

Blueprint for Our Montessori Program

The Montessori School of Winston Salem

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide a nurturing and secure environment which promotes the development of each child physically, emotionally, socially, as well as academically. We strive for a well-rounded education grounded in Montessori philosophy and teaching methods, which will develop and foster the natural curiosity of each child into a lifelong love of learning and a passion for excellence. We promote the development of a global perspective and a commitment to giving back to the community through service to others.

1. Values of the Educational Program

1.1. The Montessori approach

The Montessori approach to learning in its most authentic understanding is the framework of our educational program. We understand that Maria Montessori's methods and materials are not a closed system; however, we commit to apply the words, wisdom, and practical advice of Maria Montessori and her closest associates as the lens through which we select, design, and evaluate our program and our curriculum.

1.2. The nature of the child and the learning process

1.2.1. We affirm that education begins at birth and continues throughout life.

1.2.2. We believe that intelligence is not rare among human beings.

1.2.3. We believe that wisdom can be cultivated, and consists of the ability to listen to your heart and know how best to put your intelligence to work for you.

1.2.4. We believe that self-esteem, human dignity, and emotional well-being, as well as the ability to communicate and cooperate effectively with others, must be valued as highly as academic and material success.

1.2.5. We approach learning seeking to understand our students' uniqueness and guide them individually and at their own pace, so they fully realize their potential. We do not subscribe to the "Bell Curve" theory or standardized testing for measuring performance.

1.2.6. We celebrate the natural diversity of human beings.

1.2.7. We affirm the ideal of the Renaissance person. Our ultimate goal is to produce individuals who not only have learned how to learn, but also have a love of learning, a wide range of interests, and an openness to new ideas and possibilities.

1.2.8. We affirm that self-esteem is one of the crucial ingredients for the full expression of a person's potential. We strive to nurture self-esteem at every level of learning.

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1.2.9. We believe true success is achieved through the willingness to take risks. Individual success and failure are simply feedback mechanisms by which growth and progress are achieved.

1.2.10. We nurture intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, and physical growth for the development of a whole, healthful being.

- **Intellectual:** The intellect is an important tool in the shaping of our world. Through the development of our thinking abilities we refine our emotional responses, and we clarify our picture of the universe.
- **Emotional:** Our emotions are complex and powerful and it is important that we learn to feel them fully and without fear, identify them correctly (in ourselves and others), respect them, and accept them. It is equally important, however, that we learn to harness their power and not let them control our lives unchecked.
- **Social:** Our ability to interact positively with each other is essential to creating a peaceful world.
- **Physical:** We acknowledge our place in the physical world and seek to discover, understand, and adopt the lifestyle habits most appropriate and beneficial for our bodies and minds.
- **Spiritual:** While we feel it is each person's task to develop his or her own understanding of the nature of the universe and the individual's place in it, we proceed on the premise that our world is a beautiful, positive, loving place, a setting that provides the potential for each person to lead a full, free, joyful, and healthy life.

1.3. Developmental Approach to Education: Our educational approach is centered around the stages of human development. This approach includes keeping abreast of current theories on development, regular student observation, and a constant evaluation of the curriculum to ensure that it is appropriate for the developmental stages of our students. We recognize that the first six years are critical to a person's development. For that reason, the programs in toddler and early childhood are as important as any other level of the school. Investment of resources in the early childhood years will be made accordingly.

1.4. Individualization: We follow the Montessori curriculum, which by design is adaptable to different paces and styles of learning. Each child works within an established curricular framework that includes the school's expectations for basic academic achievement. If a child needs more direction at certain times or is not internally motivated in a given area, we feel it is our responsibility to acknowledge the personal preference but to guide the child toward that necessary work.

1.5. Active learning: We promote active rather than passive ("lecture and drill") learning by:

- encouraging students to pursue studies in areas of their personal interests;
- using hands-on, experiential learning, such as concrete manipulative learning materials, experimental discovery seminar discussions, independent library research, field investigation;

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- creating an environment in which the child's personal success is the motivation for learning.

