California Montessori Project

The Montessori teacher observes and participates in all classroom activities. The goal of each staff member is to assure that each student's needs are being met from the perspectives of safety, physical and emotional well-being, and academic excellence.

The style of teaching in a Montessori "prepared environment" is quite different from that of the teacher in a traditional classroom, who imparts the same lesson to all the children at the same time. In a Montessori "prepared environment," the teacher's role is more of a guide or facilitator of the many different concurrent learning projects. To do this effectively requires special training to observe each child for signs of readiness, and to select the appropriate material to introduce at the appropriate time.

CMP is committed to the preservation and implementation of Montessori methodology, principles and curriculum within its educational program. One of the goals of the California Montessori Project is for all teachers to have both their Montessori and California credentials. When a teacher has only one of these credentials, she/he will enroll in an approved program to obtain the other. In some larger classrooms, a Teaching Assistant will also be available. CMP teaching assistants have knowledge and/or background in early childhood education as well as previous successful experience working with children and have met the criteria set forth in the federal No Child Left Behind law. These staff positions are supervised by the lead teacher.

CMP promotes and teaches the concepts and skills of positive discipline through verbal reasoning and conflict resolution. CMP believes that by role modeling these aspects of growth within a consistent program, students will develop a sense of responsibility and a desire to work and learn in a cooperative manner with others.

As a learning environment, CMP is committed to providing faculty with a highly professional environment within which they are safe to grow, to continue their own professional development, and to nurture their own personal love of learning. In keeping with this goal, CMP has designed a comprehensive teacher support program and regularly offers a variety of staff development opportunities throughout the school year.

As a Montessori teacher, preparation of self is equally important to preparation of the environment. All CMP teachers are provided with morning and afternoon preparation time to allow them an opportunity to feel well organized prior to greeting their first student of the day. Staff are encouraged to take a few minutes each morning for self-reflection to allow for proper mental preparation before class begins. Please be respectful of these preparation times by keeping interruptions before school to a minimum. Teachers are always willing to schedule in advance a convenient time to meet with parents and answer questions or address concerns. Parents are also encouraged to send in written notes or communicate through the classroom email to which the teacher should respond within one or two days.

Montessori Assessments, Testing, Progress Reports and Report Cards

Assessment in the Montessori classroom is the hourly, daily, and weekly appraisal of student progress at CMP. Early in their educational career at CMP, students learn self-assessment from the prepared environment of self-correcting materials and the examples/modeling provided by the adult teaching staff. Self-assessment, self-reflection and self-correction are important lifelong skills that students acquire from the earliest years in a Montessori environment. Additionally, students also learn from their earliest years that their learning is a partnership with their teachers and parents.

Adults and students establish and agree upon daily, weekly, and monthly goals. Teachers maintain written records of the work presented and mastered, and each child has an individualized "work plan" which is used to guide them through the lessons and academic work required for that week.

At any given time, a Montessori teacher knows precisely where a child is: academically, developmentally, socially and emotionally. With frequent one-on-one interaction and individual, personalized assessment of student work by the classroom teacher, issues and concerns are quickly addressed as they emerge.

CMP teachers conduct Montessori Assessments (Albanesi) for placement in Montessori Math, Geometry, and Language materials. Pretests and posttests are conducted to assess student mastery of concepts. Reading assessments are conducted for appropriate reading levels, and additional assessment tools are utilized to determine areas where a student may need reinforcement, as well as, to demonstrate a student's academic advancement in any subject area.

In such a highly structured program, parents are alerted quickly to any concerns throughout the year. Additionally, CMP provides formal documentation of the student's progress four times each year: Progress reports are presented to the parents/guardians at Parent/Teacher Conferences twice each year (in the Fall and the Spring), and end-of-semester reports are sent home in January and June). While parents are most familiar with the traditional "A-B-C-D" report card, CMP's grade report has been carefully designed to give parents and students a progressive account of the student's academic mastery within the Montessori curriculum for a specific grade level which incorporates the California State Curriculum Standards.

As a result, the traditional "A-B-C-D" grades have been replaced with assessments that give a view of the child as a whole. Mastery of concepts at a student's ability level is balanced with information pertaining to the state grade level standards. A student's goal is to attain proficiency/mastery in all subject areas, yet we recognize that some students may require more time to reach this goal. Effort put forth in their lessons at their ability level is also a necessary element in determining a child's progress. Conversely, a student whose abilities are above grade level will be challenged academically, and the assessments will reflect that advanced work.

Through this multi-level approach, performance and progress, not grades, become the focus of assessment and the heart of any discussion about the child.

Annual State Testing

As a public school, CMP administers annual state testing assessments for all students in grades 2 through 8. The process and results of such state measurements can be used as *one* of *many* indicators of an individual child's progress from year to year. Seen in this light, state assessments can be useful - to help parents, teachers and the student develop individual academic work plans.

Each spring CMP participates in the state's official assessment system, the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program. The STAR testing consists of two components:

1. The California Aptitude Test, 6th Edition: CAT 6, a nationally-normed, multiple-choice test; and
2. The California Standards Test aligned to the new, rigorous, and challenging California curriculum standards in language arts, science, history/social science, and mathematics.

These assessments address the subject areas of vocabulary, reading, comprehension, and language, spelling (grades 2 and 8); science (grades 4 and 8); and writing (grades 4 and 7).

Testing materials are processed by state specified agencies and individual results are usually available in late summer/early fall. All assessment reports are sent to the school and will be sent home to parents soon after receipt.

School Records and Student Privacy

You child's school record is available for your access by making a request to the Principal. You may request an amendment of your student's education records if you believe that there is an inaccuracy. These records are confidential and unavailable to other outside unauthorized parties.

Special Occasions and Events

Birthdays

Children love to share their birthdays. Each teacher has developed her/his own practice for acknowledging birthdays. This information will be provided during parent orientation for your child's class. If you would like to share a special treat in honor of your child's birthday, please consult with your child's teacher ahead of time with respect to her/his celebration time**.** This event will be incorporated into the cultural history unit during group time experience.

If your child has allergies and cannot partake in these snacks, please be sure to discuss this with the teacher and provide alternative snacks that your child can eat at these special occasions and feel included in the celebration.

School Holidays and Vacation Periods

Please see the CMP school calendar for a schedule of days off and intersession services throughout the year.

CMP Religious Holiday Policy

In response to parent request and legalities, CMP provides the following concerning religious holidays and public education; a subject at times marked by confusion and conflict.

CMP recommends that teachers, school officials, parents and students, approach this discussion as an opportunity to work cooperatively for the sake of good education rather than at cross-purposes.

CMP's religious holiday policy was developed based on the shared commitment of respect for individual religious beliefs expressed in the constitutional guarantee of religious liberty. This means that CMP neither promotes nor inhibits religious belief or non-belief. Because Montessori classrooms are rich in cultural lessons and materials, CMP takes into account the role of religion in history and cultures.

CMP is aware of the legal issues surrounding the guidelines about the teaching of religion in public schools. Within the current legal framework, CMP, their boards, administrators, teachers, parents and students must make practical decisions regarding religious holidays. We have done this by showing sensitivity to the needs of every student and a willingness to steer a course between avoidance of all references to religion on one hand and the promotion of religion on the other.

The Supreme Court has ruled that public schools may not sponsor religious practices (Engel v. Vitale, 1962; Abington v. Schempp, 1063) but may teach about religion.
While having avoided making a definitive ruling on religious holidays in public schools, the Supreme Court let stand a lower federal court decision starting that recognition of holidays may be constitutional if the purpose is to provide secular instruction about religious traditions rather than to promote the particular religion involved (Florey v. Sioux Falls School District, 8th Cir., 1980).

CMP policy allows for the study of religious holidays in our schools as opportunities for teaching about religions of various cultures and societies. Such study is to serve the academic goals of educating students about history and cultures, as well as learning about the traditions of particular religions within a pluralistic society.

Teaching about religious holidays will be conducted when natural opportunities arise during the course of the year as students study different cultures and communities. Teachers are alerted to the distinction between teaching about religious holidays, which is permissible, and celebrating religious holidays, which is not. Recognition of and information about holidays may focus on how and when they are celebrated, their origins, histories and generally agreed-upon meanings. Our approach needs to be sensitive, neither promoting nor inhibiting religion. We desire to foster understanding and mutual respect for differences in belief and culture.

Teachers are to avoid asking students to explain their beliefs and customs. An offer to do so should be treated with courtesy and accepted or rejected depending upon the educational relevancy. Teachers will not use the study of religious holidays as an opportunity to proselytize or to inject personal religious beliefs into class discussions. Teachers can avoid this by teaching attribution, i.e., by reporting that "some Buddhists believe, some Christians believe. . . ."

Teachers may use religious symbols as examples of cultural and religious heritage. Religious symbols may be displayed only on a temporary basis as part of the academic program. Students may choose to create artwork with religious symbols, but teachers should not encourage or discourage such creations.

Sacred music may be sung or played as part of the academic study of music. School concerts that present a variety of selections may include religious music. Concerts should avoid programs dominated by religious music, especially when these coincide with a particular religious holiday.

Seasonal activities such as parent holiday programs are to serve an educational purpose for all of the students. Children should not be made to feel excluded or identified with a religion not their own.

Holiday concerts in December may appropriately include music related to Christmas and Hanukkah, and religious music should not dominate. Dramatic productions should emphasize the cultural aspects of the holidays. Nativity pageants or plays portraying the Hanukkah miracle are not appropriate in the public school setting.

Students may be excused from classroom discussions or activities related to particular holidays. CMP acknowledges that some holidays considered by many people to be secular (for example, Halloween and Valentine's Day) are viewed by others to have religious overtones. Excusal requests will be granted for holidays that are marked by classroom parties and similar non-academic activities.

In addition, some parents and students may choose to make requests for excusals from discussions of certain holidays even when treated from an academic perspective. Such requests may be granted as needed on a limited, specific discussion, in order to strike a balance between the student's religious freedom and the school's interest in providing a well-rounded education.

Students may be allowed a reasonable number of excused absences, without penalties, to observe religious events within their traditions. Students may be asked to complete makeup assignments or examinations in conjunction with such absences.

Family/School Community Partnership, Parent Participation & Parent Education

The California Montessori Project strives to partner with parents and guardians to best serve the needs of the children. This is accomplished through parent education and orientation, frequent and positive communication between staff and families, and regular parent involvement.

Parent Education and Orientation

CMP provides a variety of parent education opportunities and events throughout the year. Within the first few weeks of school, an orientation Back-to-School Night will take place. This is a very important evening to provide parents with information about the curriculum, classroom schedule, field trips, and other pertinent policies.

Within the first month or two of school, a parent information evening will be scheduled which focuses on preparing parents for their volunteer duties both in the classrooms and on field trips. This is especially important for new families, but does vary in content each year to encourage all parents to attend.

