



Mountain Laurel Montessori School
Employee Handbook 2017-2018

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LETTER FROM HEAD OF THE DIRECTORS

Dear Staff,

We hope this handbook helps you to navigate your way through the year with comfort and confidence. We suggest that you read it thoroughly before school begins and give us a call if you have any questions.

Every attempt has been made to include the information you may need, but it is possible that changes will be necessary. If you think of any way to improve this publication, please speak to Meg DeMato.

Staff will be required to use their school provided email for all professional electronic correspondence beginning this year.

The best hours to reach Mona are 11:30 - 12:30 & 3:30 – 5:00 Monday through Friday. Please feel free to contact Meg DeMato by phone (410-236-2592) or email, or in person throughout the day

Forever more,

Mona Nixon, & Meg DeMato

SCHOOL HISTORY

Founded in 1989, Mountain Laurel Montessori School educates families and children from infancy through 9th grade. The mission of the school is to provide ideal learning environments for each stage of a child’s development, adhering to the highest standards of Montessori education. The school is fully licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Social Services. Above all, teachers and staff are deeply committed to education that guides children to become joyful, life-long scholars and engaged, responsible citizens of the world.

Mountain Laurel Montessori School incorporates a close and caring community on two campuses. Infant and toddler, primary (3-6 years), elementary (1st-6th grades), and junior high (7th-9th) classes are located on a 5-acre wooded campus in Front Royal. Bus service to both campuses is available from Marshall , Warrenton and Winchester during the school year.

VIRGINIA CHILD DAY CENTER LICENSING STANDARDS

Mountain Laurel Montessori is licensed as a Child Day Center through the Virginia Department of Social Services. Licensure regulations apply to all pre-school age children and before and after programs.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MLMS is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 corporation and, in so being, has a board of directors. The mission of the board of directors, as stated in the MLMS Articles of Incorporation is to support and uphold the mission statement of the school, providing for a Montessori environment, adhering to the standards of Association Montessori Internationale

(AMI). The day-to-day operations and classroom policies of the school are the responsibility of the School Directors and staff. The School Directors are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the Montessori environment.

The Board is charged with the ultimate responsibility for financial, legal, and strategic planning and policy issues for MLMS. The Board, with the School Co- Directors, sets the policy to be implemented by the School Directors and Administration. Furthermore, the Board ensures the integrity of Montessori philosophy within the school by hiring Montessori trained and certified teachers. The Board is comprised of experienced individuals whose responsibility is the long-term health and stability of the school.

Our current board members are:

- Kris Boucher
- Monica Nixon
- Meg DeMato
- Carolyn Linke
- KC Dickman
- Ernie Ryles
- Maureen McGowan

SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Monica Nixon, Co-Director at Mountain Laurel, founded the school in 1989. Ms. Nixon holds a Bachelor Degree in Art Education from Middle Tennessee State University. Her graduate work includes an AMI Primary Diploma from Atlanta Montessori Institute and an AMI Elementary Diploma from Washington Montessori Institute. Ms. Nixon has over 30 years of experience as a Montessori teacher at both the Primary and Elementary levels. She has directed her current elementary class for the past fifteen years.

Ms. Nixon loves to be in the thick of classroom life – she and the children making new discoveries and expanding horizons. She especially appreciates supporting the students as they nurture friendships and resolve conflicts with strength and compassion.

Meg DeMato, Co-Director, grew up in Northeastern Pennsylvania. She attended Loyola University in Maryland in Baltimore, where she earned her undergraduate degree in Elementary Education, and minored in French. She then went on to earn her Master’s Degree in Early Childhood Education, from Loyola, as well as her Primary AMI Diploma. Before working at Mountain Laurel, she worked at Wyoming Seminary College Preparatory School in the International Office. She also taught as a Primary teacher at the Montessori School of Manhattan in NYC.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Board of Directors			
School Co- Directors – Monica Nixon & Meg DeMato			
Administrative Coordinator – Meg DeMato			
Front Office	Organization	Academic	Academic Support
Business Manager Rose DiNinno	School Store & Special Events Coordinator: Odalys Martin	Junior High Staff: Mary Bell David Salgado	Elementary Assistants: Catie Noel Dianne Trinh
Admissions and Records Jessica Kuzmick Office Assistant Anna Burling		Elementary Teachers: Monica Nixon Tara Hutchinson	Primary Assistants: Beth Irwin
Transportation Assistants: Wendy Wilson Phil Baumgart Mary Bell Rose DiNinno Jason Brackens Florentina Dobrin		Primary Teachers: Pam Thomas Carrie Irre	Toddler/Beginnings Assistant: Debbie Fritts
Maintenance: Bryan DiNinno		Toddler/Beginnings Teacher: Sarah Veitenthal	Primary Classroom Spanish Teacher: Naomi Egger Elementary Classroom Spanish Teacher: Elizabeth Schelin
			Laurel Club Staff: Beth Irwin Betsy Grover Dianne Trinh

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ADMISSIONS OVERVIEW

Mountain Laurel Montessori is a school for children between 16 months and 15 years of age (through 9th grade). One of the beauties of a Montessori environment is that both children with learning differences and those with exceptional abilities can be equally challenged and engaged in their work, due to mixed-age grouping and a thoughtful, individualized curriculum.

Mountain Laurel Montessori School admits students of any race, color, religion, and national or ethnic origin, to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to students at the school.

We may not have immediate openings in some programs; however, when this is the case, submission of an application and application fee ensures that your child will be included on a wait-list to be considered for the next available placement. We prefer that children begin their Montessori experience by 3 ½ , but we do accept older children without prior Montessori experience when we feel our school can meet their needs.

Decisions are based on the needs of our learning communities and appropriate age and gender balances.

Jessica Kuzmick and Meg DeMato are coordinating admissions. All inquiries, both in person and via telephone calls will be processed through Jessica or Meg. Please refer the family directly to Jessica or Meg. If neither are available, please transfer the inquiry to Jessica's voicemail (extension 227). Please alert Jessica by sending her an email that you have done so. It is imperative that MLMS is able to keep track of interested parents and their place in the admissions process. All of these steps will allow Jessica and Meg to provide appropriate information to the parent as well as contact them for future marketing.

EMPLOYEE CODE OF ETHICS

- I will utilize proper communication and conflict resolution channels and procedures.
- I will discuss confidential information only with authorized persons and only as necessary for legitimate matters of MLMS business.
- I will adhere to the terms of the Staff Handbook.
- I will refrain from malicious or false gossip/remarks regarding colleagues, students, parents or administrators.
- I will be aware of my personal appearance and will dress appropriately.
- I will refrain from discussing student concerns or issues in a way that could be hurtful or embarrassing to the child, the family or MLMS.
- I will refrain from communicating with anyone about issues concerning Mountain Laurel without first verifying with the Directors that I am representing the school appropriately.
- I will practice patience, kindness, perseverance and calmness.
- I will participate to the best of my ability in all MLMS fundraising initiatives, marketing endeavors, community development activities and volunteer efforts.

REVIEW OF SCHOOL HANDBOOK & EMERGENCY PLANS

All staff members will carefully read the following MLMS publications prior to the start of each new school year, the current MLMS school handbook, the staff handbook, and the emergency preparedness plan and sign the Employee Handbook of Acknowledgement Form and return to the Business Manager or her assistant. Employees who start after the first day of school must read these publications by the end of their first week of employment and sign the Employee Handbook Acknowledgment Form. All staff members must review these same publications periodically throughout the year. Staff members need to be particularly aware of the following:

-Arrival and departure of children; evacuation and shelter-in-place procedures; medication policies for reporting child abuse and neglect; parent communication in general and in emergency situations; all school schedules; food policies; and discipline policies.

