



**FAMILY HANDBOOK  
2020-2021**



*“The only way to change the world is through education.”*  
Maria Montessori

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Welcome</b>		Personal Items/Lost and Found
	<b>Introduction</b>	
	<b>3</b>	<b>Academics and Assessment</b>
Vision		<b>17</b>
Mission		Educational Philosophy
Historic Information/Leelanau Montessori		Assessment
History		Curriculum
Beliefs & Values		Promotion and Retention
School and Organizational Goals		Special Education
Leelanau Montessori Board of Directors		Student Permanent Records
Contracted Services		Professional Qualifications of Teachers
Authorizing Agent		<b>Conduct and Discipline</b>
Licensing Notebook		
Parent Handbook Acknowledgement		<b>21</b>
<b>General Information</b>		Discipline
<b>Programs and Procedures</b>		Code of Conduct
	<b>6</b>	Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)
Admission/Enrollment		<b>Parent Participation</b>
Childcare Tuition/fees		
Attendance		<b>27</b>
Arrival/Dismissal		Field Trips
School Closings		Volunteer Guidelines
Safety drills		Private Transportation
Time outdoors		<b>Appendices:</b>
<b>Student Well-Being and Parent Notification</b>		
	<b>10</b>	<b>30</b>
Child accident and Injury		Toddler Addendum
Illness Policy/Medication		
Asbestos Policy		Primary Addendum
Nutrition and Food		
<b>Communication</b>		Elementary Addendum
About the child	<b>14</b>	
Conferences		
Peace Process		
		<b>Parent/Guardian Agreement</b>
		<b>41</b>

**This Family Handbook is not intended to create a contract. The school reserves the right to change at any time any of the policies described or privileges granted.**

## **WELCOME TO LEELANAU MONTESSORI PUBLIC SCHOOL ACADEMY**

You have made a unique educational choice. As you become increasingly familiar with the Montessori method of education, you will discover how comprehensive and concise the curriculum and environment is in fostering active learning, critical thinking and a flexible mindset, a strong sense of self and community and individualized development.

The parent-school partnership is essential to ensuring a rich educational experience for children. We are honored to be partners with you in the development of your child. We rely on your communication, energy, support, and involvement to ensure an optimal experience for your child. This handbook provides guidelines and information to create “flow” between home and school and clarifies the roles of parents, staff and the child. It is our shared responsibility to keep each other well informed throughout the year. Please read through this handbook carefully and use it as a reference and resource for policies, procedures, and general practices. If you have any questions that are not addressed here, you are encouraged to talk to your child’s teacher or the Head of School. Note: Any information not addressed is covered in the school bylaws and policies, which can be found on our website. Any changes that occur to this handbook, will be updated on our website. We look forward to a joyful year of mutual support and growth.

Leelanau Montessori is an authentic Montessori school, providing a first rate Montessori education to children ages 1-12 and where the adults are responsive and rigorously prepared to serve the unique and individual needs of children. We will provide a philosophy and practices that will empower your child to direct his/her own life and development and create prepared environments that stimulate and enable various activities toward self-actualization. Our method reflects the educational and psychological research and data-based instructional strategies of Dr. Maria Montessori, various educators of her day, and contemporary educational research.

### **Equal Education Opportunity**

It is the policy of Leelanau Montessori to provide an equal education opportunity for all children.

Any person who believes that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin, while at Leelanau Montessori or an Leelanau Montessori activity should immediately contact the Head of School at (231) 994-2074.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

“The only way to change the world is through education.” Dr. Maria Montessori

### **MISSION OF THE ACADEMY**

Leelanau Montessori Public School Academy nurtures the whole child in a prepared environment based on respect, individuality, a love of learning, and freedom with responsibility.

### **LEELANAU MONTESSORI HISTORY**

Throughout its 35-year history, Leelanau Montessori has served many families in the region. Recent brain research supports many of the unique qualities that have been a part of Montessori education for over 100

years, including multi-age groupings, peer teaching, individualized curriculum, the use of hands-on materials, and educating for whole child development.

Leelanau County's Montessori journey began in 1984 with the introduction of the Suttons Bay Children's House at the base of Herman Road just a short distance from our present location. As these children matured, requests for a Montessori elementary arose.

In 1991, Suttons Bay Montessori Elementary opened on East Pine View a 1/2 mile west of the Children's House. Two years later it moved out of its portable classroom into a home of its own, situated next door to the Children's House. Both schools were privately owned and funded through tuition.

