



central **montessori** school

Parent Handbook - Part 1

“I was walking one day upon the Pinciana Hill with a boy from the elementary school. He had studied geometric design and understood the analysis of plane geometric figures. As we reached the highest terrace from which we could see the Piazza del Popolo with the city stretching away behind it, I stretched out my hand saying, ‘Look all the works of man are a great mass of geometric figures;’ and, indeed, rectangles, ovals, triangles, and semicircles, perforated, or ornamented, in a hundred different ways the gray rectangular facades of the various buildings. Such uniformity in such an expanse of buildings seemed to prove the limitation of human intelligence, while in an adjoining garden plot the shrubs and flowers spoke eloquently of the infinite variety of forms in nature.”

Maria Montessori

Letter of Welcome

Dear Parents,

We are so glad you have joined our community. It can take a while for you and your child to become familiar with your new school's culture. Our hope is that the information here will help everyone acclimate to our school's culture and provide answers to the many questions parents may have.

This handbook is organized in a way that will allow parents to access policy information about transitions, foods, schedules, classroom management, and, well...so many things.

Please feel free to contact the Front Desk and speak directly to Anita Pishko should you have any additional questions or would like to offer feedback of any sort.

All staff can be reached at 804-447-7493 or at frontdesk.centramontessori@gmail.com

As we know, when we enter a village, we change the village, and the village changes us. Let's learn and grow together.

Health and Happiness,

Anita

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AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY - CODE OF ETHICS

PRINCIPLE I — Commitment to the Student: In fulfillment of the obligation to the children, the educator:

1. Shall encourage independent action in the pursuit of learning.
2. Shall protect the opportunity to provide for participation in educational programs without regard to race, sex, color, creed, or national origin.
3. Shall protect the health and safety of students.
4. Shall honor professional commitments, maintain obligations and contracts while never soliciting nor involving students or their parents in schemes for commercial gain.
5. Shall keep in confidence information that has been secured in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

PRINCIPLE II — Commitment to the Public: The Montessori educator shares in the responsibility for the development of policy relating to the extension of educational opportunity for all and for interpreting educational programs and policies to the public. In fulfilling these goals, the educator:

1. Shall support his professional society and not misrepresent its policies in public discussion. Whenever speaking or writing about policies, the educator should take the precaution to distinguish his private views from the official position of the Society,
2. Shall not interfere with nor exploit the rights and responsibilities of colleagues within the teaching profession.

PRINCIPLE III — Commitment to the Profession: The Montessori educator makes efforts to raise professional standards and conditions to attract persons worthy of trust to careers in Montessori education... In fulfilling these goals, the educator:

1. Shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the Montessori education profession.
2. Shall represent his/her professional qualification with clarity and true intent.
3. Shall apply for, accept, offer, recommend, and assign professional positions and responsibilities based on professional preparation and legal qualifications.
4. Shall use honest and effective methods of administering his/her duties, use of time, and conducting business.

Adopted by the AMS Board of Directors October 1969. Expanded June 1975.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT CENTRAL MONTESSORI SCHOOL

WHY WE ARE HERE...

GOAL: 100% MONTESSORI 100% OF THE TIME

The goal of the extended day and year round Central Montessori School program is to continue the vibrant and explorative, intellectual and expressive activities of the Montessori program without the need for a daycare component. Our Montessori teachers are here with our children all day long and serve the needs of working families by providing a seamless day of Montessori activities from early in the morning until evening.

PHILOSOPHY: EDUCATION IS EVERYTHING

Central Montessori School believes a child's impulse to learn is so strong that they are compelled to learn constantly. No force on Earth can keep a child from this essential work. There are situations, experiences, and schools that impede a child's ability to learn at their full potential. Central Montessori School has prepared an environment free of barriers that hinder, frustrate, or reduce a child's desire and impulse to learn. Central Montessori School is not religiously affiliated.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to build a truly authentic Montessori school community that is respectful, culturally diverse, and gender neutral. We support our working and professional families with all aspects of their child's development. Central Montessori School will continue to foster supportive relationships with the surrounding neighborhoods and child advocacy groups within the Greater Richmond Area including Fulton Montessori School.

HISTORY

The genesis for many Montessori schools seems to lie in the frustrations that parents feel when they begin to look for a high quality educational program for their young children. In 1982, Anita Pishko opened a small Montessori school in Dickinson, Texas. She eventually sold the school to her partner and brought her two young daughters to Richmond and worked for Richmond Montessori School for many years.

Several years ago, Anita worked with other Montessorians and Mary Lou Decouseux, the director of the Fulton Hill Area Neighborhood Resource Center to open a sliding scale Montessori program. It was then that she realized that the urban area of Richmond, and specifically the Church Hill neighborhood, had few of the valuable educational choices that are available in other areas of the Greater Richmond area. Anita saw a neighborhood community in search of an excellent alternative school program: specifically, Montessori. Central Montessori School opened on November 12, 2007. We were amazed then, and still are, by the amount of goodwill and support we have received from Church Hill and the surrounding communities.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

Central currently serves children from 3 months to 14 years old. We have approximately 160 children and 30 full time staff members. Our 3 small campuses are in the Church Hill neighborhood, a dynamic urban neighborhood just minutes from our state and city government and medical complexes. Each campus, inside and out, is designed to meet the specific needs of each developmental phase.

Main Campus: 323 N. 20th St. Richmond, VA 23223: 804-447-7493

Infant and Toddler Program: 2107 Jefferson Avenue. Richmond, VA 23223: 804-447-1163

Adolescent Program: 2001 E. Broad St. Richmond, VA 23223 804-308-3249

LINE OF AUTHORITY (AS REQUIRED BY DSS)

Operations

Owners: Anita Pishko and Stephan Pishko

Director: Kelly McCray

Finance and admissions administrator: Amira Aronovici

Front desk staff (administrative assistants): Deanna Pacitto, Keiera Lewis, Liesl Tahmassebi

Facility management: Leah McCray

SPECIAL THANKS

The following individuals helped us to open and grow Central's program. Special thanks to Mr. Malone and Ms. Flynn for their educational and community activism and support as we moved through the maze of city zoning and certificates of occupancy. Mr. Malone has afforded our school a public platform from which we may speak. He has also provided Central the opportunities to be a true partner with the Church Hill community. Sincere gratitude to Tracy Pickard for the enormous support, encouragement and enthusiasm she provided us over the many months of preparations.