1.6. The Passage to Abstraction: We consistently work from a very concrete level of experience to the abstract. We begin with "the big picture" and work toward an increasing level of detail. This model is supported by a spiraling curriculum in which skills and concepts are presented and reintroduced at increasing levels of complexity and abstraction over the years.

1.7. Freedom within limits: We strive for a balance between freedom, order, and responsibility.

2. The Curriculum:

The Montessori School of Winston Salem provides a broad preparation for life, balancing academic excellence with the development of personal and practical life skills.

2.1. Universal Values

2.1.1. We encourage children to make responsible choices for themselves, to recognize that they are assuming increasing control over their lives as they mature, and to discover how to make a positive contribution to the world around them.

2.1.2. We encourage our students to be open-minded and compassionate, to gain a sense of themselves and others, and to understand and appreciate the diversity of the human spirit.

2.1.3. To facilitate the development of independence and a sense of engagement with the community, we encourage participation in day-to-day classroom management, care of the environment, and decision-making. We believe in the importance of community and the interdependence of all humankind.

2.1.4. We encourage students to love learning and to value knowledge, creativity, and humor. We hope they will be responsible, critical, and caring members of a pluralistic society.

2.1.5. We respect the fundamental human needs, rights, and dignity of each person, no matter how young, as a full and independent person who is engaged in the ongoing process of development. During this process, while honoring the right to self-determination, we model and encourage values such as kindness, honesty, warmth and openness, respect for each person's uniqueness, tolerance, cooperation, good sportsmanship, and nonviolence.

2.1.6. As educators, parents, and citizens of the world with the mutual goal of world peace we consider it our responsibility to model and encourage tolerance both to our children and to each other, and to teach acceptance of differences in ability, in color, in culture, in beliefs, in thought, in ways of doing things.

2.1.7. We encourage students to develop a respect for, an understanding of, and a sense of responsibility for the environment.

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2.2. Academics

2.2.1. Standards: We strive to nurture curiosity, creativity, independence, and imagination; to foster a lifelong love of learning; and to provide a foundation for creativity, critical thinking, and objective reasoning. We want our students to be well trained in the basic academic disciplines, to fulfill their creative potential, and to gain satisfaction in their physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development.

2.2.1.1. In all cases we set our expectations high, not by asking individuals to do more than that of which they are capable, but by consistently stressing the importance of careful work and pride in accomplishment. The reward is in the satisfaction of work done well for its own sake. We carefully build a supportive environment for the pursuit of excellence.

2.2.1.2. We design our educational program to maximize individual academic and personal success. We strive to encourage students to build on their strengths and personal learning styles and to learn from their mistakes. We do not believe that it is either necessary or appropriate to promote academic pressure and scholastic competition among students.

2.2.1.3. We encourage skills that support independent and successful learning, critical thinking, cooperative projects, reflective reading, problem solving, library research, use of technology, techniques for effective study, test-taking strategies, and techniques for focusing attention.

2.2.2. Areas of Study: We believe that an awareness and knowledge of the following areas is necessary to be an informed citizen of the world.

2.2.2.1. Fine Arts: We believe that the Fine Arts are of value to standard academic disciplines. We encourage a child's exploration of the arts at all levels. Our program includes music, visual art, and drama, both through specialist teachers and through incorporation into the regular classroom day.

2.2.2.2. Science: We teach students not only scientific facts, but also the scientific method of developing and testing a hypothesis and through their own research drawing conclusions based on data. Our curriculum will be consciously integrated, incorporating topics from all areas of science, including but not limited to botany, zoology, physical science, earth science, evolution, astronomy, and the history of science.

2.2.2.3. Mathematics: Our program integrates topics in arithmetic, geometry, pre-algebra, statistics, logic, algebra, trigonometry, and calculus, as appropriate to the individual child. We will help students grasp the underlying concepts of math through the use of concrete apparatus and through application of mathematics to real world tasks.