In 1996, Leelanau Montessori *Elementary* was invited to become a part of Suttons Bay Public School. In 2001, the primary program also merged with the Suttons Bay Public School reuniting the Montessori programs.

In 2011, a charter school authorized by Suttons Bay Public Schools, Leelanau Montessori is still deeply engaged with the Suttons Bay community. Leasing space in the former high school building while sharing activities and resources keeps both communities connected and supportive of each other.

In 2018, Leelanau Montessori bought the Connie Binsfield Resource Center to continue the school's mission and maintain autonomy as its own public school entity. Bay Mills Community College serves as our charter school authorizer providing our region's children with an authentic public school choice.

Today there are more than four thousand Montessori schools in the United States, with about three hundred public Montessori schools. How fortunate we are, to host one of them here in Leelanau County.

## **BELIEFS AND VALUES**

Maria Montessori believed that the primary goal throughout all stages of development is to increase self-reliance, thereby adding another dimension of independence toward becoming a whole human, an adult capable of directing his/her work toward individual self-development and a collective contribution to society. Our program sets forth physical, socio-emotional, cognitive/intellectual, and creative/spiritual goals for each stage of the child's development. Caring, capable, confident, and conscientious global citizens will graduate from the Leelanau Montessori learning community and will challenge themselves to continually strive for growth within themselves and as members of the human race.

1. To nurture a positive attitude towards learning and foster an abiding sense of curiosity while giving the child an opportunity to acquire skills and knowledge essential for a lifetime of learning and living, including but not limited to Montessori curriculum and the required State standards.
2. To build and encourage habits of initiative, concentration, perseverance, and organization while the children strive for their fullest potential, learning self-pacing and time awareness.
3. To develop a sense of self-respect, confidence, responsibility, and inner discipline in a caring, cohesive, supportive learning community.
4. To foster hypothesis, experimentation, observation, discovery and application.
5. To foster socially acceptable behavior, from a sense of belonging, service, freedom to choose with responsibility to others, respect for life and the environment, and stewardship of peace.
6. To develop compassion and reverence for life and the earth's environment, and assume a personal responsibility for stewardship of the earth including world peace.

7. To create caring, cohesive, and supportive learning communities.
8. To foster dynamic partnerships with families for a consistent Montessori framework and educational experience.
9. To provide a creative, aesthetically pleasing, adaptive/dynamic, inspirational environment that responds to the child's needs and interests.
10. To develop sensory and motor skills that enable and sharpen the ability to discriminate, judge, and control.

### **SCHOOL AND ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS**

1. To provide families with an excellent public Montessori education option.
2. To provide a carefully planned and stimulating instructional system that enables children to develop a strong academic foundation based on the Montessori philosophy, methods, and practices as well as the Common Core State Standards.
3. To create and sustain continuity and mutual support of learning processes between home and school through an ongoing parent education program.
4. To provide Leelanau Montessori staff the support to refine and extend their skills and talents for delivery of quality instruction, prepared environments, and personal and professional growth.
5. To develop meaningful relationships with local, state, and national educational organizations and agencies, including but not limited to Montessori, for identifying, developing, and maintaining dynamic, responsive, and relevant learning for the community.
6. To maintain Leelanau Montessori as a vibrant leader and community partner in education.

### **LEELANAU MONTESSORI BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors is the governing body of Leelanau Montessori and endeavors to protect and develop the school community. Its primary concerns are the financial and program functions of the school, for which it defines a program mission and operating policies. The school's operations are delegated to the Head of School.

### **CONTRACTED SERVICES**

Leelanau Montessori contracts its human resources needs from HR Charter Consulting, LLC, who serves as the employer of record for all school employees. All employees are then leased back to Leelanau Montessori for their services.

### **AUTHORIZING AGENT**

In Michigan, a Public School Academy (PSA) is a state-supported public school under the state constitution, operating under a charter contract issued by a public authorizing body. PSAs are also commonly referred to as charter schools. Leelanau Montessori is a charter school, authorized by the Bay Mills Community College (BMCC).

## LICENSING NOTEBOOK NOTIFICATION

We are a licensed childcare center and are required to maintain a licensing notebook. The licensing notebook that contains all licensing inspection and special investigation reports and related corrective action plans, is available in our business office to parents during regular business hours. It contains at least two (2) years are available on the child care licensing website at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).

## PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Prior to initial attendance, all parents must indicate that they have received a copy of the parent handbook by signing the parent handbook acknowledgment form located in information packets and online on the final page of this Parent Handbook.

## PROGRAMS AND PROCEDURES

Our general age groupings are:

Toddler: 15mo. - 3yrs

Primary: 3yrs. - 6yrs. (includes Young 5/Kindergarten for children who are 5 years old by 9/1

Lower Elementary: 6 – 9 yrs.

Upper Elementary: 9 – 12 yrs.

All programs are open Monday through Friday between 8:10-3:10 per school calendar. Pre-registered childcare before and after school hours is available upon registration through the business office for children ages 3-12. Please refer to the school calendar to view breaks and closings due to teacher professional development or conferences. There is a school calendar posted on site for your reference as well.

## ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

### ENROLLMENT

To enroll your child, an enrollment form is required. There is a \$50 non-refundable application fee for children under age 5.

Upon admission and enrollment, parent or guardian must complete and deliver required forms to the office prior to the child's first day of school. We will copy the necessary documents and return the originals immediately.

Required forms and records include:

- Certified Birth Certificate
- Registration form
- Immunization Record\*/ Health forms \* Children may not attend school if their immunization record or waiver form has not been received by the office.
- Emergency Card (White Card)
  - State law requires that all children must have an emergency medical card completed and signed by a parent or guardian and filed in the Leelanau Montessori office. A child may be excluded from Leelanau Montessori until this requirement has been

fulfilled. Please make sure that the information is kept current in case there is a need to contact you regarding an emergency or illness. This card also asks you to identify who may be contacted in case of urgent need when you are unavailable. Adults listed on the card will be the only people who may sign students out of the building or to whom the child will be released from our care. A parent or guardian must give written permission or inform the office if a person not on the Emergency Card will be picking up a child.

Individual classroom, procedural and Federal/State Licensing forms also are included in summer startup packets and are requested to be completed and returned prior to the first day of school.

### **TUITION/FEES**

Kindergarten/Young 5's through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students are tuition-free and attend at no cost.

Tuition schedule for 15 months - 4 year olds

- \$46/full day
- \$31/ half day

Your child's preschool tuition contract is based on the schedule option you choose. The amount due is based on the LMPSA calendar of 180 days. The office will count the days that your child is scheduled to attend and calculate the tuition for the year. No credit is given for illness or absences. The first payment will be due September 1st for the current school year. You will have the option of choosing a one-time payment, three payments, or ten monthly payments. LMPSA offers a 10% tuition discount for one-time (prepaid) payment. If you fall more than one month behind in payments, your child will not be permitted to attend until that payment is received or other payment arrangements have been made. All tuition contract payments will be made through a direct withdrawal from your bank account. Alternate methods of payment may be discussed with the office staff.

Our admission policy is on our website under Board Policies. The Board of Directors will allow children who reside in Michigan to enroll in the Leelanau Montessori. Each student must enroll each year.

Preferences will be given to:

- a. Currently enrolled students – re-enrollment paperwork will be sent home in February. Letters must be returned to the office by the due date to ensure your child's space.
- b. Siblings of enrolled students.

When maximum enrollment for a grade has been reached, applicants will be placed in a waiting pool and admitted on the basis of a lottery system as developed by the Board of Directors in Lottery policy.

### **Parent Withdrawal from the School**

Upon written notification by the parent that a child is withdrawing from the school, the following steps are taken and are effective immediately:

- A copy of the written notification is placed in the child's cumulative file. There is no minimum time of notice required. However, the parent is responsible for outstanding tuition costs, if applicable, up to date of withdrawal.
- The child's name is taken off the class list, and a memo is sent to appropriate personnel notifying them of the withdrawal.
- The child's cumulative records are updated/completed by teachers and placed in their cumulative

file.

- The child's records are forwarded to the appropriate school as directed by the parent(s)/guardian or upon receipt of a written request from the receiving school.
- In the case of a special education child, the Special Education contact shall also be notified of withdrawal, date of withdrawal, and the receiving school or agency.
- If the child transfers when school is not in session, this process is to be completed as soon as possible.

### **Center Withdrawal Policy**

- Behavior problems that cannot be resolved within a designated time frame. We reserve the right to terminate participation immediately if we consider the behavior case to be severe or to represent a safety issue.
- Failure to pay fees within 30 days of the due date agreed upon. The business office is available to discuss or re-draft payment plans if needed.
- Unresolved disagreements with parents over policies.