Later in the year, teachers may schedule curriculum informational evenings, as well as Watch Me Work evenings when children demonstrate to their parents the special materials they use each day in class.

Information about these events will be provided in the campus calendars and weekly newsletters. At times, CMP will also arrange for educational professionals to provide workshops or presentations for families and teachers. Parent participation hours will be credited for attendance at any of these Montessori classes and functions.

Parent Participation is a CMP Priority

CMP recognizes that parents are the most important educators in their children's lives. Studies show that children whose parents are involved in their education perform better in school than children whose parents are not involved. This is why we encourage parents to be active with their children's school at all grade levels.

CMP encourages and welcomes parents to work with their school Campus Advisory Council/Board and standing committees. These committees have been formed to support the school, staff and students. Information on how to sign up for these committees is available in the campus newsletters and from the office staff.

CMP also encourages parents to be active with their children's learning at home. *Read to them regularly. Ask them about their day and listen. Enjoy dinners as a family.* Parent involvement can easily be woven into even today's busy schedules. Parents and guardians are encouraged to schedule visits to their child/ren's school.

All enrolled CMP families are expected to contribute 40 hours of non-paid service to the school (70 hours for two or more enrolled children) for the purpose of participating in the ongoing development of the school and its academic goals.
Parents are responsible for keeping track of their hours of service and reporting to the school office.

A variety of service opportunities exist and include: Working in the classroom with our Montessori staff, providing office help, chaperoning field trips, and serving on campus committees to enhance the learning community. Work can be done at the campus or at home. Parent education nights, fundraising, school events, and parent workdays provide enough

additional opportunities to assure a comfortable level of participation. CMP is grateful for the contribution volunteers make on behalf of the school and in the lives of all of our students.

It is our goal to work with each family to best meet the needs of the families and school. Projects done from home or at the campus during non-school hours can be arranged. One half of the commitment may be bought out at $20.00 per hour (based on the average hourly earnings from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). Parents requiring a waiver for a full hourly commitment

must present their case to the campus principal in writing at the time it is determined the participation commitment cannot be met.

Parents can offer Special Units of Study: an Important Part of our Montessori Curriculum.

If parents, relatives, or family friends have special talents or training, please let us know so that we may schedule some time for you to participate in the appropriate curriculum unit. Students often enjoy the opportunity to share their special adults with their classmates.

Student Safety: Livescan Fingerprinting and TB tests

Student safety is a priority at CMP. In an effort to provide the highest level of safety for our students, all CMP staff and contractors and volunteers who interact with students are required to successfully complete an electronic fingerprinting process known as a "livescan" report through the Department of Justice. Under California Health and Safety Code 121545, volunteers who are in contact with students are required to have a tuberculosis clearance. These two requirements must be on file with the school office prior to commencing work at any CMP campus.

The livescan report by the Department of Justice (DOJ) looks for the same things all our employees are checked for – convictions for drug crimes, sexual crimes, violent felonies and DUI crimes. Livescan reports can be initiated at your local police station or directly at the Department of Justice and usually take 3 to 5 days to generate a report to the school.

Tuberculosis is an airborne disease, which means it can be passed from one person to another simply by sharing the same air. TB tests can be obtained through your medical doctor or through the county department of health. For those with a positive TB test, a chest x-ray is required prior to clearance.

Because the Department of Justice has not yet developed a process for cross reporting, all parents must obtain a livescan clearance specifically for CMP regardless of whether the parent has previously received clearance through an employer or another organization.

A clear livescan report and TB test result must be on file with the school office PRIOR TO the first time a parent volunteers in any role where he/she is in direct contact with students. This includes participation in school-sponsored field trips.

Working from home or serving on parent committees does not require these clearance checks.

Parent Participation on Field Trips:

Parent/guardian participation plays a key role in the success of field trips, and parents are asked to drive students and assist with chaperoning. All adults attending field trips must fulfill screenings to ensure the safety of the children. **Please note that any adult without these clearances may not attend the field trip, including other adult family members.** Adult chaperones must have on file in the campus office:

- Cleared Live Scan finger print report from the Department of Justice for the California Montessori Project (to be completed only once)

- Cleared TB test result (required every four years)

In addition, for an adult to receive parent participation hours by driving other students, the following is also required:

- DMV 10 Year Driver's Official History Report: Form H6 (due at the beginning of each school year)
- Proof of Insurance: $100,000/$300,000 liability per person/occurrence (due at the beginning of each school year)
- Copy of valid Driver's License (due only once)
- Copy of Vehicle Registration (due at the beginning of each school year, and upon renewal)

The California Montessori Project Welcomes Parents to observe our Classrooms and Daily Activities.

Any time you would like to observe the daily activity at our school, please feel free to schedule a time with your child's teacher. While it is standard procedure to advocate an *"Open Door Policy"*, we also want to be sure to limit the amount of potential interruptions and distractions each day. Contacting your child's teacher to schedule an observation in advance will help alleviate scheduling conflicts.

Parents are also reminded that an appointment for a classroom observation is just that: a time for you to observe your child's class and make any notes regarding questions that may arise. Observers should be courteous and quiet guests during the entire observation period. Observers must refrain from student interaction and must save discussions with the teacher until she/he is relieved of her/his student supervision duties. Additionally, parents should remain aware of the length of the observation period and keep it to a reasonable length of time, usually 60 minutes, or less. Parents who prefer to interact with the class should plan to complete the requirements for parent participation in the classroom and should submit a request to the teacher to provide such service.

While observing, parents must adhere to policies regarding student confidentiality. Parents shall not talk about any student to another student, parent or other third party. Breach of this policy is a breach of confidentiality and will jeopardize the parent's opportunities for further classroom observation or participation.

Policies for observations have been developed to assure a positive experience for all parties. Observers who chose to ignore these policies will be asked to end their observation immediately.

Child Custody

CMP follows child custody decisions made by the courts. In order to do this, the family must provide copies of all relative legal documents to the school. It is not CMP's responsibility to obtain these documents. School staff cannot modify or make exception to any judge's ruling regarding the custody of a child. If a child custody arrangement has changed, a parent or guardian must provide copies of the applicable legal documents to the school. If any dispute arises at school regarding visitation or child custody, CMP staff will call the local authorities to resolve the situation. CMP requests that separating and divorced parents place their child's well being as their number one consideration. When divorce occurs, families are still co-parenting and the child/ren's welfare must come first. CMP wishes to support families as much as possible in achieving positive implementation of this goal.

Thank You for not Smoking

CMP is a tobacco free environment. Smoking and use of any tobacco products are prohibited at all times at school campuses and surrounding areas, including outdoor areas. Smoking is also prohibited during school functions and field trips off site, regardless if smoking is permitted in that particular environment. Thank you for your cooperation.

Parent Communications at CMP

Parent-Teacher Conferences

CMP identifies parents and teachers as two integral parts of the student's academic success team. As such, CMP encourages parents and teachers to stay in close communication regarding each student's progress toward subject mastery. In addition to informal discussions and communications throughout the year, CMP offers two formal opportunities each school year for parents and teachers to meet individually to discuss the child's progress. These parent-teacher conference periods are scheduled at specific intermittent periods: In the Fall, after completion of the normalization period, to provide an overview of the goals and objectives of the child's academic plan for the year, and toward the end of the school year to provide a final update on the child's progress toward subject mastery before moving on to the next level.

Weekly Newsletters and Updates from Each Campus

Each week, campuses will publish newsletter updates to include information regarding special projects and events, holiday activities, field trips, fundraising, and various other informational items of interest to our CMP families. Campus newsletters are posted on the web site and will be sent home with the students if families desire paper copies. Look for these updates and read them to keep informed of important school information.

Class Newsletters and Updates

Each teacher composes her/his own lessons and newsletter information. This information will be published at regular intervals and is another way for you to stay informed about your child's education. As you read through the information, please let your child's teacher know if there are any areas you are knowledgeable in and wish to share. We also encourage you to share this newsletter with your child.

Parents are Vital to Every Child's Success: Developing a Plan of Support for your Child:

CMP recognizes that parents are vital to every child's academic success. The following points are offered to assist you in developing a plan of support for your child:

- Schedule an appointment to visit your child's school; you are a welcomed visitor!
- Make sure that your child gets enough sleep, eats a healthy breakfast every day, brings a healthy lunch and snacks for school, wears appropriate clothing for the weather, and arrives at school on time and ready to learn.

- Read to your child every day, or encourage your child to read independently.
- Insist that your child treat him/herself, other students, teachers and staff with respect and obey home and school rules.
- Call your child's teacher or the school office, write a note, or email the teacher at the classroom email address when you have a question, a compliment, or a concern.
- Volunteer your time. Many volunteer tasks can be done at home.
- Join the standing committees developed to support your child's school.
- Attend Campus Advisory Council/Board meetings at your child's school.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences to discuss your child's progress and any challenges he/she may be encountering.
- Carefully review your child's report cards, school newsletters, and other information from school.
- Participate in school activities. Encourage your child to do the same. These activities and events have been planned to provide families with the opportunity to participate in the school community and enhance relationships between students, parents, and school staff.

School Evaluations

Each year CMP will conduct surveys of parents and staff regarding their perception of the school/teachers and program. We invite you to provide us with feed back to help us continually improve. The results of these surveys will be shared with Principals, the CMP Governing Board, and staff, and will be used to effectively implement positive program change. Many of our best ideas have come from parents and staff!!

Guidelines for Arrivals & Departures

Due to traffic and facility configurations, each CMP campus has its own drop off and pick up procedures. These procedures will be available at your school campus prior to the start of school and during "Back to School" Orientation events.

In general, parents should plan to drop off their children at the designated location, and provide a warm, affectionate goodbye. Extending the drop-off procedure on a regular basis can create separation problems and can take away the child's opportunity to establish healthy patterns of self-confidence and responsibility. As noted in the Academic Overview portion of this handbook, students are encouraged to develop self-reliance and positive esteem. These characteristics are best developed and practiced through effective care of self and care of environment. Once students have worked through the initial "First Day of School" experience, students are very capable of getting themselves settled in and ready for the academic day without the help of mom or dad.

Likewise, parents should plan to pick up their students at the end of the day in the same designated location to alleviate traffic and campus congestion.

If you have a need to come on to the campus during the school day, please be sure to park in the designated parent/guest parking areas. Parking in staff areas, even if only for "a second" can create parking problems for the entire staff.

As explained in the Academic Overview, students are provided with uninterrupted units of time to support their ability to concentrate on the lessons of the day. **For the benefit of the students, CMP seeks to limit classroom interruptions and asks that parents refrain from entering the classroom after the start of the school day and before school has been released.** Forgotten homework, lunches, etc., may be delivered to the school office where they will be given to the teacher or delivered to the student at the appropriate time. For safety reasons, all parents/guests coming onto the campus during the school day must check in through the school office and obtain a visitor pass. At the completion of your visit, you will need to check back out at the school office and return the visitor pass. In the event of a school emergency, this is the most effective way to keep track of who is on the campus grounds at any given time.