BACKGROUND CHECKS AND UPDATES

All employees at Mountain Laurel are subject to regular background checks and renewals. This includes, VA Department of Social Services background checks, VA State Police background checks, and Sworn Statements. Employees are responsible for reporting any intermediate incidents, violations, and convicted crimes, that would appear on background checks, at the time of the event. Confidentiality will be maintained. While it is understood that not all violations affect employment eligibility, violations can affect school policies and other regulations. Failure to report incidents will result in employment review. All staff can request a copy of Virginia's Department of Social Services Barrier crimes at any time from the office, and can have access to their personal employee file upon request.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

All staff should demonstrate a positive attitude towards the children, the parents and MLMS as a whole. We must strive to act in a professional manner at all times, with both fellow staff members and with the parents. The earlier a problem or issue is brought up or addressed, the quicker we will be able to arrive at a solution. Personal problems have no place in the classroom and should be left at home. Children deserve to have a positive happy atmosphere at all times. Staff members should avoid using negative or harsh words. Instead, staff should always use proper grammar, speak positively, clearly and deliberately while in the presence of students and parents. Staff members should always refrain from gossip and unnecessary chatter while children are present and working.

STAFF POSITIONS AND STAFF COMMUNICATION

Board of Directors: Supervises School Co- Directors

School Co-Directors: Monica Nixon & Meg DeMato: Supervises all staff, strategic planning

Additional Duties for Margaret DeMato: supervises non-teaching staff, staff attendance and substitutions. Responsible for school events, alumni relations, annual giving campaign organizing staff meetings, coordination of website, school tours.

Business Manager, Rose DiNinno: Responsible for accounting, tuition management, facilities, security, risk management, licensing, student records, bus transportation, Supervises: Office Assistants, Bus Drivers, Facilities Staff.

Receptionist: Anna Burling: oversees Newsflash/Email updates, community outreach.

Admissions: Jessica Kuzmick & Meg DeMato

Events Coordinator: Odalys Martin: Special events planning and fundraising, volunteer coordination, Volunteer Service Agreement hours, extra-curricular activities.

Classroom Teachers: Mary Bell, Tara Hutchinson, Carrie Irre, Monica Nixon, David Salgado, Pam Thomas, Sarah Veitenthal: Responsible for curriculum and classroom. Supervises: Own classroom Assistant (for classrooms with an Assistant).

Facilities Maintenance, Bryan DiNinno: physical care of both campuses

Communication:

Our staff has always been very supportive of each other. Communication is key to a well-run organization, so regular mandatory staff meetings will be held throughout the school year. These meetings will be used to clarify and review responsibilities and procedures; resolve issues; discuss new ideas and suggestions; and support each other in our professional growth and development. Office assistants operate under the supervision of Rose DiNinno. Classroom assistants operate under the supervision of their classroom teacher. If a conflict cannot be resolved after communicating with co-workers and/or direct supervisor, please address the issue with Meg.

We know that...

- Everyone is trying their best and is committed to the MLMS Mission.
- Hierarchy and structure are a part of life in an organization.
- Sometimes people communicate in ways that feel hurtful.
- Conflict will happen.
- Conflict is difficult and can seem frightening.

We expect that...

- Adults will communicate directly with any person with whom they have conflict.
- People will own their feelings and will not use them to avoid effective communication.
- Conflicts will be addressed in a timely manner.
- Mediation will be sought out by the person experiencing unresolved conflicts or feelings.

Please promote good communication by:

- Following the Model of Respectful Communication.
- Understanding the differences between hurtful words, conflict, bullying and workplace harassment and using these terms accurately and carefully.
- Remembering that everyone deserves to work in a supportive and professional atmosphere.

Grace & Courtesy
The Montessori Model of Respectful Communication

Create
time and space for communication.

Invite
participation of those affected.

Clarify
intentions.

Think
and then speak honestly.

Listen
for the value in others' thoughts and words.

Observe
how others are feeling.

Offer
empathy.

Accept
differences of opinion.

Express

gratitude for others' time and efforts.

ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

By participating in the Annual Giving Campaign, Mountain Laurel Staff serve as an example to our students and families and solidifies the culture of giving at MLMS. The Annual Giving Campaign closes the gap between tuition and the yearly budget. This community is vibrant and made up of students, teachers, parents and friends who care deeply about our school's success. A gift from you is a vote of confidence in our school and sends the message that quality Montessori education is important and valued. By contributing to the Annual Giving Campaign you help support financial aid assistance, staff development, as well as maintain our beautiful environments. Contributions by staff can be made in many ways including payroll deduction, one-time or multiple payments. The Annual Giving Campaign appeals will begin in October, however your contribution can be made at any time. Please see Meg DeMato in order to make your donation.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

MLMS staff members have the responsibility to be proactive in their continuing professional growth. Additionally, as a condition of granting a license for daycare services, the Virginia Department of Social Services requires that employees fulfill annual requirements for training and professional development. Staff files are maintained by Jessica. When appropriate training opportunities become available, information will be shared via email or in staff mailboxes. If a desired training is offered during school hours, staff must obtain permission from the Directors prior to attending the training in order to ensure that we have appropriate coverage. It is the staff's responsibility to ensure they complete their required training hours prior to the end of the school year. Jessica will assist with tracking staff training hours, but it will be the staff's responsibility to find and register for appropriate training. Jessica will be responsible for documenting completed training and certifications. Please coordinate with her in order to keep your file up to date. For most staff 16 hours of training is required annually. Staff should use Parent Education nights and training provided by MLMS prior to arranging any outside training. If cost is attached to additional training, the staff member must send a request to attend the training with all details included to rdininno@mlm-school.org.

Staff may be required to attend trainings during professional development days, unless they have already completed their training.

It is expected that all staff will attend the MLMS annual conference. (Training hours are awarded).

Depending upon prior experience, new employees may be required to complete 24 hours of training within the first month of employment. All staff training must be completed by June 1st (annually).

TB TESTING

All new staff are required to have a TB screening completed prior to beginning employment at MLMS. You may not begin work if we have not received documentation of this screening.

For returning staff, if your TB screening expires you will not be able to attend work at MLMS until a new screening is completed. If you are unable to schedule a screening, you will be required to use personal leave until MLMS receives screening documentation. If the lapse goes beyond your personal leave balance, you will be financially responsible for the hours missed. It is imperative for Social Service regulations that the TB screening be renewed prior to lapse.

STAFF ARRIVAL

All staff members must be prepared and ready to work at their designated start time. It is strongly recommended that staff should arrive a minimum of 10 minutes early in order to attend to personal needs, (such as pouring coffee, hanging coats, etc.) prior to starting work. Pulling into the parking lot at 8:00, if your start time is 8:00, is not an appropriate timely arrival. If you are going to be even a few minutes late, please inform the office staff as soon as possible so that they can manage position coverage until you are ready to assume your position. Please keep in mind that tardiness places an additional burden on other staff who also have their own responsibilities.

PROFESSIONAL WORK DAYS & AFTER-HOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lead Teachers are expected to attend Parent Education meetings
- All staff are expected to attend the MLMS Annual Conference
- Assistants are expected to provide a minimum of 8 hours of work time for their supervisors at the beginning of the year, before school starts, and at the end of the year following the last day of school. These times can be scheduled with the appropriate supervisor.
- Staff are expected to attend the whole staff meeting at the beginning of the year. This time may not be counted as part of the 8 hours given to supervisors.
- Staff may be required to attend trainings provided on professional days when school is closed, if they have not completed or scheduled their required training hours.

SCHEDULED & UNSCHEDULED DAYS OFF

- Teachers may take paid leave for up to seven days per academic year for bona fide illness or personal leave without reduction in compensation.
- Support staff who work 35+ hours per week may have paid leave up to seven days per academic year for bona fide illness or personal leave without reduction in compensation.
- Support staff who work 34 hours or less per week may have paid leave up to three days per academic year for bona fide illness or personal leave without reduction in compensation.

Such leave is not cumulative from year to year. Leave taken that exceeds allotted contract hours shall be deducted from July's payment. Employees will be notified of their accumulated leave in January and June.

Scheduled Absences:

To arrange a planned absence, a **"Request for Personal Leave" form must be submitted to Meg ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE**. This applies to planned delayed arrivals, early departures, and absences due to appointment. *Requests submitted less than one week in advance may be denied.*

Employees may not request leave for the following days/events: VIP days, the day before scheduled breaks, any day during the first and/or last week of school.

Unscheduled Absences: MEG (410-236-2592)

In case of illness or unforeseen absence, please notify MEG no later than 7:30 a.m. You may call as early as 5:00 am.

Please call her cell (410-236-2592).