### **ATTENDANCE**

The Leelanau Montessori Board of Directors, as an agency of the State, is required to enforce the regular attendance of students. The Board of Directors, Administration, and teaching staff all recognize the educational value of regular attendance at school and how that allows for the student to participate in instruction, social connection, and other related activities. As such, regular attendance and classroom participation are integral to student academic achievement. Attendance shall be required of all students, except those exempted under another policy or by other provisions of State law, during the days and hours that the school is in session. Leelanau Montessori Public School Academy recognizes that attendance in class is the responsibility of the parents or guardians and the student.

This attendance policy applies to all students and is set by the Leelanau Montessori Board of Directors:

- A. A child is tardy if he/she is not in his/her classroom ready to learn at 8:20 a.m.
- B. The child will be considered half-day AM absent if they arrive at school after 8:45 a.m. The child will be considered half-day PM absent if they leave school before 2:40 p.m.
- C. A student who accumulates three tardies will have one absence added to their total for reporting requirements.
- D. The parent may take any extenuating circumstances that pertain to this policy directly to the Head of School for consideration.

Our board has defined the following as acceptable reasons for a child's absence from school:

- A. Illness
- B. Recovery from accident

- C. Required court attendance
- D. Professional appointments
- E. Death in the immediate family
- F. Observation or celebration of a cultural holiday
- G. Extended excused absences following appropriate Planned Extended Absence procedure\* (must be approved in advance by the Head of School)

\* Attendance need not always be within the school facilities, but a student will be considered to be in attendance if the Planned Extended Absence procedure is followed.

Planned Extended Absence Procedure and Truancy policies can be found in the policy manual on our website. Your child's teacher is a first line of communication about a planned extended absence.

## **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL**

### **Early arrivals**

There is no adult supervision for your child before 8:10 a.m. You must make contact with office or classroom staff if your child who is under 6 years old arrives before 8:10 a.m.

### **Arrivals**

Staff will greet your child outdoors at 8:10. It is helpful for children to arrive at school appropriately dressed for the days weather as some communities begin each day outside and the walk along the pedestrian path can feel lengthy. Please review the classroom level addendums to read the process for each age group's arrival routine. In the spirit of fostering your child's independence, please support them in carrying their own belongings to class.

### **Late arrivals**

Staff will greet children until 8:30. Late arrivals must be pre-arranged. It is appreciated that these are infrequent and do not extend past 8:45. Staff will be supporting classrooms and cleaning protocols at these times.

Early pick ups must also be pre-arranged via written note, email or phone call to the office. Staff will escort your child to your vehicle or a designated pick up location.

### **Dismissal**

Morning dismissal: If your child will be picked-up at 11:15 a.m. please meet them in the space designated by your child's teacher.

Afternoon dismissal is at 3:10 p.m. Children may be picked up in the front of the school in the designated area. Only children who are participating in an after school enrichment program or other school sponsored extracurricular activities are allowed to stay after dismissal. Siblings may not stay at school with a child participating in an after school activity.

In the interest of your child's safety and the teachers' preparation time, please pick up your child by 3:15 p.m. After this time your child will be directed to the office.

### **Early dismissal and release**

If your child needs to leave school early for any reason, a parent/guardian must notify the office. Please send a written note to communicate any pick-up or attendance changes in your child's day if known in advance. Your child will only be released to those listed on their White Information Card or with written permission only.

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

Leelanau Montessori will notify families of school closings via an email and text alert system. Check email, our school website, our Facebook page, and/or tune into TV 7 & 4 for weather-related closings and delays.

### **WATCHES/WARNINGS/DRILLS**

Faculty/staff will follow the school's approved emergency procedures for all watches/warnings/drills.

#### **Severe Thunderstorm Watch or Warning**

If school is already in session when a watch or warning is issued, the school will stay open.

#### **Tornado Watch**

Children will remain in school, and the staff will take safety precautions. Children will be released to parents/guardians or other designated adults upon request.

#### **Tornado Warning**

All children and staff members will remain in the building and take shelter in designated areas.

Children may be detained beyond the usual dismissal time. Children will be released to parents/guardians or other designated adults upon request.

#### **Fire and Tornado Drills**

Fire and Tornado drills will be held several times throughout the school year. Safe areas inside and outside the building are designated for each classroom. All evacuation and shelter procedures are posted in every classroom. LMPSA may need to do additional drills to achieve compliance.