For a detailed discussion regarding tardies and early pick-ups, please refer to the section on Attendance Policies. For purposes of this section, students arriving at school late or departing early must be cleared through the school office. When late to school, parents should plan to:

- Accompany their child/ren into the school office
- Sign them in using the designated office logbook
- Assist each child in obtaining a tardy slip from an office staff member
- To keep disruption to a minimum, you do not need to enter the classroom with your child as long as she/he has the tardy slip to give to the teacher.

If your child is frequently tardy to school, please consider scheduling a family meeting to discuss a plan of action that will correct this problem. Children arriving late are often self-conscious and feel uncomfortable entering the room. It also affects their ability to settle into the business of learning when they are in this emotional state. The class often takes care of a variety of business during this time and/or begins quiet journaling activities at this time. Students arriving late create an unwelcome disruption to the rest of the class. Please support your child to be on time. This is a life skill which will be of great benefit as the child gets older.

In the Montessori classroom, a great amount of learning happens at all times of the day, including the afternoon hours. Afternoon lessons are filled with all the cultural activities of history, science, art, etc., and incorporate practice of core academic subject material as well. CMP stresses the importance of the afternoon curriculum. Parents need to understand this importance and respect the need for the student to attend school for the entire day. When an early pickup from school is necessary and unavoidable, parents should plan to:

- Contact the school office or the teacher in advance of the early pick up so that staff can assist the child and the class to prepare for the interruption and transition.
- At the time of pickup, parent/guardian must check in at the school office and sign the student out in the designated office log book.
- Obtain an early release slip from an office staff member to indicate to the teacher that you have signed the student out.
- Report to your child's class, enter as quietly as possible, and give the teacher the early release slip at the same time that you help your student clean up and gather their belongings for departure. (At some campuses, the office staff member may facilitate getting the student from class for you.)

- Leave as quietly as possible.

Safety of our students is a priority at all times. If there is an occasion where someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up your child from school, please contact the office by telephone or with a written note. The transportation authorization portion of the student's emergency card must have this person's name listed, or the parent must provide a written, signed request before the student will be allowed to depart with this person.

Due to custodial agreements, and for every child's safety, it is vital that we have the appropriate, complete, and most up-to-date information regarding who is authorized to transport your child/ren.

If your child will be attending Club Montessori, parents should plan to park and escort their child into the designated Club Montessori classroom and sign their child in for the day. Likewise, parents should plan to park and walk in at Club Montessori pick up time in order to check in with the Club Montessori staff and sign out their child.

Separation: Kindergarten/First Grade students and parents

Sometimes it is difficult for both parent and young child to adjust during the first few days of school. If you anticipate tears or other expressions, may we offer a few suggestions based on our experiences?

- ***Please bring your child by the campus for a visit prior to the first day of school.*** Providing a visual reference to the place where the child will be spending his/her day can sometimes make a world of difference! Campuses will arrange a campus-wide visitation day one to two days prior to the first day of school.
- Make sure that your child knows when school is over and who is picking her/him up. This re-enforces the abstract concept that you WILL be returning to pick him/her up at the end of the day.
- Express your own happiness about school. Give the child something to focus on during your absence (i.e. "I'm really looking forward to hearing the names of your new friends ... can you try to remember some of them for me?" "I bet the teacher is going to read a story today. Can you listen really carefully so you can tell me all about it?")
- Encourage a hug and kiss, etc. and **promptly** leave. ***Try to avoid power struggles by sticking around!*** The child will usually engage in an activity within five minutes of your departure.
- ***You are invited to call us to assure yourself that she/he is doing all right.***

School Hours and Extended Day Programs

CMP adheres to and usually exceeds the state's required number of instructional minutes. Due to school traffic requirements, some campuses may have variations in the actual school drop off and pick up times, and these will be communicated to families by each campus. Generally the school day is from 8:30 to 3:00, with upper elementary and middle school classes extended by an additional 15 to 30 minutes. Kindergarten is a modified full-day program.

CMP offers an optional fee-based extended care and intersession program ***(Club Montessori)*** to provide year-round care options for our CMP families. Informational brochures are available from the campus office and on CMP's website.

Calendar

CMP has a slightly modified school calendar which adheres to the number of instructional days required by the state. School starts in August and ends in June, with extended winter and spring breaks. The school calendar is established and approved on an annual basis by the CMP Governing Board of Directors and is subject to change.

Montessori Uniform Attire / Dress Code

Montessori education is concerned with the inner development of the child's mental, emotional, physical and spiritual being. As such, we seek to limit undue focus of attention on external appearances. After much discussion about the relative values of a dress code and individual freedom, CMP has adopted the following middle path Dress Code. We believe that your child will be happiest when dressed in casual, comfortable clothing.

In general, students are expected to wear appropriate clothing which is clean, fits properly, doesn't prevent them from participating in any school activity, and is not distracting. All clothing should be neat and in good condition, free of commercialism or distracting media messages. We define commercialism as characters, symbols, or slogans referring to products, companies, movies, video games, television shows, etc. Distracting media messages include, but are not limited to, movie and television characters, derogatory comments or slogans, gruesome or violent pictures and/or obscenities. This type of attire may be a source of distraction, cause some children to focus on externals, and may cause distress for those who are unable to afford rapidly passing fads. We believe that by limiting commercialized and distracting media on our campuses, children will feel more comfortable and able to focus on exploring their learning environment.

Individual campus policies vary slightly based upon Campus Advisory Council recommendations. Please check with your local CMP campus office for specific dress guidelines.

Discipline and Behavioral Guidelines

The Montessori philosophy and educational model emphasizes respect for all individuals which is a key component in building a strong school community. Adults serve as models in the way they address the children. Lessons of "Grace and Courtesy" begin at the earliest grades, and students have the opportunity to learn peaceful ways to work through their conflicts. When issues and misbehaviors do occur, a positive discipline approach, based on respectful, relevant, and related consequences, is utilized.

The CMP staff is trained in positive discipline methods such as Love & Logic and Jane Nelsen's "Positive Discipline." The classroom curriculum includes Peace Education, with an emphasis on personal peace and tolerance of others' differences. Conflict resolution tools, such as the Peace Table, as well as Peer Mediation techniques, assist the children in learning these important life skills.

A team from each CMP campus, comprised of administration, teachers, and parents, has been trained to implement a Positive Discipline Approach through the B.E.S.T. Program (Building Effective Schools Together). Each campus has created a slogan emphasizing Safety, Respect, and Responsibility. Students are presented with lessons, which include scenarios for all areas of the school, discussing the reasons for safety, respect, and responsibility in those locations. Positive reinforcement is stressed, and students are "caught" following the rules and guidelines.

When a student is observed not following a rule, the child is asked if they know the rule and is then redirected to show the appropriate behavior. Only when a child repeatedly misbehaves are they referred to the school office and parents contacted. Data is collected to determine if further training is necessary for all of the students when issues occur often and by numerous students. The emphasis is on training and positive reinforcement for the desired behavior, as opposed to a punitive approach.

Physical violence will result in an immediate office referral. Parents will receive a written notification (Incident Report), and a phone call made if it is deemed necessary. Students disrupting their classroom may be removed to do work in another room or in the office.

Generally, once a child has completed a designated amount of work, they are invited to return to their own classroom.

Communicating with parents is an important element in building a team of staff and families. Phone calls and written notes or reports sent home are ways the school can keep parents informed about how their child is doing in the school environment. When necessary, parent/teacher conferences and meetings with the administrator will be scheduled to assist teachers and parents in finding the most beneficial ways to support a student's success at school.

When behavior that is unacceptable occurs, the following steps will be taken:

1. For minor incidents and with younger students, staff will provide opportunities for re-direction and a chance to "try again."
2. Repeated offenses will initiate a progressive system of meetings starting with a conference between the parents/guardians and teachers.
3. Should the behavior(s) continue, a Student Success Team (SST) meeting will be scheduled with a campus administrator, the teacher(s), and the parents/guardians. Other school staff and family members may also be included if deemed appropriate. In the SST process, the team identifies concerns, works together on solutions, and creates an action plan. It is customary for follow-up meetings to take place to discuss progress or the need for additional interventions.
4. Serious incidents will lead to an immediate referral to a campus administrator. Parents/guardians will be notified by phone or in writing, and a suspension warning may be issued.

5. It may be deemed appropriate for the student to be placed in an alternate setting on campus for the school day (another classroom or in the school office).
6. Serious or repeated infractions will result in one or more days of suspension from school (refer to the following Suspension Policy).

Student Discipline Procedures, Suspension and Expulsion Policy

CMP staff will enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently. Discipline may include the counseling of students, conferencing with parents/guardians, detention during or after school hours, removal to an alternative learning environment, such as another classroom, suspension, and expulsion.

A team from each CMP campus, comprised of administration, teachers, and parents, has been trained to implement a Positive Discipline Approach through the B.E.S.T. Program (Building Effective Schools Together). Each campus has created a slogan emphasizing Safety, Respect, and Responsibility. Students are presented with lessons, which include scenarios for all areas of the school, discussing the reasons for safety, respect, and responsibility in those locations. Positive reinforcement is stressed, and students are "caught" following the rules and guidelines.

When a student is observed not following a rule, the child is asked if they know the rule and is then redirected to show the appropriate behavior. Only when a child repeatedly misbehaves are they referred to the school office and parents contacted. Data is collected to determine if further training is necessary for all of the students when issues occur often and by numerous students. The emphasis is on training and positive reinforcement for the desired behavior, as opposed to a punitive approach.

Physical violence will result in an immediate office referral. Parents will receive a written notification (Incident Report), and a phone call made if it is deemed necessary. Students disrupting their classroom may be removed to do work in another room or in the office. Generally, once a child has completed a designated amount of work, they are invited to return to their own classroom.

Communicating with parents is an important element in building a team of staff and families. Phone calls and written notes or reports sent home are ways the school can keep parents informed about how their child is doing in the school environment. When necessary, parent/teacher conferences and meetings with the administrator will be scheduled to assist teachers and parents in finding the most beneficial ways to support a student's success at school.

When behavior that is unacceptable occurs, the following steps will be taken:

- For minor incidents and with younger students, staff will provide opportunities for re-direction and a chance to "try again."
- Repeated offenses will initiate a progressive system of RtI (Response to Intervention) meetings starting with a conference between the parents/guardians and teachers.
- Should the behavior(s) continue, a Student Success Team (SST) meeting will be scheduled with a campus administrator, the teacher(s), and the parents/guardians. Other school staff and family members may also be included if deemed appropriate. In the SST process, the team identifies concerns, works together on solutions, and creates an action

plan. It is customary for follow-up meetings to take place to discuss progress or the need for additional interventions.