Whenever a staff member is unexpectedly absent, school routine is disrupted. The more notice we have the better able we are to find coverage. As soon as possible, staff absences and substitute coverage will be posted on the inside of the kitchen door. **All staff members are required to check the posted areas DAILY** to see what changes in their own schedule might occur. Please remember schedules can change day to day, so it is important to check for changes every morning. Changes may also occur during the day. Office staff will update changes throughout the day as they occur.

Please assist your colleagues by having a written set of instructions for a substitute. This should be prepared early in the school year and updated throughout. Please include instructions, such as the procedure for a child who needs to change clothing due to a bathroom accident, where extra clothes are kept, the procedure for the closure of the morning and afternoon, the dismissal procedure, lunch procedure, etc. Keep instructions simple so that it is a help rather than a nuisance. Especially critical are any dietary or physical issues that may affect a child. Such information should be posted prominently where a substitute can readily find it. It is important to keep your roll book in a consistent place and let Rose know where it can be found.

Folgers: – Elementary: Only staff members who have graduating students may go to Washington, D.C. to see their child perform. There is a performance on campus for all others to enjoy. Jr. High Campus: The Jr. High students may not be participated in the Folger every year. Depending on their schedule, permission to attend must be attained from the administration.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

It is essential for the well-being of our school that communication with parents is as clear as possible and that the parents understand that we work as a team. For this reason, we have the following guidelines:

- Assistants should discuss issues or problems concerning a child with the child's teacher, who will make the decision as to the best course of action.
- Monica or Meg **MUST** be made aware of significant issues and before any problem is discussed with a parent, she must be notified. When teachers discuss a problem with a parent, judgments of the child are not to be made. It is important to use observations, especially in sensitive situations.
- No written information about a child is to be given to the parents, unless first reviewed by Meg. Any emails to parents should be copied to Monica and Meg. It is not necessary to cc routine classroom procedures.
- If a parent comes to a teacher or assistant with an administrative issue, refer them to Meg. If it is a financial issue, refer them to Rose.
- If a parent complains to you about another staff member, it is imperative that you communicate immediately that you may not discuss another staff member. Encourage them to speak directly with the staff member with whom they have a concern. You may also refer them to Meg.
- It is imperative that we respect each other and Mountain Laurel by not sharing with parents the private matters of the school. If you have concerns or issues that need to be addressed, direct communication, while not always the

most comfortable, is the most effective. Please speak directly to and ONLY with the person with whom you have an issue. If it is administrative or you feel you need assistance, please speak with Rose or Monica.

- If a parent should complain about our school or a staff member in your presence, it is crucial that we each handle ourselves professionally. Please do not participate in the conversation and let those present know they should communicate directly with the staff member involved, and Monica or Meg. It is important that you let them know that you have a responsibility to inform Monica. Please notify Monica immediately if such a situation arises.
- In a small school it can be challenging for staff members who are also parents to manage being friends and being professional. We ask you to exercise the greatest consciousness of what and how you are communicating with fellow MLMS parents. Please protect the privacy of the students and staff members in your social conversations.
- Staff members may not discuss information pertaining to any child, other than their own, with anyone who is not an MLMS staff member. It is also imperative that we protect the privacy of the children and parents by having any conversations regarding them, only private and with the appropriate staff members. (Please no hallway or in-classroom discussion.) In the case of an outside professional, express permission must be given by the parents to discuss the child.
- A Parent/Teacher conversation form will be available in the front office and on the Staff Resources section of the MLMS website. This form should be used to document any conversation a staff member feels should be brought to the Meg's attention. A copy should be placed both in the child's teacher's and Meg's mailboxes as soon as possible following the conversation.

Parents will ask questions about the school, their child's performance, behavior at school, other children, etc. The relationship between parents and teachers is very important. However, it is imperative that the proper Staff member address the questions and concerns of the parents.

With the exception of very basic information about the school or the location of a child's belongings, please direct parents as follows:

Rose DiNinno: Finances, Transportation, Facilities.

Monica Nixon & Meg DeMato: Academics

Meg DeMato: Administrative, Annual Giving Campaign, Social Media

Odalys Martin: Fundraising, Special Events, Volunteering

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Staff members may not communicate directly with students or former students through email, or other social networking media, including Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, MySpace, YouTube or other similar programs. This policy protects MLMS, and other staff members', and students' (or former students') privacy. Administrative staff may contact adult alumni via email or phone for marketing purposes. Teachers may use work email to communicate with students who have an MLMS email account for school purposes

The only exception allowed is for Jr. High staff who may communicate with alumni via their school email account, but not text.

If you use one of the social networking programs, please conduct yourself professionally. As an educator and staff member, you represent MLMS to our families and the greater community. It is wise to assume that what is posted on your page may be viewed publicly no matter what your privacy settings may be. There are many scenarios where this is possible. If you wouldn't want children to see it, don't post it. **Information pertaining to an MLMS child or parent absolutely may not be posted on any social networking site.**

Failure to follow the above guidelines could result in termination of employment.

USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Use of cell phones during a staff member's on-duty hours must be limited to use only pertaining to the well-being of the children, school emergencies and school business. Please DO NOT use texting for these purposes. Use of cell phones is not limited during personal time; however, personal calls may not be made in the presence of children.

Any staff member answering the phone should answer using the full name of the school followed by their name.

Example: "Mountain Laurel Montessori, this is _____."

STAFF BREAK AREA PROCEDURES

Each person must clean up after themselves and is responsible for any dishes, utensils, pans, they use. Please wipe any counters you use as well as your eating area. Dishes are to be washed and put away. Each person is responsible for whatever he or she places in the refrigerator and must have a name and entry date written clearly on it. Anything in the staff refrigerator is communal property unless marked with someone's name. Each Friday the refrigerator will be emptied of any food that appears stale, spoiled, is past its expiration date, or that is not clearly marked with a name.

Microwave and Toaster Ovens should be wiped after each use.

No eating in the front office.

DRESS CODE / UNIFORM / PERSONAL HABITS / MEAL BREAKS

All MLMS Staff will dress in a manner that is consistent with the school environment. Teachers who dress professionally command more respect from parents and co-workers.

During the regular school day all staff members are expected to dress neatly, cleanly and professionally.

Please adhere to the following guidelines:

Employee Dress Code:

Bottoms: Khaki, Black, Navy Blue, Dark Brown and Gray. You do not need to purchase bottoms from Land's End, but they must adhere to the regular dress code guidelines. No patterns or stripes, solid colors only.

Dresses: May be in green, gray, blue, gray, and black. No patterns or stripes, solid colors only.

White or yellow skirts are NOT allowed.

Tops: Must be in solid school colors - Green, Grey, Yellow (Maize), White, Black or Blue. Please note – ONLY the colors listed above are approved dress code colors.

A school logo must be visible on your shirt/sweater etc. at all times. Please note you may only remove sweaters if shirt underneath has a MLMS logo.

For example: You may wear a plain white shirt under a Mountain Laurel sweater or vest, but you may not wear a green (non-logo) sweater over a Mountain Laurel shirt if the logo is not visible. Use your reason. Do not wear an orange shirt under a sweater if the orange is visible, or wear a red sweater over your uniform. (The only exception is for outerwear/coats when going outside). Stick to the school colors.

*You may wear a variety of greens or blues, while keeping the school logo and colors in mind.

If you have any doubt ASK! (Meg)

Other Dress Code Policies:

- Dresses and shirts that are buttoned up can only have the top **two buttons undone**. This will ensure that **no cleavage is showing**.
- Dresses and skirts must be knee length or lower.
- Shirts for both men and women must be long enough that when squatting or bending no skin (or other sights) can be seen between the shirt and pants. No tank tops are permitted.
- Clothing must be in good repair, and free of tears and stains.
- Dresses, skirts, dress slacks, dress-length culottes and capris may be worn by women. Jeans are NOT permitted except at the Jr. High Program. Shorts may not be worn during the regular school year at the Front Royal campus.
- Leggings are to be worn only under dresses and skirts. Keep in mind that dresses and skirts must be knee length or lower, regardless.
- Shoes must be clean and in good repair. Flip-flops or tennis shoes, this includes Converse shoes, may not be worn. Jewelry, make-up, and perfume must be tasteful and minimal. (We do not want to distract the children from their work.)
- All staff members at the Front Royal campus must wear a school uniform.
- If hair dye is used, hair should be dyed an appropriate natural color.
- Piercings other than ear must not be worn during school hours. Pierced jewelry must be limited to two or fewer sets of conservative earrings. Tattoos must be covered at all times. (Please do not use school supplies such as band-aids).
- Staff may participate in non-uniform fundraisers. They must pay the appropriate "donation," and must follow all dress code regulations (except the uniform policies). Jeans are permitted.