Thanks to Jennifer Rawlings, Jacob Dill and Tracy for the many hours and so many days of support and help. The Honorable Councilwoman McQuinn visited our school on a difficult day for her to show her support and offer us direction and much needed advice. She has our most sincere thanks. City councilwoman Cynthia Newbille continues to forward our program through community design and assistance. Marianne Pishko-Scott and John Pishko provided us with financial support and business advice.

I had the good fortune to work with Mary Freed, a gifted children's librarian for quite a few years and valued her guidance and input about children and books. I used many of her recommendations as guidelines for our literacy program at Central Montessori School. Thank you, Mary. Vera Small donated most of the high quality books from her own teaching library that are currently in our school. Thank you, Vera. And finally, a special thanks to our lovely Church Hill community members.

TRANSITIONAL TIMES

THE MANY TRANSITIONAL MOMENTS THAT MAKE UP OUR CHILDRENS' DAYS

TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN

Central does not transport children between home and school. Central provides off campus transportation for school related events and utilizes public and private transportation services when appropriate.

CALENDARS

Annual Event Calendar

This calendar is on our school website. Find dates and times of school wide events and planned school closings. This calendar is published many months in advance and provides holidays and set events dates but may not have all current changes/updates.

Monthly Google Calendar

This calendar is on our school website and is kept current. You can find annual events, classroom and enrichment information here.

Montessori Moments Weekly Calendar

This calendar is located at the top of the weekly Montessori Moments that are emailed to parents. It is the most current of all of our calendars. Please check this calendar regularly.

COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT TRANSITIONS

When to call about about arrivals or dismissals

Please contact Central when:

- parents have arrived on campus (only if a parent arrives during non-standard hours -not during carpool)
- a child is ill, will be absent, or will be tardy
- a parent needs an Additional Montessori Hour
- someone other than the parent will pick a child up
- a child will be staying with other people - we will need their contact information

No need to call before arrival

Parents do not need to call before they arrive on campus. We cannot call for a child until the parent has actually arrived. We promise to transition the children as quickly as possible. Children usually join their parents within about 5 minutes.

STANDARD AND NONSTANDARD HOURS

Standard Hours

Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m.

Nonstandard Hours

Variable

Transitions can be challenging and complicated. Our well-trained staff understand this and are here to help. Central offers an Additional Montessori Hour (AMH) service to assist parents. This allows parents to bring and pick their child up early and/or late. Parents can use it as needed (just email us) or use it daily (discount applies).

Preparing now for your family's different departure needs can help alleviate stress for parents, children, and staff. Please arrange for someone to pick your child up from school in an emergency situation due to a child's illness, a school closure, or on event days should you not be able to arrive on campus within 30 minutes of notification. This preparation can greatly reduce stress for children and staff alike.

Please read about possible arrival and departure scenarios, including considerations and fees.

CHART OF ARRIVAL, DEPARTURE TIMES, AND FEES

Arrival times

7:30-8:00: Additional Montessori Hour: campus office: \$10.00 per hour (AMH)

[Additional Montessori Hour Information and Chart for Parent Handbook](#)

8:00-9:00: Standard arrival: carpool only

9:00 or later: *Late arrival: No fee: try to avoid and call or email if you must be late*

Departure times

4:00-4:55: Standard departure: carpool only

4:55-5:00: Standard departure: office pick up only

5:00-5:30: *Late departure: Office pick up: \$10.00 per hour (AMH)*

[Additional Montessori Hour Information and Chart for Parent Handbook](#)

After 5:30: Delayed departure: Office pick up: \$15.00 + \$2.00 per minute

30 Minutes After Notification of Emergency Departure (illness, school closure): due to illness or school emergency: \$15.00 = \$2.00 per minute after 30 minute arrival window

SPECIFIC CAMPUS CONSIDERATIONS

Because we serve a wide array of children in various developmental stages, the campuses where these children attend have specific arrival and dismissal considerations.

Infant & Toddler

Please keep full control over your little one while transitioning from car to building. Parents should be particularly mindful as they drive through this space.

Main campus

We utilize two different drop off and pick up egresses. Please ask which egress is appropriate for your child. A staff person will assist your child in entering the building and moving to their classroom.

Upper EI & Middle School

Upper ei: Please pull up to the playground gate. If no teacher is present, your child will enter the door at the corner of 20th and Broad.

Middle school

Your child enters the door on Broad St.

CHART OF CARPOOL LOCATIONS, AND PHONE NUMBERS

Carpool Address & Location	Program	Age Groups	Phone Number
323 N. 20 th St RVA 23223 Gate & umbrella on N. 20th St.	Preprimary, Primary, Lower EI	2 ½ -9 yrs	804- 447-7493 for main office
2107 Jefferson Ave RVA 23223 Door to office (infants) & playground gate (toddlers)	Infant & Toddler	3 months – 3 yrs	804-447-1163 please contact main office first at 804-447-7493 between 1:30-2:30
2001 E. Broad St RVA 23223 Door to office & playground gate	Upper EI, Middle School	9 – 14 yrs	804-308-3249 please contact main office first at 804-447-7493

CARPOOL SAFETY

Management of vehicles

- Please enter the main campus through the alley from 21st Street only
- Please pull up to the curb facing in the correct direction
- Please do not use your cell phone while in your vehicle
- Please turn your car off and do not idle
- Please have car seats in place. If someone other than yourself is to pick your child up, please have them have a carseat in place as well.

Weather considerations

Should lightning strikes or thunder be present, Central will delay the beginning of carpool, or interrupt carpool to assure the safety of children and staff. We will resume carpool once there have been no instances in the last 5 minutes. We ask for your patience. Please wait in your car and know your child is safe and will join you as soon as possible.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT ARRIVALS

Standard arrival

Staff are trained and prepared to receive children each morning. They will assist your child (and offer comfort when needed). Your child can greet and join friends and teachers on the playgrounds or in the classrooms before their lessons begin. A wonderful way to start a day.

Non-standard arrival

All children should arrive at or before 9:00 in order to receive the many benefits of this morning ritual and to reduce stress. At 9:00 our morning greeters have joined their classrooms and are giving lessons. Our administrative team is in meetings or attending to their many tasks. Children are involved in their studies as well.

Late arrival

A late arriving child will not have time to casually move into the day with many people greeting them. If you do need to bring your child in late to school, please call the front desk upon your arrival.