#### **Time outdoors**

Children need and want a time during the day to engage in self-directed activity. Outside time is provided for that breath of fresh air, a moment of solitude, a private conversation, or other outside activities. When playing games, children are encouraged to include anyone interested in participating. Recess is scheduled every day, weather permitting. If the wind chill is below 0 degrees F, we will have open-ended indoor time. Children are asked to wear hats, gloves, boots, etc. during the winter months. If your child cannot go outside for recess, you **MUST** have a documented medical reason and your child will be supervised by primary caregiver or office staff.

### **STUDENT WELL-BEING AND PARENT NOTIFICATION**

Child safety is the responsibility of the staff. All staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as fire and tornado drills and accident reporting procedures and review these several times per year. Emergency procedures are posted in each classroom and are available for review in the school office. Parents may request a copy. In case of fire, tornado, emergency that requires an evacuation of school

premises, parents are notified immediately by staff via a text alert.

### **Child Accident, Injury Procedures**

Leelanau Montessori Public School Academy Staff will monitor and supervise to the best of their ability in order to ensure that children are safe while in the classroom and on the playground. However, if a serious accident, injury, or illness should occur that requires immediate medical attention, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Staff will call 911 and stay on the phone until emergency personnel arrive.
2. Staff will administer first aid and/or CPR, if necessary.
3. Staff will notify the Head of School/office staff as soon as the situation permits.
4. Staff will contact parents/emergency contact as soon as the situation permits.
5. If the child is to be transported to the hospital by ambulance and the parent/emergency contact has not yet arrived, the Head of School will designate a LMPSA staff member to accompany the child.
6. The Head of School will file an incident report with Child Care Licensing as required by licensing rules. A copy will be given to the parents.

An Incident Report will be completed for any child who experiences an injury, illness, or an incident. Parents will sign completed form and a duplicate form will be kept with the school files. The Head of School will ensure that parents are immediately notified by telephone.

Parents must notify the Head of School, Office Staff, or Teaching Staff within 24 hours of their child receiving medical treatment for any incident that occurred while in attendance at LMPSA.

### **Illness Policy- see COVID addendum for additional information**

If your child cannot participate fully in activities or exhibits symptoms of illness, please keep them home until they are well. If a child becomes ill at school, staff will immediately contact parents by telephone to arrange to have the child picked up. Staff will keep the child comfortable and supervised in or nearby classroom until the child is picked up. No child will be released from school without proper parental permission.

These symptoms indicate a child who needs to stay home or may be excluded from childcare setting:

- Fever over 100 - must be fever free for at least 24 hours to return (un-medicated)
- Runny nose - yellow/green discharge
- Diarrhea
- Upset stomach or vomiting
- Sore throat
- Red, watery eyes (possible conjunctivitis)
- Persistent cough
- Rash
- Draining sore
- Scabies (keep child home 48 hours following treatment)
- Ringworm
- Lice – active lice visible on the scalp or viable nits

No medications of any kind can be administered by classroom staff or office staff without a completed Medication Permission Form signed by a parent.

Children with specific health care needs should deliver written notice about such needs, along with proper documentation by a physician, to Leelanau Montessori.

### **Health Plans and Records**

Leelanau Montessori requires that every child have on file a completed Health Appraisal form. Regular developmental check ups by a health care provider are important in keeping formal record of your child's overall health and development. These records must be updated annually. Please notify the school if there are changes to your child's health. All children must also have on file current immunization records or a authorized waiver prior to attending the school. The staff reviews these records seasonally and parents will be notified if there are records needing completion. For your information, the following link provides an overview of typical developmental milestones for your child. [CDC Link to Developmental Milestones](#)

### **Communicable Health Issues**

Any child who has contracted a communicable disease such as ringworm, chicken pox, measles, mumps, etc. must have their parents report the disease to the office immediately following diagnosis.

All parents will be notified of communicable diseases in the classroom via a Health Alert Email.

Children are permitted to attend school once their immunization record or waiver forms have been received by the office.

### **Student Medications**

(Prescription or Non-prescription)

Definition: Medication includes both prescription and non-prescription medications and includes those taken by mouth, taken by inhaler, those which are injectable (epi-pen), or applied to the skin.