Serious incidents will lead to an immediate referral to a campus administrator. Parents/guardians will be notified by phone or in writing, and a suspension warning may be issued.

It may be deemed appropriate for the student to be placed in an alternate setting on campus for the school day (another classroom or in the school office).
Serious or repeated infractions will result in one or more days of suspension from school (refer to the Suspension Policy).

Corporal punishment will never be used as a disciplinary measure. Corporal punishment does not include the use of reasonable force to protect students, staff, or school property.

Parents/guardians will be notified in writing or by phone following any disciplinary action taken in response to a student's misconduct. A follow-up parent conference with the teacher or administrator may be required. Parents may also request a meeting to discuss the incident and disciplinary action.

CMP maintains a comprehensive suspension and expulsion policy in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well being of all students. A student may be suspended or expelled for misconduct as specified below while on the school grounds, coming and going to school, or at a school-related activity. These policies are developed to conform to applicable federal law regarding students with exceptional needs.

An administrator may suspend students who fail to comply with CMP discipline policies at any time. Students who habitually fail to comply with these policies or who present an immediate threat to the health and/or safety of others may be suspended pending a recommended for expulsion to the CMP Governing Board by the Executive Director.

Prior to expulsion, students will be provided progressive discipline unless the student's conduct presents an immediate threat to the health or safety of others. CMP will notify the district of any expulsions and will include suspension and expulsion data in its annual performance report to the sponsoring school district.

Weapons and Dangerous Substances:
Due to concerns for safety, weapons of any kind may not be brought to school; this includes the parking lots and surrounding areas of the school. We are required by law to take immediate and strong action should a child bring weapons to school. This consists of, but is not limited to, all knives, including pocket knives , daggers and martial art weapons, air guns, replica guns, ammunition, incendiary devices, and fireworks. Parents are asked to discuss this with their children in an age-appropriate manner to help them understand the seriousness of these items. Parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for their child bringing such items to school and will be called immediately to pick up their child should he/she be discovered to have a dangerous object. School officials have the right to search student backpacks, lockers, or other containers if the possession of a weapon or dangerous substance is suspected.

Sexual Harassment:
The CMP Governing Board prohibits sexual harassment of or by any student, CMP staff, or volunteer. Teachers should discuss the policy with their students in age appropriate ways and should assure them that they need not endure any form of sexual harassment.

The Board expects students and staff to immediately report incidents of sexual harassment to the Principal or designee. Prohibited sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Theft or Destruction of School, Student or Staff Property:
School staff, in consultation with a school administrator, may search a student's belongings if there is reason to believe the child has taken another's belongings. School administration may refer theft of property to law enforcement.
Students and parents/guardians may be held accountable for replacing or repairing any property damaged or lost due to student negligence.

Threat of Harm:
All threats will be taken seriously. The student will be removed and parents/guardians called immediately in the event a student threatens another student, staff, or volunteer. Depending on the age of the student, and the severity of the threat, law enforcement may be notified.

Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

Governing Law: The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled—California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(J)

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well being of all students and staff at California Montessori Project ("Charter School"). When the policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This policy shall serve as Charter School's policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion, and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements.

Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This Policy and its Procedures will clearly describe discipline expectations, and it will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook which is sent to each student at the beginning of the school year. The Charter School administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures.

Discipline includes but is not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, detention during and after school hours, use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the Policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEIA") or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. Charter School will follow all applicable federal and state laws when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students.

Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is 1) related to school activity, 2) school attendance occurring at Charter School or at any other school, or 3) a Charter School sponsored event. A Pupil may be suspended or expelled for acts that are enumerated below and related to school activity or attendance that occur at any time, including, but not limited to, and of the following:
a) while on school grounds;
b) while going to or coming from school;
c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; or
d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

Enumerated Offenses

Students may be suspended or expelled for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

- Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- Willfully used force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
- Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Principal or designee's concurrence.
- Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
- Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco,

snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.

- Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11014.5.
- Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
- Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal code 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code 243.4.
- Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, “hazing” means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, “hazing” does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars ($1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
- Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- Caused, attempted to cause, threaten to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.

- Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261 of the Education Code, directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel.

Alternatives to suspension or expulsion will first be attempted with students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from assigned school activities.

Suspension Procedure

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

1. Conference:

Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Principal or the Principal's designee with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Principal. The conference may be omitted if the Principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.
At the conference, the pupil shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense.

This conference shall be held within two school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization.

No penalties may be imposed on a pupil for failure of the pupil's parent or guardian to attend a conference with school officials. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil shall not be contingent upon attendance by the pupil's parent or guardian at the conference.

2. Notice to Parents/Guardians

At the time of suspension, the Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may return to school. If school officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

3. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Placement/Expulsion

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension.

Upon a recommendation of Placement/Expulsion by the Principal or Principal's designee, the pupil and the pupil's guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the Principal or designee upon either of the following determinations: 1) the pupil's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the pupil poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the pupil's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

Authority to Expel

A student may be expelled either by the Governing Board following a hearing before it or by the Governing Board upon the recommendation of an Administrative Panel to be assigned by the Governing Board as needed. The Administrative Panel should consist of at least three members who are certificated and neither a teacher of the pupil or a Board member of the Governing Board. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed an expellable offense.

Expulsion Procedures

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Principal or designee determines that the Pupil has committed an expellable offense.

In the event an administrative panel hears the case, it will make a recommendation to the Governing Board for a final decision whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session unless the pupil makes a written request for a public hearing three (3) days prior to the hearing.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the pupil. The notice shall include:

- The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
- A statement of specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
- A copy of Charter School's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
- Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the school to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
- The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
- The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
- The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
- The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offences

The Charter School may, upon finding a good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations which shall be examined only by the Governing Board, administrative panel, or the hearing officer. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the pupil.

The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to (a) receive five days notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.

The Charter School must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness' use prior to and during breaks in testimony.

At the discretion of the person or panel conducting the hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.

The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.

The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.

Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the person presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The person conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.

If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, the Charter School must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to the Charter School. The person presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.

The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the courtroom during that testimony.

Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, if the hearing is to be conducted in the public at the request of the pupil being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are not alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped

depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing by means of closed-circuit television.

Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstances can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

Record of Hearing

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.

Presentation of Evidence

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed an expellable offense.
Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay and sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Governing Board, Panel or designee determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

If, due to a written request by the accused pupil, the hearing is held at a public meeting, and the charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public.

The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of written findings of fact and a written recommendation to the Governing Board who will make a final determination regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the Governing Board shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing. The decision of the Governing Board is final.

If the expulsion hearing panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the pupil shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

Written Notice to Expel

The Principal or designee following a decision of the Governing Board to expel shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Governing Board's adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall also include the following:

1. Notice of the specific offense committed by the student
2. Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with the Charter School.

The Principal or designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the student's district of residence. This notice shall include the following:

1. The student's name
2. The specific expellable offense committed by the student

Disciplinary Records

The Charter School shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the Charter School. Such records shall be made available to the District upon request.

No Right to Appeal

The pupil shall have no right of appeal from expulsion from the Charter School as the Governing Board decision to expel shall be final.

Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education

Pupils who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the County or their school district of residence.

Rehabilitation Plans

Students who are expelled from the Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Governing Board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to the Charter School for readmission.

Readmission

The decision to readmit a pupil or to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school, school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the Governing Board following a meeting with the Principal and the pupil and guardian or representative to determine whether the pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The Principal shall make a recommendation to the Governing Board following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon the Charter School's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

Special Procedures for the Consideration of Suspension and Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

1. Notification of SELPA

The Charter School shall immediately notify the SELPA and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the SELPA for the discipline of any student with a disability or student who the Charter School or SELPA would be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability who is suspended for more than ten (10) school days during a school year.

2. Services During Suspension

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP;

and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment or functional analysis, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alterative educational setting.

3. Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

Within ten (10) school days of a recommendation for expulsion or any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:

If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or

If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team shall:
Conduct a functional behavioral assessment or a functional analysis assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the Charter School had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;

If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and

Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the Charter School agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student’s disability and that the conduct in question was not a result of the failure to implement the IEP, then the Charter School may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

Due Process Appeals

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or the Charter School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings.

When an appeal relating to the placement of the student or the manifestation determination has been requested by either the parent or the Charter school, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the forty-five (45) day time period provided for in an interim alternative educational setting, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the Charter School agree otherwise.

Special Circumstances

Charter School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.

The Principal or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student:
a) Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 USC 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
b) Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
c) Has inflicted serious bodily injury, as defined by 20 USC 1415(k)(7)(D), upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.
Interim Alternative Educational Setting

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP team.

Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEIA and who has violated the School's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if the Charter School had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

The Charter School shall be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if one of the following conditions exists:

a) The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing, or orally if the parent/guardian does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement, to Charter School supervisory or administrative personnel, or to one of the child's teachers, that the student is in need of special education or related services.

b) The parent has requested an evaluation of the child.

c) The child's teacher, or other Charter School personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the director of special education or to other Charter School supervisory personnel.

If the Charter School knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three (3) circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the protections available to IDEIA-eligible children with disabilities, including the right to stay-put.

If the Charter School had no basis for knowledge of the student's disability, it shall proceed with the proposed discipline. The Charter School shall conduct an expedited evaluation if requested by the parents; however the student shall remain in the education placement determined by the Charter School pending the results of the evaluation.

The Charter School shall not be deemed to have knowledge of that the student had a disability if the parent has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined to not be eligible.

Communications and Dispute Resolution

Do you have a Compliment or a Concern?

CMP has confidence in the competency and professionalism of its staff. However, if the school your child attends is not measuring up to your expectations, we would like to know about it. CMP encourages open and respectful communication from individuals and groups within the community regarding compliments, suggestions, questions, and complaints about any part of the school program or any employee of CMP. CMP utilizes this information to effect improvement and positive change in our program whenever possible.

At CMP we use the communication style of first talking about what is working, and then discussing what needs improvement. We find that this style of communication is easier heard and received. Additionally, we model this communication style for the children because we believe it helps people achieve positive outcomes. We invite you to join us in this style of communication.

To express a compliment about school personnel:
If you would like to share a compliment, feel free to call the Principal, send a note, and/or speak directly to the person you are complimenting.

To express a concern the following dispute resolution process was adopted by the Governing Board of CMP:

Dispute Resolution Process

Misunderstandings and problems arise from time to time in any situation. Differences of opinion will exist. CMP intends for the school environment to be a safe and supportive environment for students, teachers, staff, and parents. We are committed to creating an honest and open atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion, or question will receive a timely and respectful response. It is requested that all parties conduct themselves in a congenial manner and communicate with each other with mutual respect at all times.

Any grievance should be brought to the attention of the respective party as soon as possible with the intention to resolve the issue. If it cannot be resolved at this level, then an appointment should be made with the Principal to attempt further resolution.