Children under 5 years of age: Special Consideration

A child who arrives late because they have slept late and eaten breakfast late, will not be ready to rest at school and/or to eat their lunch with their friends. This can cause stress for your child during the day. Please bring your child to school on time.

Attendance tracking

Children arriving later than 9:00 are marked as tardy or absent.

Morning off-campus activities

Children arriving at 9:00 will not be able to participate in off campus activities. Special Note: Go-Trips: Elementary & Middle School students will return to campus no later than 4:00.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT DEPARTURES

Parent and child afternoon reunion and communicating with teachers during carpool

Short, spontaneous sharing of information seems like a good idea but is not enough time to fully frame a discussion, cannot be documented by staff or parent, and can lead to confusion, misunderstandings, and stress for the child and parent at the moment that the parent is trying to drive home during rush hour traffic. These spontaneous conversations can also reduce the teachers ability to monitor the other children during this busy time. And of course, most importantly, this is a time your child looks forward to all day long. They do not want to share you with teachers. Please email us if you would like to check in with your child's teacher.

A child who is ill will need to go home

Children who develop any symptoms of illness at school must go home to receive proper care, minimize exposing others to a possible communicable disease, and, at this time of mitigation, be tested for COVID.

Central will contact you first by email and if we have not received a confirmation from you that you have received the message, will call you after 15 minutes. Should we not be able to reach you by phone, we may contact the first person listed on your emergency form.

Special Notice: At this time, we ask that the child receive an over-the-counter COVID test when displaying any symptoms of illness and that parents send the results to Central. Should your child have symptoms of COVID, please provide your child with a PCR test and send these results to Central as well.

After-school event days

These are wonderful events that begin right at 5:00. On these days, every playground and/or classroom may be used for the event. Space and/or staffing are not available to host AMH children.

Parents should arrange now for someone to arrive to pick their child up (or join them at the event) no later than 5:00. Fees apply for arrival after 5:00. Remember to email us and let us know who will arrive for your child.

Emergency Closure

These closures are very complicated and require careful management. We ask that parents become familiar with these protocols and be prepared to help Central staff during these moments. Please:

- Once receiving a notice about an emergency closure, please do not call the school to confirm having received the notice. Our frontdesk staff will be very busy caring for children and assisting teachers and may not be able to manage such calls. Lines should be kept clear so that first responders can be notified if needed.
- Parents should email the name of the person who will pick their child up if parents are not able to arrive by the announced closing time. Central will contact the first emergency contact should no one arrive to pick a child up. Fees apply for arrival after the the announced closing time.
- Parents should not rely on Facebook or other parents to provide accurate information during these moments. Central will provide accurate information through PROCARE texting service and/or through email. We will provide information in the most timely manner possible. Remember, these situations are highly changeable. We can move through these times together in the least stressful manner possible when we adhere to these guidelines.

TYPES OF PERMISSIONS FOR CHILD PICK UP AND DISMISSAL

Permanent Emergency Permission [Permanent Emergency Permission](#)

This contractual document is required by DSS. It gives Central permission to call a designated person(s) and ask them to pick up a child or care for a child in the event that Central cannot reach a parent or guardian by email or phone.

Central may release a child to these designated persons without additional permission in the event that we cannot reach a parent or guardian.

Standing Permission [Standing permission for persons other than parents to pick up a child.](#)

This permission designates another adult to pick their child up with prior email or verbal notice that is kept on record and referenced by staff during dismissal.

Temporary Pick Up Permission [Temporary Pick Up Permission](#)

Should a child need to be picked up due to illness, school closures, other reasons. Central may release the child to these adults after with the parents email or verbal permission.

Special Note

For redundancy purposes, Central is currently in the process of creating a digital document that will allow parents to provide any person with a specific PIN for the purpose of picking a child up during dismissal. Please watch for more information about this.

PICK-UP BY UNAUTHORIZED PERSON (INCLUDING GUARDIAN)

Central Montessori School will not release a child to anyone without a written note, email or voice notice from the parent/guardian. The person who arrives to pick up your child will need to show photo ID that matches the name we have received from the parent/guardian. A parent/guardian must provide a court order, to be kept in their child's file, restricting a legal guardian's right to take possession of their child. We are required, without a court order, to allow any legal guardian to be on campus with their child and/or release a child into the care of their guardian. We will call the police and enrolling parent/guardian immediately in the event of any confusion or problem.

ALLEGED IMPAIRED AUTHORIZED PICK-UP

Central Montessori School legally cannot release a child into the care of someone who seems to be impaired. The staff will call the other parent/guardian or one of the emergency contact persons and request that person come to pick up the child. If a responsible person cannot be reached, the staff will call the police to manage the situation. An administrator will call the Department of Social Services if they feel that a child is in need of protection.

Special Note: Central will not knowingly release a child to a parent who is not prepared to safely transport their child because of the lack of a car seat.

ATTENDANCE: ABSENCES AND TARDIES

Arriving at school on time each day can reduce stress and help a child understand that punctuality and their education are very important...an important life skill!

Call or email central 804-447-7493 or frontdesk.centralmontessori@gmail.com if absent or tardy.

Attendance records are kept

Once a child has entered the Primary III (PIII) program (kindergarten), attendance becomes compulsory and records become part of a child's official school records.

PIII and elementary children must be in class every day no later than 9:00 am. Excessive absences can have a detrimental effect on a child's classroom functioning, academic success, and ability to enter other programs at grade level. In some cases, another school may reject a child's application because of chronic absences and tardies. Parents should email the front desk and let us know why a child is absent. This information is kept in a child's permanent records.

Excused absences

- Your child is sick (please email front desk)
- If any immediate family member has been diagnosed with a communicable disease
- Vacation outside of regular school closures

We have a longer day and longer school year at Central. Those additional hours are filled with longer outdoor playtimes, go-trips and other enrichment components.

If a child has excessive absences (8 or more), an attendance agreement may be created between the parent and school for the benefit of the child.

Special Note: A child who experiences chronic tardiness or absences may not be eligible to attend other private schools or even transition into on-grade level public schools programs. The child may also fall behind in their academic studies here at Central.

WHEN A CHILD SHOULD NOT ATTEND SCHOOL

There are a few situations when a child should not attend school. Please arrange for short notice care for these moments.

Fever or Illness

If a child has had a fever within the last 24 hours and been treated with fever reducing medication.