2.2.2.4. Language Arts and Literature: Our goal is for all our students to understand the mechanics of language, in order to develop the ability to express themselves clearly

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and effectively. This ability is learned and enhanced through exposure to and discussion of literature. We prepare our students to speak, read, and write with clarity; to listen well; to think critically.

2.2.2.5. History: We develop a strong historical perspective through the study of prehistory, history, and time itself, including the fundamental needs of humankind and the cultures, lifestyles, and technology of the past.

2.2.2.6. Foreign Language and Culture: We recognize the importance of learning a foreign language, with the goal of being able to converse comfortably in that language. Our language program will be integrated into the daily classroom environment, supported by specialist teachers and Montessori foreign language materials.

2.2.2.7. Economics and leadership: Our goal is to create economically literate, fiscally responsible citizens who both understand the principles of economic freedom and feel comfortable with financial and business matters.

2.2.2.8. Philosophy, ethics, spirituality: We think of this as the study of humanity's search for answers to really tough questions. We teach that there is not one right answer, and we teach respect for different traditions. We believe that our students should be familiar with the traditions and basic beliefs of the world's major religions. We encourage students to explore spiritual questions and to understand that these questions can be separate from institutions of religion.

2.2.2.9. Politics, civics, and law: We believe that our students should understand how government works at the local, state, and federal levels, and the role that citizens can and should play in shaping consensus, advocating their point of view, and making informed decisions before they vote. They should also understand how the legal system works and have an informed working knowledge of and respect for the law. As is appropriate for each age group, we encourage students to become aware of the major social, political, economic, environmental, and ethical issues of our day, and having carefully considered all sides to take a responsible stand for themselves and to explore ways of making a positive personal contribution to society. We would like our children to know how to work for change at the local level and in so doing realize that each individual can influence the world in which he or she lives. We will strive to make the understanding of what goes on in government real, objective, and practical, rather than abstract.

2.2.2.10. Engineering: We believe that it is important for children to understand and have knowledge of practical engineering principles.

2.2.2.11. Architecture: We believe that our students should understand the patterns of architecture found around us, how buildings are constructed and designed, and that they should develop an appreciation for the enduring beauty of well-designed spaces.

2.2.2.12. Anthropology and Myth: We teach students the basic elements of anthropology, addressing the question of what makes us human, the nature of culture, and how cultures have attempted to explain or illuminate the great questions of life through story, myth, and cultural archetypes. We believe it is important for children to understand the great mythologies of the world and the themes they have in common.

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2.2.2.13. Geography: We seek to develop a global perspective and international understanding, teaching world geography (physical, cultural, political, and economic) at every level of the school.

2.2.2.14. Research and Problem-Solving Skills: We teach children to learn the process of doing investigations and research using primary and secondary source materials. We also emphasize interviewing skills and the ability to organize information into increasingly sophisticated reports and presentations. As a result, textbooks will play an insignificant role within our educational program.

2.2.2.15. Physical Education, Health, and Athletics: We want our students to understand, appreciate, and adopt a healthy lifestyle that includes exercise, proper diet, intelligent choices regarding personal health, and stress reduction. We believe that individual and team sports make up an important element in reaching these goals.

2.2.2.16. Environmental Studies: Strengthening our connection with nature and the environment is an integral part of the curriculum at The Montessori School of Winston Salem. We seek to instill in our community a reverence for the earth and a sense of individual stewardship for the environment. We accomplish these goals through the following:

- Programs in outdoor education and field biology at every age level in the school, using the natural setting of our campus and the wide variety of natural resources around us as an outside classroom.
- Programs in gardening and small animal care.
- Programs in camping, canoeing and field ecological studies in natural wilderness settings.
- Programs in recycling and composting.