If a parent disagrees with the established rules on conduct, policies, procedures, or practice, they can express this concern directly to the Principal. No parent will be penalized, formally or

informally, for voicing a grievance or complaint with CMP in a reasonable, business-like manner, or for using this dispute resolution process.

The Executive Director is the official representative between parents and the Governing Board. S/he or any Principal/designee is accessible and ready to hear suggestions, concerns, and complaints. CMP cannot act on any problem unless it is aware of it, so we request that grievances be brought to the appropriate party as soon as possible.

While not every problem may be resolved to the complete satisfaction of all parties, effort will be made on the behalf of CMP, and its staff, to bring resolution to any problem. This will only be possible through both parties' willingness to listen, attempt toward understanding, and exploration of all aspects of the issue at hand. Through this process, parents, teachers, and administration will be able to develop confidence in each other. This confidence is important to the smooth, effective operation of CMP and will directly benefit the students. CMP will strive to provide such an atmosphere at all times. Parents are encouraged to offer positive and constructive criticism, and to take the following steps if they believe they have dissatisfaction, or believe that an injustice has occurred, or that a decision affecting them or their child is unjust or inequitable:

1. When a problem first arises, the grievant should discuss the matter with the respective party as soon as possible.

2. If they are unable to resolve the issue at this level, the grievant should then contact the Principal to make an appointment to discuss the issue as soon as possible.

3. If the problem cannot be resolved informally through discussion or meeting, the grievance shall be reduced to writing by the grievant and submitted to the Principal. The grievant should specify the problem to the fullest extent possible and any remedies sought.

4. Following any necessary investigation, the Principal shall prepare a written response to the grievant no later than ten (10) working days from the date of receipt of the grievance, unless for good cause, additional time is required for the response.

5. If the matter is still unresolved at this level, the grievant may request a meeting with the Executive Director. The request for this meeting will be written and will include any and all documentation related to the grievance along with any solutions that have been proposed by the grievant, the Principal, and any other related parties. The request for the meeting is to be delivered to the Executive Director who, unless sick or out of town, will meet with the grievant within (10) working days of receiving the written request.

6. After the meeting, the Executive Director will conduct an investigation of the matter prior to making any decisions or recommendations. The Executive Director will provide the grievant with a response and outcome within a reasonable amount of time, not to exceed 30 days from the date of the meeting.

7. If the matter cannot be resolved at the Executive Director level, the grievant may request to have the matter properly placed upon the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

8. The Governing Board and the Executive Director will set a date and time for the hearing of any evidence to be presented concerning the grievance. At the hearing, the grievant and a representative of CMP shall have the opportunity to present evidence, both oral and documentary. Within three (3) working days from the date of the hearing, the Governing Board and Executive Director shall make a decision on the grievance in writing. This decision will serve as the final decision of CMP.

California Montessori Project Attendance Policy

Absence, Tardiness/Late Arrivals, and Early Departures

At CMP, attendance is a priority and is crucial to your child's academic success. CMP is a school of choice. Families who actively choose to enroll their children in the California Montessori Project charter school have opted for an educational program, with all of its rich researched-based Montessori materials, lesson presentations and experiential learning. This cannot be duplicated outside the classroom environment, which makes your child's daily attendance even more critical for success.

Absence from school hurts not only the student but also the class. The success of the Montessori environment relies partly upon the strength of the learning community that is developed. When the student is not in school, (s)he is missing out on critical classroom experiences, and the student's classmates are missing out on her/his contributions to the classroom community.

As illustrated in the Academic Overview portion of this handbook, ***all portions of the school day are equally important to the student's growth and mastery of learning***. When students are late to school, they create classroom interruptions which in turn result in an unsettling experience and loss of learning for the student and her/his classmates. Early departures can also adversely impact the student's success and ability to be a contributing member of the learning community.

Finally, California is a compulsory education state. State law requires parents/guardians of children ages 6 to 18 to send their children to school. Parents who fail to meet this obligation may cause their student to be classified as truant. The school is required to report truancies to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) established by the County Office of Education in the student's geographical district of residence. In extreme cases of truancy, the county SARB may request intervention and prosecution through the District Attorney's office, as well as possible involvement of Child Protective Services.

CMP acknowledges the need for family time and for times of rest and rejuvenation. The administrative team has taken this into account in planning the school calendar and has included well-considered break times throughout the year. ***Please refer to the school calendar as a planning guide so that your child is able to be in school each day and receive the maximum benefits of regular participation in his/her Montessori classroom.***

If a family circumstance arises which impacts your child's ability to be at school, please let your child's teacher or principal know so we can work on a plan to support you and your child during this time.

Whether the absence is excused or unexcused, the state only provides daily funding to the school if a student is actually at school. With that said, below is a summary of CMP policies regarding absences, tardies, and early departures from school:

Reporting Absences:

All absences and late arrivals must be called in by a parent/guardian prior to the start of the instructional day. When the student returns to school, (s)he should bring a written note for re-entry to class. The note should include the following:

- Notification date
- Student's full name
- Teacher's name and grade,
- Date(s) of absence
- Reason for absence
- Name, relationship and signature of the person notifying the school.

When arriving late or departing early, the parent/guardian must sign in through the school office and obtain a tardy slip to admit the child to class or an early release slip to indicate to the teacher that you have already signed the child out for the day. Once the child has been signed in, the child may proceed to class. To limit classroom disruption, once a child has been signed out, an office staff member will send for your student to meet you at the office.

Please note that CMP maintains a closed campus. Students *must* be signed in and out by a parent or guardian or by a responsible adult who has been pre-designated by the student's parent/guardian. CMP cannot allow children the liberty to leave campus during the instructional day without properly designated adult accompaniment.

Absences Allowed by Education Code Law (Ed. Code § 46010, 48205)

Under California law, excused absences are only designated for:

- Student illness: A child is too ill to attend school if he or she has a contagious condition, a temperature of over 100, symptoms of vomiting or diarrhea, or written orders from a doctor to stay at home. If the child is ill 3 days or more, the school will require a note from a physician documenting the child's illness and the necessity of having the child stay home from school. Illness of *other* family members does not result in an excused absence for the student.
- Health/medical quarantine as may be designated by the school, county health department or medical professional.
- Medical appointments or services lasting all day.
- Failure to provide proof of immunization for school enrollment.
- Attending the funeral of an immediate family member to include the student's parent or legal guardian, sibling, grandparent, or any relative living in the household of the student. In such circumstances, one day is allowed; or three days are allowed for travel outside of a 300 mile radius of the child's home residence.
- Observance of a religious holiday or ceremony; or participation in certain kinds of religious exercises for a limited number of days per month when documented by a signed and pre-approved request for absence under this provision. Request shall be submitted in writing to

the school principal for pre-approval. Principal shall have discretionary authority to consider the maximum allowable days of excused absences under this provision to include consideration for the student's total absences and student's academic performance. Attendance at religious retreats shall not exceed four hours per semester.

- Excused tardies are only designated for medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours.

All other absences or late arrivals are classified as unexcused, even if the parent notifies the school.

Whenever possible, parents are encouraged to schedule medical/dental appointments and family business during intersession periods, school holidays, and other non-school times. In the event an absence from school cannot be avoided, the best course of action is to stay in close communication with your child's teachers, and provide an opportunity for the child to make up any missed assignments.

Verification of Illness

The statewide average absence rate for typical childhood illness is 5 days per school year. **Anytime a child has a doctor's appointment and/or documentation that requires the child to stay home from school, documentation must be provided to the school office when the student returns to school. These absences will be recorded as "verified" and will be taken into account when reviewing the child's total attendance record.**

Students who are ill in excess of school guidelines may be required to bring verification of illness from a medical professional on their return to school for successive absences. If the child is under the regular care of a physician for a serious or chronic condition, or is directed to stay home by a medical professional, verification is to be provided to the school office at the time of the absence. Absences for excessive illnesses that are not verified with official documentation will be marked unexcused and may subject the student and/or parents to truancy review.

Chronic Illness

Personal illness which reoccurs on a frequent basis will require a doctor's certification.

If your child has a diagnosed chronic illness, you must provide a physician's authorization in order for these recurrent absences to be excused. Such authorization requires the treating physician to verify the diagnosis and list symptoms that would require the child to stay home from school but not necessitate an office visit. With this authorization, the parent may send a note when the child returns to school listing one or more of the symptoms identified by the physician's report. These absences will be considered verified. Please contact a campus administrator or attendance clerk for additional assistance.

Missed Assignments and Tests

A student who is absent from class or scheduled instructional activities for allowable reasons may complete missed assignments or tests that can be reasonably provided and will not have his/her grade reduced or lose academic credit if the assignments or tests are satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time. In some cases, the teacher shall determine a reasonable equivalency in the tests and assignments provided, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the student missed during the absence.

Excessive Absence/Truancy Notification

While CMP maintains high expectations for student attendance, we also recognize that students may miss a few days/hours during the school year due to illness or family emergencies. For this reason, CMP has established guidelines for satisfactory student attendance. In the event that students fall short of these guidelines, written attendance letters will be sent to the student's parent/guardian.

These letters are to reinforce the parent/guardian's awareness of potential attendance problems and represent the first steps in the attendance review process. Subsequent portions of this process may include mandatory parent/teacher/principal conferences, development of an attendance action plan, and attendance contracts. If these remedies remain unsuccessful, the parent/guardian may be scheduled to meet with CMP's Executive Director and/or appear before the school's Attendance Review Committee, consisting of the Executive Director (or designee), a CMP principal, and a credentialed teacher. A law enforcement representative may be included at the discretion of the Executive Director.

Attendance guidelines have been established as follows.

Unexcused Absences:

- If a student incurs 3 unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will receive a letter documenting the child's attendance. An appointment with the child's teacher will be requested to identify the cause of such absences and to discuss how the school can work with the family to support the child's success in school, including regular attendance.
- Upon incurring the 5th unexcused absence, the parent/guardian will receive a second letter documenting the child's attendance and will request an appointment with the child's administrator to discuss the child's continued absence and develop an attendance improvement plan for the student.
- Upon incurring the 7th unexcused absence, the parent/guardian will receive a third letter documenting the child's attendance. Upon recommendation of the principal, CMP's Executive Director will become involved in the review of student attendance, which may include a meeting with the student's parents/guardians.

Total Absences (excused for illness or unexcused):

- Once a student incurs 10 total absences, an initial letter will be sent to parents/guardians alerting them to their child's attendance record. The letter will request that parents/guardians contact their child's teacher to discuss the reason for these absences and to develop a plan for attendance improvement.
- After incurring 15 total absences, a second letter will be sent to parents/guardians requiring a meeting with an administrator. A plan will be established to improve the student's attendance, and any subsequent absences for illness will require a doctor's verification.

The principal can, at any time, request consultation and intervention by the Executive Director for habitual absence or truancy issues.