Not Able to Participate

When a child is not able to function during a normal day because of tiredness or lack of sleep, or medical treatments. This includes outdoor playtime.

Covid Considerations

A child should not attend school, at this time, with any symptoms of illness without receiving a Covid test with a negative result. Results should be sent to Central before your child's return.

WHEN IT SEEMS A LITTLE HARD TO COME TO SCHOOL

Dealing with separation anxiety

Acclimation to a new environment usually takes about six weeks, or less for most children, but occasionally a child will need more time to adjust. If a child still feels anxious after the first few weeks of school, the parent/guardian should contact the front desk. We can pass the message along to your child's teacher. Central staff are experts at helping children move through transitions (parents too). We can help.

Helpful hints for making the first transition of the day a happy one

Some children will adjust easily to a new routine, while others need a bit more time. Following these hints will help ensure a positive start to the school year.

- Children can practice, before their first day, eating out of a lunch box, resting on a floor mat, carrying their bags, etc.
- Parents should have a sincere and very positive attitude about the program they are leaving their children in each day. A child will sense this and feel that they are in a safe and exciting place.
- Parents should allow plenty of time for morning preparations. This will help a child feel calm and ready for a full day.
- Parents should arrive on time each day. Please speak to the administrator if your child will be arriving after 9:00 am.
- Parents should provide their child with one good hug and kiss and assure their child by saying, "Have fun, I'll be back before 5:00!"
- Parents should NOT LOOK BACK! We ask parents to not leave the office area and walk into the classroom with their child.
- Parents should leave the premises feeling assured that they have placed their child in a program where they will be safe, appreciated, well cared for, and happy! Often it is the kind voice and support of another child that will help a child acclimate to new expectations, new friends, and daily activities.

THE BIGGEST TRANSITIONS

Student Transitions into the Next Level

Central's administrative and teaching staff has a whole picture perspective and guidelines that it follows when determining when a child is advanced and which classroom the child will join at the next level.

There are many benefits of a year round school program. Central considers several variables when offering a child a position at the next level:

1. Is there an available spot at the next level and when is it available,
2. Is the child demonstrating readiness/maturation with self management,
3. Is the child ready for a more complex social environment with new friends and teachers, and
4. Is the child ready for the relatively advanced lessons at the next level?

The answers to these questions helps us understand if the child will benefit from the advancement or would they benefit from more time at the current level at this time.

If we determine that a child is ready, and will benefit from advancement, Central will notify parents about the transition about a month before the child's start date.

At that time, we will provide parents with a "Welcome to..." packet, the name of the child's new teaching team members, and the child's start date!

Please note: Although Central appreciates a parents preference, it cannot make a determination based on parents' preference.

What Parents Can Do

- Parents are invited to contact Front Desk should they want to speak with their current and/or new teacher.
- Parents are invited to speak to an administrator should they have any questions about this process or about Central's general school policies.
- Parents can join their child's new teacher for a six week normalization check-in meeting.
- Parents should anticipate that their child will be a bit more tired, may eat less, need more changes of clothes, may feel some confusion, and may be anxious about this change. Contact us should these feelings continue after the six week adjustment/normalization period.
- Parents can remind children that they do not lose friends, but make new ones!

Please note: The advancing child will have one or more visitations at the next level before their start date, if possible.

Rest assured, we know your child very well and would not transition them to the next level if we did not think they were ready and would be successful!

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

WHAT TO BRING TO (AND LEAVE AT) SCHOOL

Infant & Toddler

- Appropriate nutritious food for multiple mini-meals: formula, food, breast milk (labeled and dated)
- One week supply of diapers, wet bag, and wipes (labeled)
- Underwear while transitioning out of diapers (labeled)

Special Note: Children's clothing should be as easy as possible for them to manage independently. Elastic waist bands are **essential**. These can be efficiently removed and replaced by most toddlers with little or no assistance from an adult. *Please do not send your child to school in onesies or tight leggings because they will frustrate your child's attempts at independently changing their clothes.*

Everyone!

- A nutritious lunch packed in reusable containers. Please read labels and do not send high fat/salty or sugar foods (these will be sent home). Please be sure to label your child's lunch box with their name and date.
- Two cloth napkins, a fork, and a spoon (if needed) packed in the lunchbox. These cloth napkins are used as your child's napkin and placemat; labeled
- Changes of clothing for all children under the age of 8 to be kept in their bag; labeled
- Seasonally appropriate outerwear and raingear (jackets/footwear), to be left at school; labeled
- Canvas bag and folder (provided by Central), or a backpack if in upper el or middle school
- Three comfortable face masks for your child. These will be kept in their bags until needed; labeled

Canvas bags or backpacks?

Central provides each infant, toddler, pre-primary, primary and lower elementary child with a canvas tote bag. We will gladly replace one canvas tote bag at no charge. There are many reasons that we ask children to use only these bags and not backpacks. They:

- Require less storage space at school
- Have a neutral color that reduces visual clutter
- Can be washed
- Are easy for the children to access independently
- Do not distract students
- Reduce the incidences of "haves and have nots"
- Provided by the school - no need to shop
- Are lightweight
- Can be decorated and personalized
- Are very easy to label
- Are made of biodegradable material that will not add to landfills or waterways

Special Note: Upper elementary and middle school students may bring a backpack to school. Students who walk or ride a bike to school may also use a backpack. Their design and coloring should be as neutral as possible. *No attached adornments on bags are allowed.*

WHAT NOT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

Adornment

Adornments should be enjoyed at home and not brought to school. Stickers, tattoos, headbands, barrettes, jewelry and other items can become distractions and can be lost, stolen or broken. If they do arrive at school and are distracting, teachers will collect them and keep them for the parents to pick up. Hair coloring, makeup and temporary tattoos can all be distractions in a classroom. Sunglasses and loose scarves or ties can cause safety concerns and will not be allowed on the playground.

Personal belongings

Children should leave their personal belongings at home. Books and toys can certainly be lost, stolen, or damaged, requiring teachers and staff to spend much time investigating and searching.

WHAT TO WEAR TO SCHOOL

When a Montessori teacher designs and prepares their classroom, they adhere to traditional Montessori rationale and consider the relevance of every single material or item they place in the room, the organization of the shelves and space, and the way children interact with each other. The clothing both teachers and children wear into a prepared classroom environment is as much a part of the environment as the materials or the organization of space.