2.2.2.17. Practical Life skills: To facilitate and encourage a sense of independence, we teach a wide range of practical life skills appropriate to each child's level of development. We regard this as a vital element affecting the design of our entire curriculum. These practical life skills include the following:

- Eye-hand coordination and the use of simple tools.
- Care of self: how to dress, keep oneself clean, personal hygiene.
- Grace and courtesy: appropriate ways to handle situations kindly.
- Practical economics: the value and use of money, including how to earn and manage spending money.
- Technology: the safe use of technology, such as more complex tools, telephones, computers, classroom audio-visual equipment, and household appliances.
- Computers: We use the computer as a fundamental tool for learning, not only as an element of contemporary practical life, but also as an aid in the development of logical planning and problem solving.

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- **Transportation:** As appropriate at each age level, the safe use of alternate means of transportation other than a parent's car, such as hiking, bicycling, and public transportation.
- **Communication:** the appropriate use of the technology of personal and mass communication.
- **Care of and responsibility for one's environment:** keeping the classroom clean and neat.
- **Health and safety:** the development of sound habits of safety, nutrition and hygiene, along with the acquisition of first-aid skills and, as developmentally appropriate, CPR.

2.3. Peace education:

2.3.1. Peace Education is a core element of our curriculum, essential in the development of well-rounded human beings. Key components of peace education include the following: human relations, conflict resolution, nonviolence, leadership training, cooperation, negotiation, empathy, active listening, role-modeling, and communication skills.

2.4. Community service, global perspectives

2.4.1. We seek to show and teach our students that the freedom and education they receive here come with the responsibility to help others, both within the school and in the larger community. We believe that the responsibility to change our world for the better lies with all of us, and that service needs to be an accepted part of everyone's life if we are to achieve this goal.

2.4.2. We value our place in the world. We seek to develop an awareness and understanding of the international community and how we are interrelated with it, weaving international education through our curriculum at every age level:

- through the study of diverse foreign cultures and languages,
- through the study of physical, cultural, and economic geography,
- through correspondence and international travel,
- through encouraging families to share their cultural traditions, community heritage, travel experiences and traditional festivals,
- through utilizing our international families as a tremendous teaching resource.

3. Discipline

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3.1. Our ultimate goal is to promote personal responsibility, self-discipline, and self-motivation as the reasons for behavior rather than fear or motivation from without. We also endeavor to provide a school environment that will promote and protect the physical and emotional well being of our students and staff.

3.2. We use positive reinforcement and redirection to encourage progress and acknowledge contributions, rather than focusing on the consequences of breaking rules. We teach students appropriate, kind, and considerate ways to behave in given situations. We will never permit the use of corporal punishment.

3.3. While we are normally successful with a wide range of students, we can never be right for every child. One of our greatest challenges is to be objective, compassionate, yet realistic in considering the needs of each child as a unique individual. When we fail despite our best efforts to work with the child to help him or her meet appropriate behavioral expectations within the school's fundamental ground rules, we sadly and reluctantly counsel the family to seek out another school setting in which the child can experience success.

4. Human Resources

4.1. We carefully identify the duties of each position within the school. We believe that is important that every employee knows and understands what his or her duties and responsibilities are.

4.2. We carefully identify the skills and knowledge, experience, educational philosophy, core values, and interpersonal skills needed to be successful at the Montessori School of Winston Salem in each position.

4.3. We take great care in our hiring process to find new members of our faculty and staff who bring the right mix of skills, knowledge, experience, values, and personality to succeed at the Montessori School of Winston Salem.

4.4. School employee compensation will be annually reviewed for fairness and equity. We aim to offer a salary and benefits package which will maximize our ability to attract, develop, and retain the best available talent for each position.

4.5. We will clearly communicate to all members of the faculty and staff our expectations and personnel policies, as well as the benefits and professional development opportunities that may be applicable to their positions.

4.6. In evaluating the school's programs and the performance of each employee within that program, we will be objective, respectful, and professional, intentionally encouraging and supporting individual initiative, self-evaluation, and continuous professional growth.