The Executive Director has jurisdiction to refer subsequent attendance issues to CMP's Student Attendance Review Team (SART) as described under "Students Classified as Truant".

Excessive Late Arrivals or Early Departures

- As indicated throughout this section, attendance is an issue CMP takes very seriously. Students who are regularly arriving late to school or leaving early are also at risk of poor academic performance. For students who are habitually missing a portion of the instructional day, notification letters will be sent as outlined above, following the thresholds outlined below: Students incurring 6 tardies will receive a letter requesting a meeting with the child's teacher.
- Students incurring 9 tardies will receive a letter requesting a meeting with the child's administrator.
- Students incurring the 12th tardy will generate the need for a review of parents' attempts to implement the attendance improvement plan as outlined by parents, teacher and principal. Upon recommendation of the principal, CMP's Executive Director will become involved in the review of student attendance, which may include a meeting with the student's parents/guardians.
- Subsequent attendance issues may be referred to CMP's Student Attendance Review Team.

Families are also reminded that the Montessori curriculum embraces a wide variety of integral subject matter and teachers spend a significant amount of time to ensure that *all portions* of the school day are equally important to the student's growth and mastery of learning. When a student leaves early, the student is missing out on integral learning experiences which adversely impact the student's success and her/his ability to be a contributing member of the learning community.

Accordingly, if a student develops patterns of early departure, parents will be scheduled to meet with the teacher, principal, CMP Executive Director and/or attendance improvement team to develop an attendance improvement plan.

Again, our goal is to have your child in school for each full day of instruction.

Students Classified as Truant

Section 48200 of the Education Code of the State of California, states that it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to see that their children attend school regularly and on-time. Section 48200 is the law, a part of the contract between home and school, and a component of CMP's promotion policy. Parents/Guardians violating 48200 may be subject to prosecution by the District Attorney.

Section 48200 provides: "Each person between the ages of 6 and 18 years … is subject to compulsory full-time education. Each person subject to compulsory full-time education … shall attend the public full-time day school or continuation school or classes and for the full time designated as the length of the school day by the governing board of the school district in which the residency of either the parent or legal guardian is located and each parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the pupil shall send the pupil to the public full-time day school or continuation school or classes and for the full time designated as the length of the school day by the governing board of the school district in which the residence of either the parent or legal guardian is located. Unless otherwise provided for in this code, a pupil shall not be enrolled for less than the minimum school day established by law."

Students who are habitually absent may be given a formal warning and referred to the Student Attendance Review Team, as described below.

Student Attendance Review Team (CMP Governing Board approved 2-7-11)

CMP has implemented a Student Attendance Review Team (SART) process to address attendance and tardy issues. This team is designed to meet with parents/guardians of students who have exceeded the allowable amount of unexcused absences. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the student's attendance record and develop a plan for the student's regular participation in school. The team shall include an administrator and a teacher from a different CMP campus than the student attends. All SART teams shall be chaired by the Executive Director or his/her designee.

Procedures for Excessive Absences

STEP 1: Formal Written Notice

When a student's percentage of attendance falls below 90% at any point after the first month of school, the parent/guardian will receive a Formal Written Notice alerting them to their student's attendance record and follow-up requirements.

STEP 2: Formal Written Notice – SART Meeting
(Parent/Guardian and student attendance required)

When a student's attendance percentage falls below 85%, the Student and parents/guardians will be sent a formal notice to attend a mandatory Student Attendance Review Team meeting. The Executive Director will make the final determination of the appropriateness of recommending the Student to the SART Meeting.

Parents/Guardians and the student will be required to attend the SART meeting during which time the SART will consider whether it is in the best interest for the student to remain enrolled in California Montessori Project. This meeting shall be held as soon as possible. The parents / guardians may request one postponement, for good cause, not to exceed five (5) school days of the SART meeting.

At the SART meeting, the parents/guardians and student shall be informed of the reason for the conference and presented with the evidence of the student's violations of this policy. If the parents/guardians do not attend the SART meeting, the SART will review the relevant information and make a determination in their absence.

The parents/guardians shall be given the opportunity to present information and/or witnesses to the SART orally and/or in writing during the meeting. The SART shall consider any and all information presented by the parents/guardians and student when determining whether to recommend that the student be placed on an attendance contract and subject to disenrollment upon further violation of this policy.

Additional factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, the following:

- student's progress in the curriculum
- disruption to other students
- teacher observation/feedback
- student's grades at the time of the evaluation
- standardized testing data

The SART's decision shall be provided in writing to the parents/guardians within three (3) school days following the meeting.

The SART may:

- Place the student on probation and require that an attendance contract be signed by both the parents/guardians and the student acknowledging that any further unexcused absences or tardies shall be cause for another hearing in front of the SART which may result in disenrollment from CMP.
- Place the student on attendance probation to be evaluated again at a later time if the student's truancy patterns continue
- Use other alternatives to improve attendance
- Disenroll the student from CMP
- Refer parents/guardians and student to the District Attorney.

Appeal of Disenrollment

If a student is disenrolled from CMP by the SART, the parents/guardians and student may appeal the SART decision to the CMP Governing Board.

The Executive Director or designee shall schedule the appeal to be heard within thirty (30) school days. The Executive Director or designee shall send out written notice of the date, time and location of the meeting to the parents/guardians.

The appeal shall proceed as follows:

- The Governing Board shall review the attendance records and any documents submitted by the parents/guardians.
- The Governing Board shall also review all records considered by the SART.
- The parents/guardians and student may address the Governing Board regarding the matter.
- The Principal or SART representative may address the Governing Board regarding the student's attendance.
- The final decision with regard to continued enrollment at CMP shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the appeal hearing. The parents/guardians shall be informed in writing of the Governing Board's decision.

The decision of the Governing Board is final.

Referral to the District Attorney

If a student's attendance does not improve after the SART meeting, or if the parents/guardians fail to attend a required SART meeting, the parents/guardians and the student may be referred by CMP to the District Attorney's office for prosecution through the court system. Students 12 years of age and older may be referred to the juvenile court for adjudication.

Options for Students Unable to Attend School

Students who are unable to attend school for an extended period of time due to serious injury or illness may be eligible to receive individualized academic assignments during the period of absence when approved in advance by both principal and Executive Director. Please note that attendance credit is not issued and the sole focus of such assignments is to support the student to stay current on his/her academic studies. The principal may request verification of students' condition by a physician. Students with mental health conditions must present verification from a physician *and* a treatment plan from their therapist. In such cases of medically related extended absence, the principal and the Executive Director will meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to determine the appropriateness of long-term individualized assignments (5 days or more of foreseeable absence).

Children who are absent due to shorter term illness should rest and recuperate so that they may return to school as soon as they are able. When reasonable, parents are encouraged to work with teachers to support the student's completion of missed work within a practical period of time.

Independent Study is not an option for replacing a student's attendance and participation at school. CMP has determined that a packet of measurable work does not adequately replicate the Montessori classroom experience. Instead, the administration and teaching staff wish to emphasize to our students and parents the importance of being at school every day.
While families are asked to arrange for vacations and non-medical absences during school intersessions, holidays, and other non-school periods, if you know your child *must* be absent, please contact the teacher or principal in advance for assistance in obtaining makeup schoolwork for your child.

If your child is regularly unable to attend school or participate in scheduled classroom activities for reasons that are not health related, a conference should be scheduled between parent and principal to determine if CMP is the most appropriate academic placement for your student.

Attendance Questions or Assistance

We appreciate the opportunity to meet with you at any time to discuss any concerns or questions you may have about your child's attendance.

It is the goal of CMP to team with families to support each child's academic success. Daily attendance is a key component to this success and sends a message to your child that their education is a priority and is valued.

Student Health and Safety Policies

Immunization Records and Health Exams

As a public school, the California Montessori Project is **required by law to have a copy of immunization card and a signed Physician's Form on file for each enrolled child**.

During enrollment and prior to the first day of school, a copy of the child's immunization record is to be presented to the CMP office staff. This record will be kept in the child's cumulative academic file.

The California Department of Health and Department of Social Services requires all students to receive polio, measles, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, rubella and tuberculosis immunizations. Kindergarteners are also required to have hepatitis B and chicken pox (varicella). Seventh graders need hepatitis B prior to starting school, and seventh and eighth graders are required to have a pertussis vaccination beginning in the 2011-12 school-year.

If there is a religious objection regarding immunizations, California law requires an affidavit to be signed by the parent and be filed in the child's school cumulative file.

A physician's statement of health (Report of Health Examination for School Entry) is also required prior to the child's initial enrollment in a public school. This physician's report form is included in the annual enrollment packet and only needs to be filed once.

Families who need assistance with the cost of these enrollment requirements may inquire with their county health department for dates of immunization and exam clinics in their area. Information on county health programs is included in your enrollment folder.

The following is a summary of health guidelines that the school is required to abide by:

1. It is the policy of The California Montessori Project to allow students to attend school when they have minor allergies.

2. Any contagious illnesses and/or a fever *of 100°F or higher* require the student to be absent from school. The child must remain fever-free for twenty-four hours prior to returning to school. C*ontagious illnesses require that the student has been on an approved course of medication for at least twenty-four hours prior to returning to school along with a doctor's note indicating that the student is no longer contagious and is ready to return to school.* Please be conscious of these policies and take the other children and staff into consideration in this regard.

3. ***Please call the school if your child will be absent***. If it appears your child may have a lengthy illness, please notify the school office as soon as possible, and obtain a doctor's note to be kept with the attendance records.

4. **Please contact the office as soon as possible if your child is diagnosed with any communicable diseases.** These include: chicken pox, strep infections, influenza, head lice, fifth's disease, and/or conjunctivitis. Our school will notify the other parents to be aware of symptoms related to these diseases. This is the most effective method of preventing/limiting a potential outbreak of illness.

Please note that CMP has a "no nit" policy for head lice. Your child will be sent home in the event lice or nits (eggs) are found. Instructions will be given to you for treatment of the lice as well as procedures to follow to clear the home of any infestation. Your child may return to school only if there are no lice (alive or dead) or nits/eggs present. Before being admitted back to class, please bring your child into the school office for a re-check.

5. In the best interest of your child and of all the other CMP students and staff, if health issues or symptoms of communicable illness or infection are observed in your child at school, you will be notified immediately and will be asked to pick up your child. In this instance, the student may not return to school until a medical practitioner has treated such symptoms or until the student has been symptom free for at least twenty-four hours. If it appears your child may have a lengthy illness, please notify the school administration as soon as possible.

6. When any prescribed medication needs to be given to a child, the school must have written permission and instructions from the parent and the child's doctor before school staff can administer the medication. A Medical Alert form and a Permission to Administer Medication form may be obtained from the school office.

7. Over-the-Counter medication may not be administered by school staff unless a written note from the child's doctor gives specific dosages and directions. For safety reason, children may NOT carry over-the-counter medications with them, such as throat lozenges, cough drops, cortisone cream, and the like.