Personal habits:

- Smoking is not allowed on school property.
- Please refrain from chewing gum during school hours.
- Staff may not eat in front of children unless it is during a sit-down meal with the children. (Breakfast should be eaten at home or if arriving before your work time, eaten in the Staff Break Area and finished before the staff member's start time. Lunch breaks are only offered to staff members who work more than four hours. Unless you are assigned to sit

with the children at lunch, meals at school should be eaten in the Staff Break Area or in an enclosed office away from the children.)

BACKGROUND CHECKS AND UPDATES (ADDED 12/13/17)

All employees at Mountain Laurel are subject to regular background checks and renewals. This includes, VA Department of Social Services background checks, VA State Police background checks, and Sworn Statements. Employees are responsible for reporting any intermediate incidents, violations, and convicted crimes, that would appear on background checks, at the time of the event. Confidentiality will be maintained. While it is understood that not all violations affect employment eligibility, violations can affect school policies and other regulations. Failure to report incidents will result in employment review. All staff can request a copy of Virginia's Department of Social Services Barrier crimes at any time from the office, and can have access to their personal employee file upon request.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION &/OR DISMISSAL

MLMS has a staff that is deeply dedicated to children and to our community. We are a supportive community where clear communication is valued. All staff members are entitled to fair and equitable treatment under the guidance of our mission statement. It is expected that all staff members will maintain professionalism when communicating and will work for the good of the school by supporting and upholding our mission and all policies stated here and in all other official MLMS publications.

Should infractions occur, including insubordination these procedures shall be followed:

- Employee will receive verbal and written notification of meeting date and time to discuss infractions.
- Meeting will be held with the employee and the appropriate administrative staff persons to review the occurrence(s).
- A written record of the meeting will be maintained with remedial recommendations, disciplinary actions and expected compliance stated clearly. All parties present at the meeting shall acknowledge the written record by signing the document.
- A second meeting will take place within a proscribed period of time with Monica and/or Meg and other appropriate administrative staff members to discuss success of compliance by employee.
- If compliance is not forthcoming the procedures will be repeated a total of three times.
- If after three meetings the employee cannot or does not comply with policy, termination of employment may occur.

Either the staff member or the school may terminate employment in accordance with the terms of the staff member's employment agreement and the terms set forth herein.

If any staff member does not agree to and cannot uphold MLMS policies and mission statement, employment should be sought elsewhere. MLMS reserves the right to immediately suspend or terminate a staff member's employment as warranted and permitted by law.

MLMS ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

Every employee of Mountain Laurel Montessori School has the right to a workplace free from harassment. Harassment of anyone on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, or physical or mental disability is prohibited by law and by the policies of Mountain Laurel. Harassment because of sexual orientation, personal

appearance, marital status, or other personal characteristics is disrespectful and also prohibited by Mountain Laurel's policies.

Harassment can include such behavior as slurs, demeaning jokes or comments, innuendoes, unwelcome compliments, cartoons, pictures, pranks, hazing, stereotypical comments, derogatory descriptions, or other verbal or physical conduct. Such behavior is considered harassment when it has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance; or affects an individual's workplace opportunities.

Sexual harassment is a type of harassment that occurs when the verbal or physical conduct described above is sexual in nature or gender-based. Unwelcome sexual advances (either verbal or physical), requests for favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- submission to such conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment (e.g., promotion, training, timekeeping, or overtime assignments).
- submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for making employment decisions (hiring, promotion, termination).
- the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Any employee who believes that he or she has been the subject of unwelcome harassment or who has observed harassment in the workplace, is encouraged to identify the offensive behavior and request that it stop. If you are unable to address the matter directly to the harasser, or if you do and the behavior continues, report the matter directly to the School Co- Directors or her designee.

All complaints will be investigated promptly, impartially, and discreetly. Upon completion of the investigation, the appropriate parties will be notified of the findings. If any employee is found by the School Co-Directors to have harassed another employee, appropriate corrective action will be taken. This could range from a disciplinary warning up to and including termination.

No employee will suffer retaliation for reporting alleged instances of harassment.

This policy has been adopted to ensure that all employees of Mountain Laurel Montessori School will treat each other with dignity and respect in a safe and positive work environment.

POLICY ON CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

Requirement to Report – Section 63.2-1509A of the *Code of Virginia* requires all teachers and other persons employed by the school to immediately report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect for any child under age 18. The school will require all mandated reporters to complete a state-approved training on recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect. This training can be accessed for free on-line at:

http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated_reporters/cws5691/index.html

If a school staff member has suspicions of child abuse or neglect that may have occurred either within or outside of the school setting, that person must immediately (within 24 hours) report their suspicion to the School Co- Directors or her designee. The School Co- Directors or her designate is mandated by law to immediately (within 24 hours) report the suspicion to **Child Protective Services** at the Warren County Department of Social Services, **(540) 635-3430** or the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at (800) 552-7096. The School Co- Directors or her designee who was informed of the suspected abuse is required to notify the staff member when the report was made to Warren County Department of Social Services or the VA Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline. The School Co- Directors or her designee who was informed of the suspected abuse is also required to notify the staff member of the name of the person at social services or the hotline who took the report and to report any follow-up action that was taken in regard to the report.

- When reporting child abuse or neglect, school employees must share with the Department of Social Services all information that establishes the basis for the suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

During the investigation of an alleged case of child abuse or neglect, the school will cooperate with the needs of the Child Protective Services worker, and will provide the following resources, as appropriate:

- Room/private space for interviews of staff and children;
- Accompaniment of the Child Protective Services worker to the site of the alleged abuse;
- Pertinent policies, procedures and records;
- Names, functions, and roles of involved parties;
- Work schedules of staff;
- Phone numbers and/or addresses of collateral children's parents/guardians in order for the Child Protective Services worker to gain permission to interview them as witnesses.

There are guidelines for interviewing children who are suspected of being abused or neglected or who are the siblings of such children.

- Prior to visiting the school, the local Child Protective Services worker will contact the School Co- Directors or her designee to establish a convenient time for the interview.
- A Child Protective Services worker required to make a report regarding child abuse or neglect may talk to any child suspected of such abuse or neglect or to any of his/her siblings without consent of and outside the presence of his/her parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person standing in loco parentis, or school personnel.
- The Child Protective Services worker assigned to the case will be responsible for notifying the parent or guardian that the interview has been conducted.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EMPLOYEES ACCUSED OF CHILD ABUSE

When a complaint of alleged child abuse and/or neglect has been filed against an employee, the School Co- Directors or her designee will notify the employee as soon as the school has received notification that the complaint will be investigated. It should be noted that all complaints made to Child Protective Services are not automatically investigated. The school system will participate in the investigation as invited to do so by the Department of Social Services.

- For the protection of the employee and all other parties involved, the employee will be immediately placed on administrative leave with pay pending the outcome of the investigation.
- The employee will be contacted at least once weekly, and more frequently as needed, as the school receives information from Child Protective Services regarding the investigation.
- The employee who is being investigated by Child Protective Services has the legal right to have a representative present at all interviews.

CONFIDENTIALITY

MLMS's confidentiality policy forbids the sharing of demographic or personal information about students and their families with anyone aside from Mountain Laurel employees on a need-to-know basis, and parents or guardians of individual students upon request. In addition, MLMS treats all organizational issues and problems with individual faculty matters as confidential. All records, files, conversations conferences are held for the benefit of the child (or staff member) and are strictly confidential.

A staff member shall not disclose any of the aforementioned information directly or indirectly or use it in any way for personal reasons or for the benefit of any other person, firm or corporation either during employment or at any time after termination.