Teachers take into consideration the effect their own clothing has on the children's ability to deeply concentrate on their studies. They wear relatively beautiful, simple clothing that is practical and comfortable. Teachers do not wear brightly colored fingernail polish, fragrances, jewelry, or any type of clothing that might cause a child to stop concentrating on a lesson. Distracting tattoos are covered.

The considerations a teacher has for their clothing and appearance are appropriate for student's clothing as well. The following clothing policy is designed to help maintain and protect a child's need for deep concentration, social acceptance and independence.

Neutrally designed

Clothing should not have printed images that distract or negatively impact your child's ability, or their friends' ability, to concentrate. Images of action figures, cartoon characters, licensed characters, super heroes, TV personalities, camouflage, weapons or controversial language can distract students from their important work and can limit the child's ability to use his/her imagination during social play. It can also introduce an exclusionary aspect to otherwise pro-social play. The color of clothing should also be as gender-neutral as possible. Overuse of pink or camouflage patterns can introduce a polarizing or exclusionary aspect into otherwise pro-social behaviors. Very shiny, glittery clothing can distract as well.

Highly functional clothing and shoes that aids autonomy

The goal of all children is to become as independent as possible. This goal cannot be achieved if a child has to wait for a teacher to unbutton, unsnap, unzip, and unbuckle clothing, shoes or outerwear.

Your child should practice putting their clothes, shoes and outerwear on and taking them off before wearing them to school. If your child cannot independently manage his/her clothing easily and quickly, then the clothing should not be worn to school. This is of special importance for children who are in the process of mastering toileting skills.

We highly recommend elastic waist bands for all children under the age of four.

We recommend that children under four also wear Croc-like shoes to school. Crocs (or shoes like them) are easy to manage and are waterproof (especially important for children in the process of mastering toileting skills). Please select shoes that your child can take off and put on independently. Shoes should be seasonally appropriate, closed toed with low heels for reasons of safety and agility. The design should be similar to those outlined above for clothing.

Right shoe on the wrong (or left) foot?

Children should be able to manage their shoes by themselves. Children will put the wrong shoe on the wrong foot (most of the time). There is no evidence that this causes children to fall or negatively impacts their physical development. Out of respect for the child's self-care efforts, Central does not have them correct this. Untied laces do cause injuries. Please help your child learn to tie their laces. Remember, none of us went to prom with shoes on the wrong feet!

Outerwear

Please provide your child with seasonally appropriate outerwear. This allows for children to be outside when it is wet, rainy, hot, or cold. Raingear, waterproof boots, hats, etc. ALL ITEMS MUST BE LABELED. These will be left at school and not sent home for weekends or holidays. We ask parents to exchange them each season to be certain their child has weather appropriate clothing that fits well. Please let Central know if this is problematic for you for any reason. We may be able to help.

Weather/seasonally appropriate

Because of our zero waste policy, we follow the recommendations of energy conserving advocates and set our thermostat at 80°F during the summer and 68°F during the winter. We experience the outdoor environment every single day in all types of (safe) weather. The outerwear your child wears must be appropriate for rugged outdoor wear in any type of weather. Please leave rain boots and outerwear here at school in case unexpected weather develops during school hours. The change of seasons can mark the need for season-specific clothing. Remember to label each item that comes into school.

Warmer/hot weather

Loose-fitting, light-colored clothing with long sleeves and pants and closed toed shoes reduce the need for insect repellent. This type of clothing also reduces the need for sunscreen. Sun hats should be brought and left at school. Please note that Central staff members will not apply sunscreen or insect repellent.

Cooler/cold weather

Warm clothing and insulated outerwear should be brought to and left at school. We ask all children to put on all of the outerwear they wore to school that day before going out to play. Because children have higher metabolisms than adults and because they are more active than adults, they often become overheated and will ask to take their outerwear off (imagine if you were involved in aerobic exercise and were required to wear a coat and hat). It is our policy to allow primary and elementary children to take their outerwear off once they are outside and they report being hot. Research indicates that children do not become sick or catch cold because of cold weather.

- The small amount of vitamin D that is available through sunlight cannot touch the skin if it is covered

- Some bacteria/viruses that enjoy the dry, warm indoor climates, cannot survive for very long in the colder outdoor temperatures
- We observe children putting their outerwear on when they truly become cold.

Special Note: Infant and Toddlers

The little ones do not have this option. Because their digits are smaller and their smaller bodies do not regulate heat as efficiently, we have toddlers keep all of their weather-appropriate outerwear on during outdoor activities.

Lost and Found

For several reasons, Central no longer maintains a Lost and Found area. Items not labeled or claimed by children are donated to Goodwill or to Diversity Thrift. Central staff do their best to reunite items and children at the end of each day. Please help Central reduce unnecessary waste and consumerism by labeling your child's items and clothing. Children who dress themselves are more likely to recognize and take ownership of their clothing.

DAILY ROUTINES & SCHEDULES

Outdoor playtime schedules are responsive to weather, activity levels, or events. Bathrooms and water are always available; a.m. and p.m. snacks are available on demand. Children may bring in and eat breakfast at school. Schedules vary from level to level and may change based on seasons.

Infant daily schedule

Infants are the bosses at Central! They dictate when they eat and sleep. As they become mobile, the guides will encourage them to shift from 2 + naps to 1 in preparation for their transition into the toddler program.

Toddler daily schedule

8:00-9:00 Arrival and first lessons
8:00-9:45 Lessons and activities in all curriculum areas
9:45-10:45 Outdoor playtime
10:45-11:30 Homemade lunches
11:30-2:30 Nap and quiet time
2:30-3:15 Lessons and activities in all curriculum areas continue
3:30-5:00 Outdoor playtime, Dismissal

Pre-primary and primary daily schedule

8:00 - 9:00 Arrival and first lessons
9:00-10:30 Lessons and activities in all curriculum areas
10:30-11:00 Morning group
11:00-12:00 Outdoor playtime
12:00-12:30 Homemade lunches
12:30-3:00 Nap/rest and quiet time
2:30-3:00 Lessons and activities in all curriculum areas continue
3:00-3:30 Afternoon group (music)
3:30-4:30 Outdoor playtime
4:00-5:00 Group Activities and dismissal

Elementary daily schedule

8:00-9:15 Individual and small group lessons and work cycles
9:15-9:45 Outdoor activities
9:45-10:00 Morning group-readings and greetings
10:00-1:00 Individual and small group lessons and work cycles
1:00-1:30 Lunches, daily soup and journal writing
1:30-2:00 Outdoor playtime
2:00-4:30 Individual and small group lessons and work cycles

Middle school daily schedule

8:30-9:15 Individual and daily assessment/journal entry
9:15-9:45 Morning meeting
9:45-1:00 Study lab
1:00-2:00 Lunches and outdoor activities
1:30-2:30 Study lab
2:00-4:30 Individual and small group lessons and work cycles

COMPONENTS OF YOUR CHILD'S DAILY ROUTINE

SELF CARE

Montessori children experience a high degree of autonomy after they have received instructions on self-care. They learn to wash their hands, blow their noses, get their own water, set up their snacks and lunches, ask for help, help others, lay out and restore their mats and care for their environment and others.