8. Notify your child's teacher if your child/ren is/are taking medication only at home. This will enable the teacher to act accordingly in case of allergic reactions or other side affects at school. Should either of these events occur at school, parents will be notified immediately.

This is just a brief summary of student health policies. CMP has developed a comprehensive policy to address student health issues. If desired, please ask for detailed information at the school office.

Medications Administered at School

Effective July 1st, 2008, CMP campuses will no longer be allowed to administer over-the-counter medications to students, and students may not bring medicines to school. If your child needs to take over-the-counter (OTC) medications, a parent must come to the school to administer it to their child, or a doctor's note regarding the dosage and use of the OTC medication must be sent with the medication in its original container.

Any child taking prescription medications must have an approval form signed by their physician and the parent/guardian before bringing the medication to school. The prescription medication must be in the original container with the child's name and directions clearly labeled.

All medications must be collected from the office by the end of the school year unless the student is enrolled in Club Montessori for the summer intersession. Medication approval forms are available in the office.

California Safety Laws

For safety reasons, if your child is under the age of 6 or under the weight of sixty pounds, she/he is required by California State law to be transported in an ***approved child safety restraint seat***. Please take the time to ensure the safety of each child in your car, as well as your own, by buckling up.

Various agencies offer car seat safety clinics to check for the proper installation of child safety seats in your vehicle. Often, approved safety seats are available at these events, at a reduced cost or even free of charge. In contrast, the Highway Patrol fines individuals for each unbelted individual in the car. If you have financial difficulty complying with these requirements, contact your local Highway Patrol office. There are funds available to assist families in meeting this requirement.

CMP policy provides that no CMP employee shall knowingly allow a child to be transported without the proper safety requirements. In these cases, the child shall remain at the school until the parent or adult transporting the child has returned with the proper safety seat in place (this includes field trips). An adult who knowingly transports a child without the appropriate safety restraints in place may be subject to charges of child endangerment and may be reported to Child Protective Services.

For those students who may ride their ***bicycles*** to and from school, ***helmets are required***. Please discuss this with your child along with other pertinent safety topics. Be safe, not sorry!!

Nutritional Health

A daily balanced diet is essential to every child's physical, mental, emotional, and physiological needs. If a child comes to school hungry or improperly nourished, the child will have difficulty concentrating on her/his schoolwork. Please make every effort to provide your child with healthy and nutritionally balanced meals for the best possible day!

Breakfast is essential. Be sure that your child begins each morning with a healthy and nutritionally balanced meal to provide the brain energy that he/she will need for the activities of the day. If your child is unable to eat breakfast at home, you are welcome to pack a HEALTHY breakfast for her/him to eat at school prior to the start of class time. A good suggestion might be cereal and fruit in a Tupperware sealed bowl, or fruit juice in a sealed cup and toast, etc. Some of the major food companies are now making "milk and cereal bars" which are relatively low in sugar and surprisingly high in protein. Read labels, be creative, and your child will eat with more interest!

Snacks and ***Lunch*** are the parents' responsibility. Please plan to send a bag or lunch box with your child each day, and make sure to label all containers to be taken home with your child's name. Some campuses may offer optional lunch programs.

When preparing your child's lunch and snacks, please make every effort to send items that the child can eat easily, can open and/or close relatively easily and independently. Lunch must be something that can be eaten without heating.

Please avoid sending junk food and highly processed food items. These food choices are usually loaded with refined sugar or fat and offer little or no nutritional value. During school, students need "brain food". Stick to items that are as close as possible to their natural state: fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, seeds, nuts, dairy products and proteins. Limit juices and juice drinks. Even 100% juice, consumed in excess provides too much sugar for a young child's dietary health and results in an afternoon "low" as the child's blood sugar attempts to balance back out. Instead, opt for a bottle of water or milk that can be kept fresh with a cold pack or in a thermos.

SODA POP, CANDY BARS, ZINGERS, TWINKIES, ETC., WILL BE SENT BACK HOME. We believe that monitoring the intake of these types of highly processed, non-nutritive foods will provide the child with a better ability to concentrate. If you think that these types of foods are appropriate, please save them for the home environment.

Registration and Enrollment for the California Montessori Project

As a public charter school, CMP is a school of choice, and eligibility for enrollment is based on California residency, not on district of residence boundaries.

As a public school, CMP follows state requirements for Kindergarten and First Grade admission***. Kindergarten children must be 5 years old on or before December 2nd of the year they enter school. First grade children must be 6 years old on or before December 2nd of the year they are to be designated as a first grade student.***

In California, Kindergarten is not compulsory (mandatory), though it does help prepare children for elementary school. CMP does not administer kindergarten readiness assessments prior to enrollment. All assessments are conducted by the teacher, at the time the student begins, to establish the creation of the student's individual learning plan. (See Academic Overview) If you have questions about your child/ren's readiness for Kindergarten, please contact the school to which you are interested in enrolling.

CMP seeks a diverse student population from the local area surrounding each school campus. Enrollment is available to those who understand and value CMP's mission and are committed to CMP's instructional and operational philosophy. As a California public school, admission to qualified applicants is determined by lottery at the end of the open enrollment period.

New Enrollment will be carried out using the following guidelines:

1. Parents interested in enrollment will tour a CMP campus and participate in an orientation that details the purpose, goals, and objectives of our school. The orientation will include an explanation of Montessori philosophy and methodology and how parents can best support their child/ren in the learning process. This tour and orientation is to provide families with an opportunity to decide if our school appears to be an appropriate match for their child/ren.
2. After completing the tour and orientation, families who wish to continue with the enrollment process may schedule a classroom observation. Parents and students having the opportunity to observe in a Montessori classroom are better able to determine if this independent, self-disciplined learning style and environment is an appropriate match.
3. Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and commit to being independent, self-motivated learners. Parents who have questions about the suitability of

this program should arrange for their child to visit a classroom for a portion of a day. This can be scheduled through the campus office with an administrator. A discussion with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student with the principal can be scheduled following the visitation if deemed necessary.

4. Families who wish to continue into the final stages of the enrollment process are required to read and complete the enrollment packet prior to enrollment.

CMP is committed to the academic success of its students and readily acknowledges that Montessori education is not necessarily the perfect match for every student. CMP encourages parents to recognize that there are other educational approaches that may be more effective for some students. By attending an informational tour and observing in a classroom, parents and guardians will be better informed to make the best choice for their child/ren.

Re-enrollment for current CMP families is completed in late winter prior to the open-enrollment lottery. Siblings of currently enrolled students will be given priority in the lottery. A sibling application is available at the campus office.

Classroom Placement Policies and Procedures

It is the goal of CMP to place each student in the most appropriate learning environment to fit his/her needs academically, socially, and emotionally. In addition, care is taken to balance classes by grade/age and gender. Information and recommendations from teaching staff is utilized to balance these needs within the classrooms. Although we would like to facilitate parent request for a specific classroom or teacher, the complexity of this process prohibits us from taking these requests.

Student Policy for Promotion/Retention

Montessori instruction accommodates the varying interests and academic development of individual students. Students will progress each year by completing the Montessori and State Standard curriculum necessary to support their success at the next grade level.

When considering promotion (accelerating a student an additional grade level), the child's social and emotional growth is to be taken into consideration. Parents, teachers, and the principal will determine if this is the best course of action for the student by using criteria such as intellectual maturity, academic achievement, including standardized testing, physical, social, psychological, and emotional considerations.

Retention (remaining at the same grade level for a second year) is an action that may be taken to assist a student to be more successful in their learning. Risk for retention should be identified as early in a child's school career as possible. As soon as identified, the teachers and principal should begin interventions to assist the student in areas of concern. Parents should be included in this discussion as early in the school year as possible.

Students are to be identified for retention or promotion on the basis of:

- Academic achievement and standardized testing
- Physical, social, psychological, and emotional considerations
- Special needs
- Information provided by teacher(s), parents, or guardians

The demonstration of individual student learning is to be measured by, but not limited to, the following:

1. Student grades in Reading/Language Arts and Math (more than one grade level above / below)
2. Albanesi (Montessori) assessments in Reading/Language Arts and Math (more than one grade level above / below)
3. State testing scores in Language Arts and Math (assessing below or far below basic in all subject levels / assessing at advanced in all subject areas)
4. Writing Assessment (same as above)
5. The meeting of the intervention goals determined by the Student Study Team (SST)

English Learners

English Learners, determined through the CELDT testing process (California English Learner Development Test), could be considered "at risk" based on the challenges they face in acquiring mastery of subject areas in English. English Learners should be provided with supplemental instruction as a key intervention to ensure that they will eventually attain grade-level proficiency. Decisions regarding the promotion or retention of English Learners require special consideration. Following the supplemental instruction for the English Learner, if it is determined through the SST process that the student would benefit from retention, the above determinations and process will be followed. For more detail, refer to the CMP English Learner Handbook.

Special Education

Students with physical and/or mental disabilities which interfere with the major life activity of learning are provided protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Their educational opportunities will be affected by the development of accommodation plans intended to mitigate the effects of the disability on educational performance.

Students whose physical, mental, or learning disabilities are provided protection under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) have their educational needs supported through Special Education (specially designed instruction) and related services (services which enable them to benefit from their Special Education program).
Modifications of curriculum and the grading rubric are to be utilized for students on an IEP (Individual Education Plan). Accommodations put in place for students who have a 504 Plan or are in Special Education are not used when considering retention of the student.
Retention may be considered for students on a 504 Plan or IEP if the academic, social, and emotional needs of the student would benefit from the repetition of a grade. The IEP or 504 team would make the recommendation for retention.

Appeals Process

When the recommendation for retention or promotion is not agreed upon by the parents/guardians, they have the right to appeal to the CMP Governing Board after first bringing their appeal to the principal and executive director. The principal will provide the executive

director and/or Governing Board documentation regarding the recommended promotion or retention to include, but not limited to, testing and assessment results, report cards, and SST meeting notes.

Field Trip Policies and Procedures

Field trips are an essential component of the Montessori curriculum. Students are given the opportunity to utilize knowledge gained in the classroom and apply it through experiences in the greater community. Field trips are age appropriate and are linked to the curriculum as much as possible. It is not unusual for an elementary or middle school class to attend a field trip approximately once every six weeks.

Field Trip Participation, Costs and Payment Options:

Student behavior may be a factor in deciding if a child is to participate in a field trip. Parents will be contacted in advance to discuss any issues and to determine other options.

Parents who do not wish for their child to attend a particular trip should discuss their reasons with the teacher, as the purpose of the field trip is to expand on the students' academic experience. Any child not participating in a field trip must attend school that day. The teacher will arrange for your child to do their work in another classroom.

All students are to have equal access to the field trips as a part of the curriculum. CMP realizes that the more costly field trips may be a financial burden for some families. Therefore, the Campus Advisory Council has authorized fundraising efforts for each classroom to offset field trip costs and support scholarships.