4.7. We consciously follow fair and equal employment practices in employment, assignment, promotion, compensation, and termination of both teaching and non-teaching staff members. We endeavor to employ persons solely on the basis of the factors necessary in the performance of the job and the operation of our school, without discrimination on the basis of religious affiliation, race, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender, or any other factor on which discrimination is prohibited by the laws of the jurisdiction within which our school is located.

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4.8. No official of our school will seek to induce a teacher who is under contract at another school to break that contract. There is nothing deemed improper if a member of the teaching or administrative staff of one school independently approaches another school about possible employment.

4.9. Our school will not offer employment to a member of the faculty or staff of another school without communicating with the Head of the school at which he or she presently is employed or committed for the upcoming school year to request a frank evaluation of a candidate's qualifications. This information will be considered absolutely confidential.

4.10. Our school will take all reasonable and lawful precautions to maintain the confidentiality of records and information concerning teachers and other staff members who are applying for employment at another school, in accordance with the rights of the individual.

4.11. Any materials brought to school by the Educator, purchased with his or her own funds, shall remain the property of the Educator.

4.12. It is mutually understood that any teacher-made educational materials produced by the Educator during the term of employment using school materials and supplies shall be considered the property of the school. However, the Educator may use school materials to make a duplicate set of these materials for his or her own professional library.

4.13. Should a faculty member develop any new curricula, teaching techniques, teaching aids, or any other intellectual property during the course of his/her employment with the School, all rights to such are retained by the faculty member (who bears the responsibility to copyright or patent them); however, the faculty member grants to the School a perpetual, non-exclusive license to use the property or product for its educational programs and faculty training and development.

4.14. Any teaching aids, materials, or curricula developed by the School, as well as any mailing lists of the School's students and families, represent the proprietary property of the School. The Educator agrees that he or she shall not sell, transfer, assign, or disseminate said materials to a third party without first obtaining the Head of School's written approval.

5. Facilities

5.1. We will seek to create a campus of timeless beauty that reflects our commitment to education and our community.

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- 5.2. Our buildings and grounds will support the implementation of our educational program and institutional mission.
- 5.3. Each building or structure will be carefully considered in terms of need, ideal space, and configuration. The school is committed to following environmentally sound building practices, based on sustainability and renewable resources, both for new construction and for renovation and improvement of existing buildings.
- 5.4. Sections of our grounds will be preserved for natural habitat, as well as for programs in horticultural education, and in animal care, when possible.
- 5.5. The school will do everything in its power to keep the buildings and grounds free from toxic substances and environmental irritants. Whenever possible, pesticides and cleaning products will be found that are non-toxic and hypo-allergenic.
- 5.6. The school will follow and maintain safety procedures designed to protect students and staff.
- 5.7. The school will actively pursue a process of continuous facility improvement.
- 5.8. The school is committed to creating as little waste as possible and to disposing of waste in an environmentally responsible manner.

6. Finances

- 6.1. Our school honors its financial commitments.
- 6.2. We will operate on a balanced budget.
- 6.3. School fees will be set with particular consideration of fostering economic diversity among our student population while pursuing the core values.
- 6.4. We are committed to a financial scholarship program (financial aid) to support economic diversity.
- 6.5. The school is committed to full disclosure of its financial operations. We will communicate accurate information about the financial state of the school in an annual report to the community.

7. Recruitment and admissions

- 7.1. Our goal in the process of admissions and recruitment is to welcome families for whom the school will be a good match. We are seeking families who share common values and goals with the school and who, after consideration and exploration, have concluded that our school is something that they want very much for their children.
- 7.2. When we admit a new student, we are welcoming the child, his or her parents, siblings, and extended family into the school community.
- 7.3. In making admissions decisions, we will give preference to families whom we believe are committed to learning about the Montessori philosophy and embracing the long term value of a

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Montessori education. In accordance with the Montessori tradition, we do not ordinarily accept children after the age of three; however, older children are accepted on a case by case basis.