Special Notice: Currently, all children 2 and older are required to wear face masks.

All children (and staff) are instructed to wash their hands upon arrival, before they eat, after they eat, before and after using the toilet, upon coming in from the playground, when they touch their faces, and before they leave each day. We ask parents to reinforce these important personal hygiene routines at home.

Starting in the primary program, toilets are in standard bathrooms. If a teacher needs to assist a child, the door is left open and another teacher is aware and present. Our youngest students are learning to be autonomous in the restroom as well. This means that a child may have a bowel movement and not inform a teacher or they may not want help. They will do their best to clean. Parents should check for cleanliness and provide many warm, sudsy baths each and every day and help their child practice personal hygiene skills. Contact the school for more information about this.

CARE OF OTHERS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Montessori programs help children become sensitive to the needs of others and the environment. Lessons in Practical Life and cultural studies stress how each person, even a young child, can attend to these needs.

REST TIME

Children can bring a comfort item to school. Parents should label these. *Children should not bring a pacifier to school.* Children in the preprimary or primary classes will not wear diapers during naptime without prior agreement with the director. Just let us know if we can help.

Central provides all children, under the age of 5, a period of about 2 hours each day for naps and rest. This time is used by the children to sleep and to rest or a combination of these. The start of nap/rest times may shift a bit depending on seasons.

Developmental Groups	Time
Infants	2+ x a day: self-determined
Toddlers	11:30-2:30
Preprimary	12:00-2:30
Primary (under 5 years of age)	12:00-2:30

Learning to relax and self-soothe in a busy world

Although there are new consumer products that may, in the short term, seem to be a sleep solution for infants (and their very tired parents), these items may (or may not) delay a child's ability to self calm and to sleep in a 'real life' environment. I do not fault parents for using these and may have used one myself. No judgment or worries. Central will not use these products in our school environment.

Children can sleep anywhere

It is my observation that children who are tired can and do go to sleep everywhere. Even in places where there is much noise, lights, and movement - say a festival, a grocery store, a restaurant. I have often wondered if ambient sounds and natural lighting might be a comfort for many children who may experience anxiety about being "separated" from others during nap time. We see that little ones can acclimate and have restorative sleep in our bright, busy classroom spaces.

Goal of self care

The goal of Montessori programming is to continually empower children to care for self and to gain autonomy and independence. Our rest/nap policies are consistent with this goal.

Align home with school's nap/rest times, if possible

Many children, because of busy parent schedules, do not rest on weekends. We encourage parents, if they are able and willing, to align their child's rest/nap time with Central's. This will help the child move out of negotiations and to feel comfortable with an established rest/nap schedule at home and school.

If your child is preparing to join us, helping them move into Central's nap/rest schedule can be very helpful.

CENTRAL'S NAP/REST POLICY AND PRACTICES

At school, the rest/nap environment is prepared, a routine is followed, and staff are well trained to help children develop the important life skills they need to self-soothe, and/or to calm and relax. This is true for primary children and for infants and toddlers. (Please find specific consideration for infants and toddlers at the bottom of this document.)

Environment and routine

- A child's rest space is the same each day
- Mats are placed and comfort items are set on mats
- Lights are turned out or lowered allowing for natural light to remain in all classrooms
- Music plays softly in the background
- Ambient sounds from different classrooms or from children talking or moving about in the nap space are present
- Mats are cleaned once a week (or more) and bedding is sent home to be laundered
- Infant crib sheets are washed each day

Children

- Restore their lunches, go to the restroom, and wash their hands
- Lay down on their mats (encouraged to lay on their backs - infants are always placed on their backs to sleep)
- May look or read a book if, after 30 minutes, they have not gone to sleep
- May fall asleep quickly and some children will take up to one hour to truly relax
- Will resume quiet and calm Montessori activities while their friends begin to wake up and join them.

Teachers

- Set up the rest mats and may create rest cubbies (for safety and calmness) with the aid of tables
- Invite all children to lay down, usually on their backs, at the beginning of the rest period. This allows children to observe the entire room and to have visual space. It also reduces the child's impulse to crawl or grab at other children moving by or trying to rest
- Walk about the room, calmly reminding children of the need to rest and directives on how they can calm themselves (relax, breathe deeply, imagine their favorite thing or story). Most often, they are simply instruct children to lay down and rest
- Assist children transition and into and out of rest/nap to afternoon activities.

Infant Sleep Practices

Infants under 16 months of age will be placed for sleep in a supine position (wholly on their back) for every nap or sleep time;

Crib

- A firm crib mattress covered by a tight-fitting sheet in a CPSC safety-approved crib will be used
- All cribs, linen and mattress covers will be numbered. Each number will be assigned to a specific child
- No items may be placed in or over a crib occupied by an infant; no positioning devices, mobiles, pacifiers, or toys. No positioning devices or monitors will be used unless the infant's primary care provider has completed a signed waiver
- A sleep sack may be used, but no blanket (blankets are welcome once a child transitions to a floor mat at 12 months)
- The bedding for each child's assigned crib will be laundered each day with water at least 140 degrees. Bedding that is soiled will be removed from the room immediately and washed before being used again
- Cribs will be a minimum of 12 inches apart, unless separated by Plexiglass or wood
- Cribs will have a clearance of 30 inches on the service side of the crib
- Cribs and mats used for sleep will be mapped with the infant's name and assigned number.

Infant

- Infants will be placed on their backs. If a side position is used by the infant, the guide will bring the dependent arm forward to reduce the likelihood of the infant rolling into a prone position. Infants that move themselves into a prone position will be allowed to sleep that way
- Infants shall be allowed to sleep or rest, as individually needed
- Only one infant will be placed in each crib
- Before an infant is placed in their crib for sleep, they will be checked to ensure that they are comfortably clothed (not overheated)
- Sleeping infants will always be directly observed and monitored by sight and sound at all times, including when they are falling asleep, sleeping, or in the process of waking up. They will be individually checked every 15 minutes
- Once infants are awake, they will be removed from cribs.