Children's records are confidential to our school. This information will not be shared with any person or organization outside of MLMS without approval from the School Co- Directors. This information will not be shared with other staff members unless there is a reason for that staff member to receive this information. All written correspondence must be copied to the student's file. All student files are stored in the reception office. A copy of

any correspondence which contains an assessment of a child, whether academic, social or other, must be provided to the School Co- Directors to be approved before the correspondence is sent to the parent.

Original records, whether hard copy or electronic, will remain in the office at all times. Any copies of original records are confidential and must be returned to the office. If child assessments or evaluations are created outside the office, a hard copy must be placed in the student file as soon as possible.

All business files, records and papers MLMS made available to staff members are to be kept confidential.

All staff files, records, papers and compensation are confidential to the individual staff member, the immediate supervisor, the Business Manager and School Co-Directors. Discussion of compensation with others is prohibited.

Children's records will be released upon written requests made by a school to which the child has transferred, in accordance with Local, State and Federal Laws.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees are not permitted to engage in outside employment or business activity that may interfere with or limit the staff member's effective performance and responsibilities under the Employment Agreement. Employees may not use their position at MLMS to further sales or marketing of any product or service to the parents, children or staff during the school day or on school grounds. Teachers may provide tutoring and / or consulting services to other schools, individuals or organizations, but only after obtaining prior approval from the School Co-Directors.

COMPENSATION

Salaries are calculated on an individual basis based on factors such as position, performance, education, professional development and years of experience. Salaries are reviewed annually and may be updated or modified each year based on the above considerations or at other times as deemed appropriate by MLMS.

MLMS regards issues such as salary as a private matter between MLMS and the staff member and will protect the confidentiality of this information.

Submission of Time sheets: Time sheets are to be submitted three business days prior to the scheduled pay date. If a time sheet is not submitted at the appropriate time, payment will be made at the next pay cycle.

The pay schedule is as follows:

August 31 st	September 30 th	October 31 st
November 30 th	December 15 th	January 31 st
February 28 th	March 31 st	April 28 th
May 31 st	June 30 th	July 31 st

Questions staff have regarding paychecks should only be discussed with the Business Manager.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES

DAYCARE LICENSING STANDARDS

STAFF / CHILD RATIOS

Staff to child ratio requirements must be met at all times. When children are regularly in ongoing mixed age groups, the staff to children ratio applicable to the youngest child in the group shall apply to the entire group.

-Age 16 months old to 2 years: 1 staff member for every 5 children (1:5)

-Age two years old: 1 staff member for every 8 children (1:8)

-Age 3 years old through 5 years old: 1 staff member for every 14 children (During AM & PM Work Cycles): (1:14)

-Age 3 years old through 5 years old (Lunch & Recess): 1 staff member for every 10 children (1:10)

-Age 5 years old through 8 years old: 1 staff member for every 18 children (1:18)

-Age 9 years old through 12 years old: 1 staff member for every 20 children (1:20)

EMERGENCY & SAFETY PROCEDURES

Please see MLMS Emergency Preparedness Plan Supplemental Book

DAILY OBSERVATION & HEALTH CHECK

Staff members in all classrooms should conduct a Daily Observation & Health Check for all students in attendance. Even though the list may seem lengthy, the morning health inspection only requires a few minutes, particularly if you incorporate it during your greeting children in the morning. The inspection is easy to remember if you start at the top and go from head to toe and then from front to back. Check the following:

- 1. Scalp - Itching, sores, cleanliness, lice. Children are excluded from school if lice are present.**
- 2. Face - General appearance, expression, unusual color.**
- 3. Eyes - Redness of eyelid lining, irritation, puffiness, squinting, frequent rubbing, styles, sensitivity to light, yellowish color.**

4. Ears - Drainage, earache. (There are other observations for hearing impairment.).

5. Nose - runny nose, sneezing, frequent rubbing.

6. Mouth - Inside of mouth for redness, spots, sores.

7. Throat - Enlarged, red, or irritated tonsils with or without white spots.

8. Chest - Frequent or severe coughing, wheezing, rattles (raspy breathing).

- Child gets red or blue in the face.
- Child makes high-pitched croupy or whooping sound after he coughs.

9. Skin - Yellowish skin or eyes, unusual spots, rash, bumps, bruises, unusual injuries; crusty, bright yellow dry or gummy areas of body. Check both front and back of body.

10. Fever - Feverish appearance with changes in behavior.

- Child is cranky or less active than usual.
- Child cries more than usual.
- Child appears unwell or generally uncomfortable.
- Fever greater than 101°F.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

Only a MAT trained staff member is permitted to administer medication. Medication forms are located in the office and will be completed by a parent. All medications, except emergency medications, will remain locked in the front office. (See below)

Some staff who have EMAT certification can administer emergency medications such as Epi pens and Benedryl.

- Emergency medications such as Epi pens and Benedryl travel with the child throughout the day. (Some parents provided two so that we can have one in the classroom, and one that travels to the woods or the playground. They will be stored in a secure location, and all staff should be made aware of their location.
- Allergies and Emergency medical information will be supplied in each classroom's emergency handbook, and should be posted in a known location in each classroom.

INJURIES

All serious accidents involving students must be reported immediately to the Front Office. Be certain to instruct children to notify a staff member about an injury. All injuries must be documented using the Incident/Injury report in the Front Office. If an accident occurs, a First Aid trained staff member should take charge. Do not attempt to move someone if there is any possibility of spinal injury. Most injuries can be handled with a good washing with soap and water, a band-aid, ice applied to bumps and swelling and TLC.

Be sure to inform administration of any accidents, especially head injuries that may require monitoring of the child. Parents should be notified directly, immediately after the accident when a child has received any noticeable injury, such as a bump, scrape, insect bite, swollen lip, etc. Please be sure parents have been contacted so that the parents are not alarmed when they arrive to pick up their child.

MLMS Staff shall not administer treatment other than first aid to students. If the injury appears to be serious (possible broken bones, concussion, tooth loss, poisoning, stitches, etc.), the child should be cared for and comforted by a staff member while another staff member telephones for emergency help and then notifies office staff. Staff will stay with the child until a parent arrives and / or during a trip to the hospital and throughout medical treatment if a parent has not arrived.

The injured child's emergency registration form must be transported with the child to the hospital as a means of authorizing medical care. Non-emergency care should be delayed until arrival of a parent.

In the case of a major accident resulting in the death of a child, MLMS will notify within 48 hours the Virginia Department of Social Services.

First Aid Kits are located in the Kitchen (Front Office), Toddler classroom, Elementary hallway (travels with students to Woods), Buses, white van, "Library" (Backpack outside Mrs. Irre's classroom).

***It is imperative that staff members complete the Injury Report located in the front office when a child is injured.**

CHILD MISSING FROM CLASS PROCEDURE

Every effort must be made to maintain accountability for children at all times. In the event a child cannot be found, the staff MUST remain calm. The staff will quickly scan the classroom or area, check bathrooms, cubby areas and scan the outdoor environments. This process should take less than a minute or two. If the child is not located, the staff member will immediately contact the office and a comprehensive search will commence, with entrances to campus monitored. If the child is not located within 10 minutes, the administration will notify the parents and appropriate authorities.

It is most important that authorities be contacted as soon as possible if the child is not found on campus.

When authorities are contacted to report a Missing Child, MLMS must report this incident to the Virginia Department of Social Services.

Attendance during lunch/play time: Roll is to be taken at the beginning and end of each lunch/play period, this includes, Jr High, elementary and primary lunch/play times. Each staff is responsible for knowing the attendance and count of children under their supervision at all times. If a child arrives or leaves during the period, their arrival or departure is to be noted on the attendance roster so that emergency personnel have accurate information.

CLIMBING EQUIPMENT

When climbing equipment is available, one adult should be assigned to supervise the climbing children to ensure safe use of the equipment. While on the climbing equipment, children may not carry anything and must have both hands available at all times. Children may not climb up slides or slide down head first! Instruct children to always climb up the ladder and slide down the slide on their bottoms or belly, feet first. The rubber mulch must remain on the ground. Do not allow the children to pour the rubber mulch down the slides or to throw it. Throughout the play period and just before adults leave the play area, check the depth of the mulch under fall zones, especially at the bottom of slides, and rake mulch to these areas as necessary to maintain the proper 6"+ depth. Rakes are mounted on a wall at the elementary patio for this purpose. Check the climbing structure daily for loose bolts or splinters that could present a hazard to the children and report any dangerous situation to the office staff.