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7.4. In the admissions process, we consciously treat parents with respect and honesty as partners in exploring whether or not we would be a good match. We will help them to grasp the true nature of the school and what it has to offer, and allow them to weigh all the factors as they consider whether our school is indeed the right match for them and their child.

7.5. We will welcome prospective parents and make it as easy as we can for them to learn about the Montessori School of Winston Salem and our educational programs.

7.5.1. We will hold regular open houses to allow prospective parents to tour the school, observe in a classroom, meet some of our families, and learn more about Montessori education. We will make every effort to accommodate individual scheduling needs of prospective parents.

7.5.2. We will have an Ambassador Parent program available for prospective parents who would like to speak with current families.

7.5.3. We will spend as much time as possible with prospective parents in order to answer their questions, address their concerns, and assist them in determining whether our school would be a good match for their child.

7.5.4. We will consider applications for admission on a case by case basis, giving preference to siblings and to children who transfer from a previous Montessori school. We will do our best once an application has been received to gather all of the information needed to evaluate the application. We will endeavor to make and communicate all admissions decisions to the families in a timely and organized manner.

7.6. Our school does not discriminate in matters of admission on the basis of race, religion, or ethnic background. We consciously teach children to accept, respect, and celebrate the rich cultural diversity of the global community.

7.7. We regard a mix of backgrounds and abilities as a positive and important element in our community. We look at each student individually, and we often find that because of our flexibility and individualized approach, children who may have learning difficulties in other environments can often experience a greater level of success within our community.

7.8. We will promptly consult with parents should it ever become clear that a student is not benefiting from the school's program, or if the school is not the best program to meet his or her needs.

7.9. We pledge to represent our school truthfully and accurately to the public and to our parent community.

7.10. We will not engage in negative public relations about other schools in our community.

7.11. While we welcome inquiries and interest in our school, we will never knowingly attempt to recruit a student who is presently committed to another Montessori program.

8. Building Community

8.1. We recognize that a Montessori school is more than a place of learning; it is a community of children and adults, and that community has a significant impact on our students' capacity to learn,

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grow, create, develop, assimilate values, and relate peacefully and respectfully to other people and to the natural world.

8.2. We treat all students, families, teachers, and staff members with kindness, warmth, and respect.

8.3. We consciously work to build a constructive partnership between the family and school in support of each child's educational development.

8.4. Within reasonable guidelines, established to ensure the integrity of our educational program and the privacy of other students' records, parents are welcome to visit the school to observe their child in class or to review his or her academic progress.

8.5. We place a primary emphasis on providing continuing education and support for our families. We encourage parents to participate in programs that can help them refine their parenting strategies and facilitate the development of independence, responsibility, self-confidence, and self-respect in their children and themselves.

8.6. To facilitate the welcome of new families into the school, we will make available a list of community members who have volunteered to provide support and information.

8.7. We expect all members of our school community to respect and show support for the principles and values established in this Blueprint.

8.8. We value input from all of our community members in our decision-making processes. To facilitate open communication we will hold monthly community meetings to allow and encourage a free and open exchange of ideas and information. These meetings will be a direct line of communication between the school community and the Board.

- The dates for these meetings will be published at the beginning of the school year, and they will be held regardless of attendance.
- At least one representative of the Board and one member of the administration will attend each meeting.
- A scribe will record all that is said.
- The meeting is run by the community, not by the administration or the Board. The group – not an officer – decides what it wants to talk about, and how long to talk about it.
- All voices are equal, and decisions will be made by consensus.
- Questions that are raised for the Board will be respectfully responded to by the Board at the next community meeting.
- Details on the community meeting process will be made available to all members of the community.

8.9. Any mailing lists of the School's students and families represent the proprietary property of the School. The parents agree that they shall not sell, transfer, assign, or disseminate said materials to a third party without first obtaining the Head of School's written approval.