Central Montessori's Safe Sleep Practices matches &/or exceeds guidelines set by the American Academy of Pediatrics published in Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs

Pacifiers and Diapers

Pacifiers should not be sent to school and cannot be used during nap time. Unless the child wears diapers throughout the day, diapers are not worn during naptime.

Non-nappers: All children younger than five must rest, if not sleep. Some children do not normally nap. They are provided a time to relax, read a book and possibly fall asleep. Occasionally, a non-napping child will fall asleep. If staff feel that a child is tired enough to fall asleep, the child will be encouraged to rest, even beyond the initial rest time, then they may get up and begin the afternoon Montessori activities. Upon turning 5, children join the PIII (Kindergarten) afternoon class and may or may not continue to participate in rest time.

OUTDOOR PLAYTIME

All children go outside from anywhere between 1 hour to 2 hours or more. The outdoor activities are determined by weather, staffing, lessons, and more.

LESSONS

Children receive individual and group lessons (whole group and small group) every day. Because of the ambient learning that occurs within a Montessori classroom, children see and hear instruction even when they are not directly involved in lessons. Lessons and activities in art and music are fully integrated.

THE DAILY SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT OF CHILDREN IN A MONTESSORI CLASSROOM

The children spend their days with Central's well trained and dedicated teachers and staff. These crucial relationships are of importance and can help shape a child's overall experience while at school. In addition to the intensive training Montessori interns and lead teachers receive in their certification programs, all Central Montessori School staff are trained in acceptable and unacceptable management of children. There are different considerations for different levels and this topic is discussed in full during PIN events and parent conferences. These are the considerations for all staff in all classrooms.

Classroom management

Instead of raised voices and negative directives, Central's teachers use instructive directives to help children understand what is expected: "Please walk slowly in the classroom" instead of "STOP RUNNING" or "please use an "inside" voice while you are inside" instead of "STOP YELLING".

Here are a few of the management techniques the staff is trained to utilize when helping a child to move out of disruptive behavior.

- Engage children in activities if they are involved in disruptive behaviors
- Have children walk beside a teacher, holding their hand
- Joining a group of children for a lesson
- Engage the child to help with a Practical Life activity
- Invite a child to work with a friend who is likely to model productive and positive behaviors
- Direct a child to start and try again
- Practice moving about the classroom quietly and calmly with arms and hands relaxed by their sides
- Help children practice waiting for a turn calmly and quietly
- Apologizing to a friend if we make a mistake
- Forgiving a friend if they make a mistake

Teachers may not engage in forbidden acts

- Shaming or embarrassing a child for their behavior
- Withholding food as a form of punishment
- Moving a child into isolation or closing them behind a door
- Leaving a child alone (out of sight and hearing)
- Being with a child without another child or adult present (Please note that during AMH services, a child may be alone with a staff member but they are to wait in a place that can easily be assessed and viewed. This may also occur should a staff member need to care for a child in an emergency. Again, they will always be in an easily accessible and visible place.)

HEALTH FIRST FOOD POLICY SCHEDULE

Many of our families have found their way to our school because of our pro-health food policies. They appreciate the fact that the children who eat with their child are also eating the healthiest food they can afford to provide for their child. Please let us know if you would like more information about our Health First Food Policy.

Please send your child to school each day with the very healthiest food you can afford. Please let Anita know if Central can help in any way.

Think 3 mini meals

No matter when your child wants to eat, they find healthy foods in their lunchbox.

Breakfast

If your morning is hectic, please feel free to include a breakfast in your child's lunch box!

Snacktimes

Children may eat a morning snack and afternoon snack whenever they choose (except for 30 minutes right before lunch). If all of the food in their lunch box is healthy food, then they can have full autonomy and eat whatever they would like whenever they would like! No snack foods please.

Lunchtimes

Lunchtime is social (children all eat with their classmates at the same time). It runs about thirty minutes long. The children set their tables, place all of their food before them, enjoy lunch together, restore, and clean their lunch area. Please send lunch to school each day, labeled with your child's name and the date.

Join us for lunch: Paused

Parents/guardians are free to join their child for lunch! Parents/guardians are welcome to have lunch on their child's birthday or whenever possible. However, try not to come too often because the children are learning the wonderful art of appropriate discussion with their peers during this time.

HEALTH FIRST FOOD POLICY THOUGHTS

Learning to enjoy a healthy diet is one of the most important habits we can instill in our children.

EATING WHEN HUNGRY

Children, like adults, may have a diminished appetite because of several possible reasons: They may be ill, tired, or experience a (newly developed?) lack of interest in the food packed. Children may be excited or in a transitional period. They may experience great hunger and interest in food earlier or later in the day. Young children may have not normalized to three meals a day. They simply eat when they are hungry.

UNEATEN FOOD

Many preschools may serve lunch and simply empty any uneaten food into the trash can. The parent has no way of gauging how much their child has actually eaten during the day. When parents provide the food for their children, and all uneaten food is sent back home, parents can see exactly what a child consumes. Sometimes this is less than the parent would like. Central staff understand the concern parents may experience when a lunch is not eaten, but we cannot bribe or force a child to eat.

PARENTAL ANXIETY ABOUT FOOD AND THEIR CHILD

If you feel that your child is not consuming enough calories during the day, please contact your child's pediatrician. If your child is, indeed, undernourished and/or diagnosed with failure to thrive, your pediatrician may recommend foods with a higher calorie count-not necessarily more food. Please contact your pediatrician for guidance and please alert Central if your child requires special medical nutritional support during the school day.

GROWTH SPURTS

Children seem to experience growth spurts. They may have plenty of food one day and the next day, the same amount is not adequate. Central will contact you should your child need extra food.

A MISSING LUNCHBOX AND A "GIVING PLATE"

Sometimes an elementary child may be a bit extra hungry or the parent will forget the lunchbox. As soon as Central is aware of this, we will contact you. If it is close to lunch time, a "giving plate" is set out and friends are asked to donate a small amount of their food should they have any to spare. It is quite a remarkable thing to witness. Children carefully place a few grapes or a small portion of cheese or vegetables on the giving plate. Soon the plate is full and the hungry friend has plenty to eat! This may well be the first time a child has been able to provide food for another person.