PLAYGROUND RULES

PLAYGROUND

1. TRUCKS: remain in the area outside the elementary class at the yard area and are put away behind the wall at the end of recess.
2. WOODEN BEAMS: on the ground are the boundaries. The bank area is off limits. Please, no digging, sliding or disturbing the soil in this area. ELEMENTARY STUDENTS ONLY may play in the designated area beyond the beams (the path leading to gate to woods).
3. SANDBOX: Sand and sand toys must remain in the sandbox. No feet in the sandbox. Sandbox must be closed after each play session, even if another group may come out later in the day.
4. BOXES Boxes with chalk, small cars and brushes may be used in the courtyard and must be stored after use.
5. HANDS: must be kept to self, unless it is a mutually agreed upon game and approved by the adult in charge. NO KISSING or LICKING.
6. CLIMBING AREAS: Adults MUST be nearby (on playground) when Primary age and younger children are using the climbing wall and monkey bars. Toddler and after nap recess require that an adult must be within reach of these areas. Appropriate shoes must be worn when climbing. Staff should use their discretion to decide if children are wearing appropriate shoes when allowing children to climb. Hands must be free of items when climbing.
7. MULCH: must stay on the ground within the wooden boundaries and may not be thrown. Rake as needed to keep mulch at 8" deep in the fall zone areas. (where children are most likely to fall)
8. RAKES, SHOVELS & BUCKETS: Never dig down to the barrier. Put equipment away when not in use. Shovels may be used only in the dirt area. Please make sure holes of larger size are filled in before leaving the playground.
9. DENIM PEA GRAVEL BAGS: may be moved by children with trucks carefully but not dropped or thrown. Please make sure they return to rock area.
10. SLIDES: are used one way only-DOWN and on bottoms or belly, feet first. ELEMENTARY students may NOT USE twist slide.
11. SHED: is used for storage. ADULTS are RESPONSIBLE for making sure items are put away. Encourage children to take care of this before they leave.
12. GATES: must stay closed for safety.
13. NO GUN TYPE PLAY

WOODS:

1. SIGHT & SOUND: Students and adults should always be able to see each other's heads. All students must be in sight and sound supervision of an adult.
2. BOUNDARIES: Students need to be told where the boundaries are and remain within them.
3. TREE CLIMBING: Students must be wearing pants to climb trees. Climbing of trees in shorts or skirts is prohibited.

If these guidelines are consistently followed, the children will be able to fully enjoy our outdoor spaces, and most accidents will be avoided.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are reserved for the afternoon Primary, Elementary, and Jr. High classes. Teachers organize trips to support group studies in which your class is involved. Additional costs must be absorbed by the parents. It is up to the teacher to prepare and distribute handouts and emails notifying parents and office staff of such trips.

Teachers make arrangements for transportation. If parent chaperones drive, each must give a copy of their driver's license and proof of insurance to Rose to be kept on file in the school office. If a school vehicle is required, a transportation request form must be submitted to Rose as soon as possible. Late requests may not be able to be accommodated. Early submission is imperative.

On field trips, teachers must have with them:

- A fully equipped first aid kit,
- Emergency medications and field-trip medication authorization form
- A staff member authorized to administer such medications
- Fully charged cell phone, emergency contact information, and extra water with cups if activity is outdoors.
- Unless using the bus, each child must be in a child safety seat through age 7 and all children 8 and over must be properly restrained with a seat belt. No child may ride in a seat equipped with an airbag.

SNACK

Snack is provided by the parents. Any remaining snack is to be used during the week or provided as a supply for forgotten lunches unless a parent specifically asks for the remainder to be returned. The school provides basic ingredients for baking. If more expensive ingredients are required, you may ask the baking parent to provide the ingredients. (Whatever the children bake will be used as the classroom snack the following day).

If food is prepared for snack, leftovers may only be distributed to staff members. Leftover food may not be saved for later or the next day. If food is not taken from its original package, that food may be used for future snacks.

SUPPLIES

The school will supply polishes, soap, tissues, toilet paper, paper towels, paints, tape, paper, etc. Please see Rose when you need replenishment of these supplies. Please inventory at the end of the school year so that ordering can be done over the summer. Items that the school does not routinely stock must come out of the classroom budget. Any animal supplies should be taken out of funds that each teacher receives or funds you raise within your classroom (i.e. a donation jar for students to make contributions toward pet care.)

CLEANING

Assistants are responsible for daily classroom maintenance. Duties include:

- Keeping the kitchen area clean and loading the dishwasher during the day
- Mopping the kitchen and bathroom floors at the end of the day

- Sanitizing and wiping the bathroom sink and toilet (assistants should clean and disinfect the bathroom fixtures and toilets as needed **and at least** mid-morning, just before lunch, and at the end of the day)
- Cleaning the kitchen sink and counter
- Taking out the trash
- Spot-mopping the floor
- Any time the vacuum is used it should be emptied immediately following.
- Vacuuming each day.
- Laurel Club, including bathroom will be cleaned by Laurel Club staff each day. Rug should be vacuumed on Fridays. Cleaning staff will clean Laurel Club room during weekend hours.

Cleaning staff will take care of the following:

- On Fridays, assistant /teachers will put up chairs at the end of the day.
- Weekend cleaning
- Windows will be washed inside and out twice a year.
- Additional chores such as cleaning woodwork will only be done by the cleaner if a specific request is made and there is time to do it.
- Jr. High) once a month
 - Cleaning bathrooms
 - Sweeping & mopping floors
 - Vacuuming rugs

The cleaning supply closet and cupboards must be kept locked at all times! The main cleaning restocking supply closet is located in Laurel Club classroom. Diluted Basic G in spray bottles does not have to be locked up, but must be kept out of reach of children. All chemicals including disinfecting wipes and sanitizers, must be stored in a locked cabinet. Even hand-soaps and hand-sanitizers that have a label stating, “Keep out of reach of children” must be stored in a locked cabinet. Teachers may ask parent volunteers to help clean whenever there is a special event.

HANDWASHING

All staff must follow stringent hand washing standards for themselves and the children. Staff and children must wash hands when they enter the classroom, before *and after* eating, after using the bathroom, and after sneezing or nose wiping. Make certain that a liberal amount of soap is used and ample time is spent rinsing.

SCHOOL POLICY REGARDING SAFETY SEATS & SEAT BELTS

If a proper restraint (an approved child car-safety seat or booster) is not available for the child, a staff member shall not place a child in the vehicle. The driver accepts responsibility for the legal and safe transportation of the child.

The Virginia Child Restraint Device Law, effective July 1, 2007, requires that child safety seats must be properly used in vehicles manufactured after 1/1/68 for all children **through the age of 7**. Virginia law also requires children **age 8 through 16** to be belted correctly in vehicle safety belts in vehicles manufactured after 1/1/68. It is imperative that children arriving and departing our school be properly restrained according to Virginia state law.

Students riding in our school bus are exempt from child safety seat requirements because the bus design prohibits the use of such devices. All passengers, regardless of age, will wear a seat belt at all times while on the school bus. However, use of the school vans or staff cars require use of safety seats.

If parents need to leave a child safety seat at school for any reason, it should be marked clearly with the child’s name and left on the school’s front porch.

BUS RIDERS: Parents are responsible for providing appropriate car seats for children 3 years and younger if they ride the bus. Parents provide car safety seats for the duration of the school year if they participate in our scheduled bus services.

CHILDREN IN TRANSIT WITHIN THE SCHOOL

- No child is to be on the outdoor campus grounds without an adult.
- No children will move from building to building without an escort.
- Elementary students may be in the main building without an adult as long as they have the appropriate permission.
- All elementary students will enter the building on the side of the school with the ramp entrance.
- If a parent is picking up their child before their scheduled dismissal time, the parent must sign in at the front desk and receive a Visitors' Pass. The parent will pick up their child from the classroom and then return pass and sign out in Front Office.