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9. Administration

9.1. The purpose of the administration is to ensure the success of our educational program.

9.2. The administration's duties include but are not limited to the following:

- articulating the core values and vision of the school,
- providing academic leadership,
- taking leadership in the admissions and recruitment process,
- building community and enhancing retention among students and families,
- recruiting and guiding faculty members and staff,
- ensuring the financial health of the school,
- serving as the school's representatives to the larger community,
- facilitating the continuous process of internal evaluation,
- fundraising,
- and implementing the long-term plan for the school.

9.3. The Head of School will ensure that consistency with our core values and vision permeates the school seamlessly from class to class, from level to level, and from one year to the next.

9.4. The Head of School will support the faculty and attempt to provide similar support to the school's families. When conflicts arise, decisions must be balanced with what is best for each individual child and what is consistent with the core values of the school.

9.5. The administration will follow a collaborative model in working with faculty members and staff.

9.6. The administration of the school will ensure a smooth and timely flow of communication about important dates and information to parents, students, and staff.

10. Governance

10.1. The Board of Trustees shall be comprised of men and women who share a deep sense of commitment to the ideals of a Montessori education and to the Montessori School. In all matters, they consider the overall best interests of the school over their own interests or over the interests of any constituent group within the school community.

10.2. The primary responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are to establish, from time to time reexamine, and if necessary refine, the institutional identity, mission, and core values and beliefs about education that define the nature of the school, as outlined in the Blueprint. Based on this foundation, the board selects and supervises a day-to-day Head of School, whose job is to select and supervise the school's faculty and staff, admit students and families, ensure that they are provided with an authentic Montessori program and kept safe (physically and emotionally), oversee the school's financial resources and physical plant, and nurture a sense of community among children, teachers and staff, parents, and friends of the school. Thirdly, the board establishes policies and makes decisions that are consistent with the school's core values as set forth in this blueprint, and

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ensures that day-to-day operating policies established by the Head of School are likewise consistent with the school's core values as set forth in this blueprint.

10.3. Before voting on any motion made before the Board, the Board of Trustees will first consult the Blueprint to identify the underlying values and beliefs that would support whatever decision is made on the issue before the Board.

10.4. If the Blueprint does not address the issue, or if the Board concludes that the Blueprint needs to be amended to more completely address the underlying values and beliefs, it will amend the Blueprint before voting on the motion. Any change in the Blueprint must be announced through multiple channels to the community and then presented at a community meeting for input before it is brought to a vote.

10.5. The minutes of the Board meetings will reflect not only the motions passed, but also reference to the section number of the blueprint.

10.6. The Board will conduct its business following the Montessori Rules of Order. These are the same Rules of Order that we will use in our Community Meetings.

10.7. All Board members will be knowledgeable in the Montessori approach. The school will provide means to facilitate this, such as an annual retreat and continuing education workshops.

10.8. Ideally, the Board is composed of a diverse group of 5-7 people who are not current parents of children attending the school. If this is not possible, then it should be a group of 5-7 people of whom a majority are not current parents of children attending the school.

10.9. The Board members shall serve for a minimum of five years, to encourage stability and institutional memory.

10.10. The Board shall take a philosophical leadership role in the school's fundraising efforts and seek to find additional funding sources for the school.

11. Fundraising

11.1. Contributions are necessary for maintaining and enriching the quality of our program and fulfilling our commitment to educational excellence.

11.2. Gifts in support of our core values and our academic program are welcome. We cannot accept gifts that would require the school to violate any of the core beliefs outlined in this document.

11.3. We hold major fundraising campaigns, such as an annual fund, and limit smaller fundraisers to those carefully chosen based on alignment with core values.

11.4. Individuals are welcome to designate usage of donated funds; however, ultimately it is up to the Board of Trustees or their designee to determine if the conditions are acceptable.

11.5. Only the Board of Trustees can accept a gift of real property or tangible goods on behalf of the school that would potentially require repair or maintenance expenditures.

11.6. The school will seek to establish an endowment to address future operating expenses and long-term goals of the school.

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