DAILY SOUP

Daily Soup is not a snack or a meal. It is an important cultural/science learning experience. The fresh fruits and vegetables and other items the parents/guardians contribute on Mondays (or paid for twice a year) may be used to make Daily Soup as well as Practical Life experiences. The purpose of preparing foods with the students in an academic setting is to make the studies of plants and foods meaningful. Students also have a chance to study where food comes from, how it may differ from culture to culture, and what comprises a healthful diet.

This is an addition to the foods packed for your child's lunch. Children will often try foods they think they do not like while eating with friends (same with adults!)

Toddlers do not yet have the skills necessary to prepare Daily Soup like the primary children but they too love to share in food experiences. If special fresh fruits or vegetables are sent in by parents, that food will be prepared by teachers beside the toddlers and shared with everyone!

Daily Soup is primarily vegan and all uneaten produce is composted and this compost is used in our school gardens. Thank you for your important support of this part of our curriculum.

RECOMMENDED FOODS

Please pack only the healthiest foods you can afford. You may want to use the Good Nutrition List as a food guideline when making selections on what to pack. One or two pieces of fresh fruit or vegetables, a source of protein and complex carbohydrates make for a very healthful meal. We send home any food your child does not eat so you have a chance to monitor what types of food your child is eating.

Children, unless moving through a growth spurt, do not eat as much as an adult. Please pack simple lunches. If your child's teacher feels that your child needs additional food, they will notify you directly. Over-packing a lunch can be overwhelming. Your child will almost always choose to eat the fattiest, saltiest food you pack for him/her so please avoid packing these foods.

Great options: Fruit/Vegetables, dried/fresh legumes, unsweetened cereals/other grains/pastas, eggs/cheeses, breads, seeds, tofu, milk, unsweetened applesauce*, unsweetened yogurt*, etc.

*No single-use containers, please!

Special Note: Should your family find it hard to pack these recommended foods or other nutritious options, for any reason at all, please contact Central, we may be able to help.

WHAT NOT TO SEND IN A LUNCHBOX

Please do not send foods containing a lot of sugar, or salty or fatty foods to school in your child's lunch. There are many foods that are fake-healthy. Because we cannot see the list of ingredients, they may be sent home. These foods can be enjoyed at home for breakfast and/or dinner. We will respectfully send these foods (or items that may look like these) home at the end of the day. Crackers/pretzels, goldfish, pre-packaged applesauce, premixed yogurts, dessert breads, dry fruits, granola bars, pre-packaged yogurt with fruit in single serving containers are all foods that we will send home.

Food pouches

Please do not send in single serving food pouches. They are the antithesis of food exploration and information, as all food is mush inside the pouch. The child cannot see the foods, experience different textures or smell the foods. In addition, they create unnecessary waste.

"Sometimes foods" should be served at home and at school only during special events.

HOW TO HAVE A PLEASANT LUNCH

The children follow these guidelines when eating with others. Hopefully, these are similar to the guidelines used in your home.

- Stay seated the entire time that you are eating
- Stay calm with arms relaxed
- Discuss pleasant things while at the table with others
- Do not make a negative statement or negative body language in response to someone else's food (this can make some children feel ashamed or different)
- Do not share food with others
- Tell a teacher if you do not have enough food

WEANING INFANTS AND TODDLER FOODS: SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

We know the little ones are ready to wean because they tell us! They will begin to show interest in the solid foods those around them are eating and will indicate they want to touch it or grab it or eat it! This is an exciting time and Central can help you and your infant through this important transition. There are some important considerations.

Little ones have specific health concerns and foods must be screened for choking hazards. Please send your child a limited selection of healthy foods (at least 3 items). For little ones, the simpler, the better. Your child may go through a growth spurt and need additional food at any time. We will let you know when this occurs. Please label your child's lunchbox and all reusable containers with your child's name and the date.

The following items must be considered when you are preparing your child's snack and lunch. It's all about safety! Hotdogs can be high risk foods. They must be cut in half lengthwise and then quartered. Foods that are round, hard, small, thick, smooth, or slippery are considered high-risk foods for young children. Examples are: raw carrots, peanuts, whole grapes, hard pretzels, seeds and nuts, popcorn, chunks of meat and spoonfuls of peanut butter.

FOOD ALLERGIES

You must bring in a physician's report for any medically significant food allergies your child has. Remember that because of our dynamic and social food program, Central is not the correct school program if your child has severe or life-threatening food allergies**. Children are generally discouraged from sharing food with each other because of family food preferences, allergies, and the need to monitor food consumed at school. Please know that your child's medically significant allergies, once you have provided us with this information, are posted in all classrooms, and teachers are very watchful.

If your child has a medically significant food allergy, please send safe prepackaged "sometimes" foods that can be offered to your child when other children are eating sometimes foods.

** Please be aware of this policy before beginning an enrollment process with Central Montessori School.

HOLIDAYS, CELEBRATIONS, AND "SOMETIMES" FOODS

Food used to mark celebrations are allowable because we serve them so seldom and this type of food can hold great meaning to different cultures and families. We ask that parents consider providing the most nutritional foods possible for these events.

Central celebrations: times & places when sometimes foods might be served

Birthdays (Walk around the Sun celebrations)

Chili Cook-Off

Election Day (elementary and older)

GrandDays: Paused

Winter Celebration: Paused

Day of Friendship (Valentine's Day)

Market Days

Parent Visitation Days: Paused

Continent Day: Paused

Pancake Heaven: Paused

End of Year Events: Paused

ZERO WASTE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY: REUSABLE CONTAINERS & 2 CLOTH NAPKINS

Central Montessori School strives to promote ecological awareness and activism within our school and in the community. We have adopted a Zero Waste Policy: everything in the school that qualifies as "trash" should be taken out of the school by the same person who brought it in. The zero waste policy is similar to the policy used in protected wildlife areas. We reuse or recycle everything possible. There are several benefits to the policy.

- Much time and money can be saved (not to mention the reduction of pollution) by using reusable containers
- Leftovers taste wonderful in a reusable container
- Reusable containers do not fill up our waste sites as quickly as one-use containers
- Children are more likely to help prepare their lunches if they are familiar with the food container and can manage it by themselves
- Cloth napkins can decompose quickly and will not fill our landfills and waterways