Because these funds are limited, we ask parents to help out with the field trip costs by doing one of the following:

(1) Pay the full fee at the time it is due.

(2) Divide the total amount into smaller amounts, making several payments until the full amount is paid. The full fee will be paid when due by the school and then reimbursed with the payments.

(3) Participate in classrooms fundraising, or those in the greater community, such as carwashes or working Bingo nights.

Parents may request a scholarship; however, a teacher might need to cancel a field trip if there are not enough funds generated by parental payments and fundraising. Assistance Applications are available in the school office. All requests are kept confidential by school administrative personnel. Parents will be contacted by administration to discuss participation in fundraising efforts.

Permission Forms:

Approximately one month prior to a field trip, parents will receive a permission form which states the destination, fees, and other pertinent information.

Due dates for permission slips are to be strictly enforced, and a child will not be permitted to attend the outing without a signed form. Parent/guardians unable to drive their own child on the field trip are required to leave an appropriate car seat if their child is 6 years of age or younger, and/or 60 pounds or less.

The educational experience of the field trip is always to be emphasized over a commercial one. However, in some instances, bringing spending money will be appropriate and will be stated as such on the permission/ information sheet.

Parent Participation on Field Trips:

Parent/guardian participation plays a key role in the success of field trips. Fundraising is encouraged to help offset the cost of some trips, and parents are asked to drive students and assist with chaperoning. All adults attending field trips must fulfill screenings to ensure the safety of the children.

Please note that any adult without these clearances may not attend the field trip, and they must be on file in the campus office:

- Cleared Live Scan finger print report from the Department of Justice for the California Montessori Project (to be completed only once)
- Cleared TB test result (required every four years)
- Attendance at the Parent Education session: "7 Habits of Highly Effective Volunteers"

In addition, to receive parent participation hours by driving students, the following is also required:

- Proof of Insurance: due at the beginning of each school year or at time of renewal for all drivers, including parents driving their own child. When driving other children a $100,000/$300,000 liability per person/occurrence is required. (Note: many insurance companies will charge a minimal fee for increasing the liability amount for one day). A parent driving only their child must show proof of insurance meeting the California legal liability limits.
- Copy of valid Driver's License: due at the beginning of each school year for all drivers.
- Copy of Vehicle Registration: due at the beginning of each school year for all drivers.
- DMV 10 Year Driver's History Report: due at the beginning of each school year for all drivers, including those who will only be driving their child. Reports indicating past violations will be sent to CMP Central Administration for review and for a decision on parent driver eligibility. (Note: On-line DMV and insurance company reports are not certified and cover only 5 years; therefore these do not meet CMP requirements.)
  Your DMV record is available to you during normal working hours. You may obtain a report by:
    - Visiting your local DMV office (make an Appointment for faster service)
    - Completing a Request for Driver Record Information form INF 1125
    - Showing identification
    - Paying the fee

  If going into a local field office is not convenient for you or you are out of state, you may request your record by mail. Complete the INF 1125 form available on this web site or prepare a written request, including your name, date of birth, social security number, California driver license number, and your signature, along with a check or money order for $5, and mail to:

Department of Motor Vehicles
Office of Information Services
Public Operations Unit G199
P. O. BOX 944247
Sacramento, California 94244-2470

Drivers will be given a Field Trip Packet with student information, directions and other pertinent information for the trip, and a list of all field trip policies and procedures. **We ask that drivers read this packet carefully to avoid any misunderstandings. Note:** Student information is confidential and should only be accessed in the event of an emergency.

Teachers are responsible for oversight of the entire group and for facilitating the excursion. Adults participating in the field trip are asked to assist wherever needed and are expected to chaperone the group of students they have driven, as well as be aware of safety concerns for all students. Drivers must drive directly to and from the field trip destination. Stops for food, gasoline (except in the instance of a long distance trip), and other activities outside of the trip itinerary are not permitted. Personal errands are not permitted at anytime.

CMP policy states that only movies rated "G" may be shown without parental permission. Parents with DVD players in their vehicles are therefore asked to follow this policy when driving on a field trip.

As per the CMP Code of Conduct, parents are asked to avoid discussing students with others. Discipline issues should be brought to the teachers' attention for appropriate follow-through. Other concerns regarding the field trip should be brought to the teacher or campus principal.

Chaperone Responsibilities & Expectations:

These enriching field trips would not be possible without the support of our parent chaperones. It is a responsibility that should be taken very seriously, as chaperones are responsible for the safety of other children.

Being safe on a field trip means:

- Chaperones are expected to have supervision over their designated group at all times. In the event a parent needs to take a break, to use the restroom for example, another cleared chaperone should be asked to watch their group during that time.
- Chaperones are asked to be aware of all CMP students on the trip. The safety of the children is everyone's responsibility.
- On overnight trips, chaperones are expected to have supervision of their group during all waking hours. Chaperones should be available to assist with a student or students in the event of an issue or emergency during the night and be capable of alerting the classroom teacher if necessary.
- No alcohol is to be consumed for the duration of the field trip. If a chaperone is taking prescription or non prescription medication that would alter a person's state of being, the chaperone is required to inform the teacher prior to the trip. In some instances, this may prohibit a parent from chaperoning on the trip.

Being Respectful on a field trip means:

- Follow the lead of the teacher and model appropriate behavior at all times.
- Treat all students with grace and courtesy.
- Confidentiality must be observed at all times.

- Adults are to dress appropriately for the trip: proper foot wear, properly fitting clothes that are neither too tight nor too loose and that cover the body adequately.

Siblings:

As stated previously, field trips are an important part of the educational experience. Field trips are grade level and curriculum specific, and children anxiously await their opportunity to attend these special events. For this reason, we ask that siblings attending CMP not be included in their sister or brother's field trip experience. Although it may be enjoyable to attend an extra field trip, attendance in his/her own class is of utmost importance. Prior approval may be granted by the principal and executive director for extenuating circumstances two weeks or more before the occasion. Siblings not attending CMP may be granted permission to attend based on the appropriateness of the event. Please keep in mind when deciding to participate in a field trip that handling a younger child may be a detriment to proper supervision of the students.

Information Technology / Electronic Resource

Current technology is modifying the way in which information is accessed, communicated, and transferred. These changes may also alter instruction and student learning. California Montessori Project (CMP) offers students access to technologies that may include electronic mail (through Internet access), Internet connections, and equipment, such as computers and multimedia hardware, in the technology work area of the classrooms.

With the access to computers comes the availability of materials that may not be considered appropriate in the classroom. On a global network it is nearly impossible to control all materials available. Ultimately, the school staff, parents, and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that students should follow when using these technology resources. CMP supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to allow their student access to any part of these technologies.

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) addresses concerns about access in schools and libraries to the Internet and other information. For any school or library that receives discounts for Internet access or for internal connections, CIPA imposes certain requirements, but does not require the tracking of Internet use by minors or adults. Although CMP does not receive such funds, we are taking every effort to follow CIPA's guidelines to restrict:

(a) the access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web;
(b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
(c) the unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful

activities by minors online;

(d) the unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and

(e) minors' access to materials inappropriate or harmful to them.

Technology Use - Rules and Responsibilities

The school code of conduct, as well as this document, governs access to and use of media technology. Students will be held accountable for any misuse or abuse of any school materials or resources.

The technologies provided are for students to conduct research, enrich educational experiences, and communicate with others in relation to school work. Access to technological services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Parent/guardian permission is required. Access is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, based upon the acceptable use guidelines outlined in this document, the system administrator and or staff will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final. The administration or staff may deny, revoke, or suspend specific privileges.

Individual users are responsible for their use of the technologies available to them. The use of these tools must be in support of education and research and must be consistent with academic expectations of CMP. Transmission of any material in violation of US or state regulations including copyrighted, threatening, or obscene material is prohibited.

CMP maintains a public Web site. Intranet Web pages may be established and maintained by staff with secondary responsibilities given to students who have the skills necessary. All content will be approved by CMP staff before posting.

The user is expected to abide by the following rules of etiquette:

- Be polite. Do not write or send abusive messages. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.
- Be respectful with regard to others' work; user will not view, alter or otherwise modify someone else's data. This includes documents opened or contained within work folders.
- Altering the operating system, as well as general visual appearances to a technology is prohibited. Such changes may include but are not limited to screensavers, background, sounds, passwords, display setting, network setting, etc.
- Transmission of obscene materials is prohibited. Sending or receiving offensive messages or pictures from <u>any</u> source will result in immediate suspension of privileges with an administrative review.
- Do not reveal personal information about yourself or other students.
- Electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private. Users should only access personal mail when appropriate permission from staff is obtained and no other users need the technology for school use.
- Do not use the network in a way that would disrupt the use of the other network users.
- Malicious attempts of vandalism to harm or destroy data or equipment will not be tolerated.
- Use of personal data or equipment will not be allowed without prior approval. Additionally, proof of current and regular updates on Anti-virus protection, as well as regular disk scans, must is required prior to use once approval is obtained.
- Downloading or uploading of any kind requires prior approval. Such loading may include items from the Internet, Flash Drives, floppy disk, etc.
- Games are strictly prohibited.

Violation of any of the above mentioned rules and responsibilities will result in a loss of access and may result in other disciplinary or legal actions.

Personal Items at School

CMP assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items.

Toys and Sharing

Participating in sharing at group time enables children to feel important and special. It also facilitates verbal expression. Good suggestions for sharing may be seashells, rocks, library or special books, pictures or treasures from a trip. Please consult with your child's teacher regarding sharing policies for a particular class. Read the weekly updates and monthly newsletters to discover sharing suggestions relating to the units of study for the month. We do ask that toys be kept at home, or leave them in the car, as they often create distractions and possible power struggles between other students when they are brought to school.

Extra Changes of Clothes

Students are encourages to bring appropriate changes of clothes to store in their cubbies or lockers for emergency use; *most especially kindergarteners*. Teachers will communicate with parents as the clothes are used and need to be re-stocked. Please remember to label all items with the student's name and send to school in a plastic bag or other disposable/re-usable carrier.

Other personal items at school

Toys, trading cards, electronic games and other personal items unrelated to the student's daily schoolwork should be left at home. These items tend to create disruptions at school and will be held by the teacher.

Trading cards, such as Pokémon and Yugioh are not permitted. They will be confiscated and returned to a parent if brought to school.

Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones and other items of value to school. Cell phones, pagers, iPods, and the like, are to remain off and out-of-sight during school hours and may only be used once the student has left the school grounds. In the event parents require their child to have such items, contact the teacher or Principal to discuss your child's personal circumstances. Once approved, these items are to remain in the student's backpack or locker until the end of the school day. **If the student uses such items during school hours, it will be confiscated and only returned to the parent. Permission may be granted by the teacher or administrator to use a cell phone during school hours for a specific situation only.**