STAFF PROCEDURES

STAFF MEETINGS

Staff Events, Meetings and Training

Periodically throughout the year, we will have staff functions to provide an opportunity for collaboration, professional development, and social interaction. This promotes the optimal functioning of the staff. Therefore, it is important and required that all staff attend the following staff events unless a special exception has been granted by the School Co- Directors. Missed events will be considered paid leave for salaried employees.

- Staff and Level Meetings
- Staff Events and Training

Staff Meetings: staff meetings will be held on the following dates at 3:45pm. All staff is required to attend.

October 24 th	December 12 th	February 15 th
February 18 th	May 24 th	

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Each class should maintain a daily attendance log to track the attendance of each child.

EXPENDITURES & SUPPLY REQUEST

All receipts for expenditures must be submitted to the business manager with a "Request for Reimbursement" form. Reimbursement requests must be submitted within a week of the expense date for the Front Royal campus and within a month for the Junior High campus. All receipts for the academic year must be turned in to the Business

Manager by June 15 of each year. Receipts may not be carried over to the following academic year. Reimbursements may be denied if not turned in within these time frames. These policies and procedures include items purchased with PTO classroom budget money. The Business Manager must first approve all expenditures that are not within the allotted classroom budget.

When making purchases, please use the purchase order form. Please complete the form and return to Rose. All purchases should be made using the school credit card once purchase request has been approved.

CHILDREN SCHEDULE & CONTRACT CHANGES

Any changes to a child's daily schedule requested by parents that will affect the financial status of their account, should be reported immediately to the Business Manager for approval so any necessary changes can be made to the child's account.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

Hours of Operation: 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM

Please read the MLMS school handbook for specific arrival and dismissal times for students and procedures for different classes.

TEACHER / CHILD INTERACTIONS

- Speak in a calm and quiet voice at all times while in the classroom. Go to the child to talk instead of talking across the classroom.
- Allow the child to work independently. Avoid interrupting unless the child is not respecting the materials, classroom or other children.
- When sitting with a child, always pay attention to ALL of the children in the class as opposed to one or two children at a time. Always sit in a position that will allow you the best view of the entire classroom, never with your back to the classroom.
- When speaking to children, make eye contact and speak at their level.
- Be consistent without being illogical, rigid or irreverent.
- Be objective, not personal in your instructions. Say, "Books go on this bookcase" rather than, "I want you to put the books on this bookcase."
- Be positive. Say, "Use this tricycle, it is just your size" rather than, "You are too small to ride a bicycle."
- Give a reason rather than flat authority. "Hang up your coat, before someone steps on it and gets it dirty" rather than, "Hang up your coat."
- Give a solution to a problem rather than mere prohibitions. Say, "Please move to this side of the table, so that your friend will be able to see" rather than, "Don't stand in your friend's way".
- Be specific. Give concrete information using concrete commands. Say, "If you hold the card by its edge, it will stay clean" rather than "Don't get the card dirty."
- Match objects and actions to your words. Say and show, "Trays (pause and show) are held in the middle (pause and show) near your waist (pause and show)" rather than, "Hold the tray like this."
- Give awareness of consequences. Say, "Hitting hurts your friend" rather than, "Don't hit."
- Recognize the validity of the emotions when you limit destructive actions. Say, "I know you are angry but you may not hurt your friend" rather than, "How could you hit your friend?" OR say, "I know that you are afraid, but we need to clean your scratch" rather than, "That scratch won't hurt." OR say, "I know that you don't want to wear shoes, but your shoes protect your feet" rather than, "You don't want to hurt your feet, do you?"

- Use a simple and courteous manner with children and other adults. Say, "Good morning, I am glad to see you" (hand offered and withdrawn if not taken) rather than, "Can you say good morning to me and shake my hand?"

Phrases to Use with Children:

- That is your friend's work, where is your work?
- Please walk quietly to keep our classroom peaceful.
- Please speak softly to keep our classroom peaceful.
- Please put the work away so it is ready for the next person.
- Handle the material carefully so it is nice for the next time.
- Would you like to be by yourself right now or have company?

Always:

- Cross the room to speak with someone, do not raise your voice.
- Speak to the child directly and personally, privately if expressing a concern.
- Stoop down and make eye contact, speaking softly.
- Do not offer a choice if there is not a choice. Use the words, "please do this..." rather than, "would you like to do this..."
- Always greet and take leave of children by shaking hands and making eye contact.

RECORD KEEPING

All classrooms are required to keep a daily attendance log.

Primary classrooms are required to post a daily snack log.

Student enrollment records are kept in the office.

Academic progress reports are kept in the office.

Alumni record are kept in the archive storage.

Staff records are kept in the office.

Lead Teachers will provide a copy of academic progress reports to parents and will give the original to Jessica Kuzmick for appropriate filing.

*Any request to release records must be made via Rose DiNinno.

SOL STANDARDS

Standards of Learning will be accessed on line if needed. Printed copies will no longer be available in the library.

"LIBRARY"

Teach and encourage proper use of the MLMS library.

-Markers are available in the library to mark a book's place on shelves when browsing.

-Any books returned to the library should be placed in the basket for books to be re-shelved. This shelf is located outside Rose's office.

Keep in mind this area is a community area and extra care should be taken to keep it clean, neat and in proper working order.

LICENSING CHECKLIST

Virginia Licensing Checklist for Compliance with Virginia Standards (Refer to Licensing Book for Complete List).

Attendance:

Complete and accurate daily attendance is kept in each classroom.

Cleaning Supplies:

*Hazardous substances such as cleaning materials shall be kept in a locked place using a safe, locking method that prevents access by children.

*Cleaning and sanitizing materials shall not be located above food, food equipment or utensils and shall be stored in areas physically separate from food.

*Pesticides and insecticides shall not be stored in the classrooms.

*If cleaning supplies are not kept in original containers, the substitute containers shall clearly indicate their contents and instructions and shall not resemble food or beverage containers.

*Cosmetics, medications, or other harmful agents shall not be stored in areas, purses, or pockets that are accessible to children.

*Purses must be locked or kept in car.

Electrical Outlets:

Electrical outlets shall have protective covers that are of a size that cannot be swallowed by children.

Supervision of Children:

*Children are to be supervised by an adult at ALL times.

*Children shall be within actual sight and sound supervision of staff, except that staff need only be able to hear a child who is using the restroom provided that staff check on a child who has not returned from the restroom after five minutes.

Staff to Child Ratio Requirements:

Staff to child ratio requirements must be met at all times. When children are regularly in ongoing mixed age groups, the staff to children ratio applicable to the youngest child in the group shall apply to the entire group.

-Age 16 months old to 2 years: 1 staff member for every 5 children (1:5)

-Age two years old: 1 staff member for every 8 children (1:8)

-Age 2.5 years old through 6 years old (During AM & PM Work Cycles): 1 staff member for every 14 children (1:14)

-Age 3 years old through 5 years old (Lunch & Recess): 1 staff member for every 10 children (1:10)

-Age 5 years old through 8 years old: 1 staff member for every 18 children (1:18)

-Age 9 years old through 12 years old: 1 staff member for every 20 children (1:20)

Rest Period:

*Centers operating five or more hours per day shall have a designated rest period.

*Mats shall be used.

*After the first 30 minutes, children not sleeping may engage in quiet activities.

*Sleeping toddlers shall be individually checked every 30 minutes.

- *Rest mats shall be identified for use by a specific child.
- *Occupied rest mats shall be at least 2 ½ feet from any heat-producing appliance.
- *There shall be at least 12 inches of space between occupied rest mats.
- *Exception: 12 inches of space are not required where rest mats are located adjacent to a wall or a divider as long as one side is open at all times to allow for passage.
- *Rest mats shall be sanitized on all sides weekly or before use by another child. (Basic G solution).
- *Pillows and filled comforters shall not be used by children under two years of age.
- *Linens shall be assigned for individual use.
- *Linens shall be clean and washed at least weekly.

Preventing the Spread of Disease:

- *A child shall not be allowed to attend the center for the day if he has a temperature over 101 degrees Fahrenheit, recurrent vomiting or diarrhea, or a communicable disease.
- *If a child needs to be excluded due to illness, the following shall apply:
 - Arrangements shall be made for the child to leave the center as soon as possible after the signs or symptoms are noticed.
 - The child shall remain in the designated quiet area until leaving the center.
 - When any surface has been contaminated with body fluids, it shall be cleaned and sanitized.

Proper Hand Washing and Toileting Procedures:

Staff shall follow proper hand washing and toileting procedures.

- Children’s hands shall be washed with soap and running water upon arrival to the classroom.
- Children’s hands shall be washed with soap and running water before and after eating meals or snacks.
- Children’s hands shall be washed with soap and running water after toileting and any contact with blood, feces or urine.
- Staff shall wash their hands with soap and running water before and after helping a child use the toilet or a diaper change, after the staff member use the toilet, after any contact with body fluids, and before feeding or helping the children with feeding.
- Exception: If running water is not available, a germicidal cleansing agent administered per manufacturer’s instruction may be used. Please use running water whenever available.

If diapering or helping a child with soiled clothing:

- The diapering area shall be accessible and within the building used by children.
- There shall be sight and sound supervision for all children when a child is being diapered.

The diapering area shall be provided with the following:

- A sink with running water not to exceed 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Soap, disposable towels and single use gloves such a surgical or examination gloves (Do not use food service gloves).
- A nonabsorbent surface for diapering or changing shall be used. For children younger than three years, this surface shall be a changing table or countertop designated for changing.
- A plastic-lined storage system that is either foot-operated or used in such a way that neither the staff member’s hand nor the soiled diaper touches the exterior surface of the storage system during the disposal.

When a child’s clothing or diaper becomes wet or soiled, the child shall be cleaned and changed immediately.

The diapering surface shall be used only for diapering or cleaning children, and it shall be cleaned with soap and at least room temperature water and sanitized after each use. Tables used for children's activities or meals shall not be used for changing diapers.

Medications:

- Medications shall be administered by MAT trained staff members.
- All medications shall be kept in a locked place using a safe, locking method that prevents access by children. If a key is used, the key shall not be accessible to the children.
- Medications needing to be refrigerated shall be placed in a separate locked box in the refrigerator.
- Medication shall be labeled with the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage amount, and the time or times to be given.
- Medication shall be in the original container with the prescription label or direction label attached.
- The proper medication form shall be filled out and kept with medication.

Over the Counter Skin Products:

All nonprescription drugs and over the counter skin products shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Nonprescription drugs and over the counter skin products shall not be kept or used beyond the expiration date of the product.

If sunscreen is used, the following requirements shall be met.

- Sunscreen shall be in the original container labeled with the child's name.
- Sunscreen does not need to be kept locked but shall be inaccessible to children under five years of age.

First Aid and Emergency Supplies:

- A first aid kit shall be in each building used by children, accessible to outdoor play areas, on field trips, and whenever children are in care.
- Each first aid kit shall be easily accessible to staff but not to children.
- The required first aid kits shall include at a minimum: scissors, tweezers, gauze pads, adhesive tape, band-aids (assorted types), antiseptic cleansing solution or pads, thermometer, triangular bandages, surgical or examination gloves, ice packs, and first aid instructional manual.
- The following nonmedical emergency supplies shall be required:
 - *One working, battery operated flashlight in each classroom that is used by children. Weather alert radio is located in Rose's office.

Food and Food Preparation:

- Perishable foods shall be kept in a refrigerator at 41 degrees or less and discarded within 7 days of opening.
- Utensils shall be cleaned and sanitized after each use (Dishwasher).
- Food contact surfaces shall be cleaned and sanitized after each use (Basic G).
- Hands must be washed before and after handling ready to eat foods.

Cleaning Solutions Used for Surfaces (stored locked out of reach):

- Basic G solution is used for cleansing surfaces.
- Solution used for diapering surfaces, resting mats and blood, fecal, or other body fluid contamination is Clorox/Lysol Cleansing Wipes.

Nutrition and Snack Surfaces:

- Children shall be provided with a variety of nutritious snacks.

- A daily schedule of snacks served to the children shall be posted.
- The daily snack schedule shall be kept in the classroom.

Transportation:

- If the center provides transportation, the center shall be responsible from the time the child boards the vehicle until returned to the parents or persons designated by the parent.
- During the transportation of the children Virginia state statutes about safety belts and child restraints are followed and stated maximum number of passengers in a given vehicle shall not be exceeded.
- The children must remain seated at all times.
- Parents shall be notified of the field trip and given the opportunity to withdraw their child from the field trip.

SCHOOL AND FACULTY EVENTS

There are several school functions or extracurricular events held throughout the school year that involve families and faculty/staff. These events provide an opportunity for families to create meaningful relationships within our school community. The children in our care benefit from this partnership between families and school faculty/staff. Therefore, it is important and required that all staff be present at the following school functions unless a specific exception has been granted by the Co-Directors. Missed events will be considered as paid time off for salaried employees. These events include but may not be limited to:

- Whole School Picnics & Social Functions (including Volunteer Thank-you Tea)
- Parent Ed Events
- Staff & Parent Development Events

In addition to these events, please plan accordingly for the following annual school events:

- Orientation for Primary and Toddler Parents –After a general school information session led by the School Co- Directors, each teacher should speak with his/her own parents about policies and procedures. Teachers are responsible for setting up chairs and removing them for that event.
- Appointments for New Primary/Toddler Children - Teachers should schedule classroom visits.
- Parent/Child Morning - Teachers make arrangements for potluck, including set-up and clean-up.
- Thanksgiving/Winter Performances - Teachers plan program and inform parents of details in writing (or via the school newsletter).
- Celebration of Winter Holidays – Teachers should be available to assist where needed.
- MLMS Annual Spring Conference/Workshop
- Graduation - Teachers provide list of children's full names to the office by May 1st. Office makes diplomas and places them in alphabetical order. Teachers practice with the children. Teachers inform parents in writing, plan program, and practice with children. Facilities maintenance personnel and/or teachers set up chairs and put them away afterwards.
- Open Houses (Teacher's only).

PARENT OBSERVATION AND CONFERENCE SCHEDULING

Observations are scheduled by the front office. Teachers must check the appointment book daily so they are aware of visitors.

The teachers use *Sign-Up Genius* to schedule conferences. Teachers are responsible for holding conferences and writing reports.

PARENT EDUCATION

We hold several parent nights throughout the year to inform parents about the Montessori approach to learning and how to support their children's self-construction. Teachers are responsible for preparing topics relevant to the age level they teach. It is recommended that teachers extend a personal invitation to parents in their classes to attend these events. Phone calls, emails and written invitations are very effective for encouraging parent participation. Teachers are responsible for setting up and putting away the chairs for this event or securing parent volunteers for assistance.

HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Other than the holiday events noted on the school calendar, teachers are responsible for planning any activities for holidays and special events. Expenses for holiday activities (including presents or crafts) must be pre-approved by Rose. Teachers may ask the room parent to help secure parent volunteers to bake cookies, dye Easter eggs, etc. for a special holiday celebration.

INJURY/INCIDENT REPORT

All staff should complete an Injury/Incident report following all injuries and incidents involving children.

Any injuries and care provided should be documented using the Injury/Incident report. Injury reports to be signed by parents should never include other children's names.

Incidents may require action from the School Co- Directors. For this reason, incidents including conflicts, misunderstandings, miscommunication, or unresolved issues should be reported in writing. Please follow the direction listed at the bottom of the Injury/Incident report to notify the School Co- Directors when an incident occurs.

DISMISSAL FROM OUTDOOR AREAS

When dismissal occurs from a supervised outdoor area, one adult should be assigned to verify that each child goes to the right person. If a person comes to pick up a child who is unfamiliar to the supervising adult, photo identification and verification of written permission is required. The supervising adult will call the children as their parents or guardians arrive. The children must walk by their parent's (guardian's) side and hold hands until they arrive at their car.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

I acknowledge I have received a copy of Mountain Laurel Montessori’s employee handbook. I understand this handbook is intended for personnel policies and that it is not all inclusive. I understand that the policies in this handbook do not represent an expressed or implied contract of employment. I further understand that Mountain Laurel Montessori reserves the right to revise this handbook at any time without prior notice.

I have received the information provided in the Mountain Laurel Montessori Employee Handbook. I agree to conform to the standards, rules and regulations set forth in this handbook.

Date:

Employee:

(Please return this page to the office staff for documentation in your employee file).