Prescription/Non-Prescription Medication: If it is necessary for a child to take prescription or non-prescription medication during school hours, the law requires that the school receives written authorization from the parent for non-prescription. The parent's permission, as well as the bottle with the pharmacy label indicating the dosage and time. The classroom staff or school office will provide a form necessary for permission to administer. The school office can keep up to a one-month supply of the medication in the office in the original prescription bottle. The medication is to be taken in the presence of designated school personnel. Any unused medication at the end of the year will be sent home or discarded.

\*If an elementary child has written approval by the physician to possess and use an inhaler, the child is allowed to self-administer the medication if needed. A primary child will not be allowed to self-administer. This will be the guidelines for field trips as well.

Written instructions from a physician must include the name of the student, name of the medication, the dosage of the medication, route of administration, the start date and end date medication shall be administered, and times the medication is to be administered to the child and shall be kept on record by the school.

Parents must complete a Medication Permission and Instructions form before medication can be administered. Administering personnel will document on the form each time the medication is administered **Note:** Sunscreen, bug repellent, and diaper ointment require annual written parental permission.

### *Faculty/Staff exclusion due to illness:*

In a Montessori setting, adults are a crucial component of the prepared environment. As a result, physical presence in the classroom is a high priority. As childcare and educational professionals, we must always balance the protection of children in our care from the spread of communicable illness with the priority of our physical presence in the classroom. All faculty and staff should work collaboratively with their co-guides/assistants, as well as school leadership, to balance the need for healing and self-care with the need to support the prepared environment here at school. Staff may follow the guidelines in above Illness policy and use the same measures of symptoms as the children for whom they care.

### **ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The local education agency known as Leelanau Montessori is required by 40 CFR 763.80 to complete an inspection to determine whether any hazardous material was used in the construction of our facility. Documents pertaining to this inspection have been furnished to the State of Michigan as required. A copy is available in the school office for your review.

### **NUTRITION/FOOD POLICY**

We are committed to children's health. Research demonstrates the irrefutable link between mind and body. Healthy foods create healthy brains. Children are empowered to develop physically and intellectually by making healthy, nutritional choices, which increases mental performance and concentration, sharpen memory, and produce consistency of moods. Our curriculum and practices include knowledge and habits of healthful choices, which rely on your support.

*Refer to your child's classroom addendum for policies/procedures for food in the classroom.*

*Please let staff know of any food allergies.*

### **Lunches**

Lunch is parent provided. If a child leaves lunch at home, lunch will be provided by the school in accordance with nutritious meal requirements. The child is eager and capable to plan, shop, prepare, pack, and remember his/her lunch and snacks. Please support this act of independence by guiding practice in a way that can give them ownership as soon as possible.

A balanced lunch contains items from all of the food groups:

- Protein source - meat, fish, eggs, cheese, beans, nuts
- Complex carbohydrates - whole grain bread, rice, crackers
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Beverage - milk, water, 100% fruit juice

We encourage sustainable practices of using reusable and labeled containers for all food and beverages. There is no refrigeration available for lunches so please store an ice pack or frozen water bottle. We send uneaten food home, so you are aware of your child's diet. A baggie for 'sloppy' items keeps the lunch container clean.

Please keep the following foods at home:

- Beverages with added sugar (pop, Capri Sun, HiC, Gatorade)
- Pre-packaged individual servings (ie. juice, pudding...)
- Candy, cookies, cake, jello, pudding
- Fruit snacks or roll-ups
- Anything with added frosting, chocolate, candy sprinkles
- Artificially sweetened foods

**A child will not be deprived of a meal or snack if the parent fails to provide it. Menus will be posted in the Primary and Toddler rooms with any substitutions indicated. If a meal or snack is inadvertently forgotten by parents, food provided by the school will be in accordance with the Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP). Hands are always washed before all meals and snacks.**

## COMMUNICATION

Effective communication between school and home is vital to the successful academic, social, and emotional well-being of students. The primary line of communication lies between the child's teacher and parent. Should you need to contact your child's teacher of a non-emergency nature, please email their school address or leave a message with the school office before or after regular school hours. The office phone is checked for messages throughout the school day. The Head of School will also be available during the day to address any issues with parents/families.

The school provides a weekly update and a monthly newsletter to inform our community of school events and opportunities, the Montessori Method and to keep you abreast of the school's commitment to excellence and inspiration.

## COMMUNICATION ABOUT YOUR CHILD

In order to protect each child's dignity, teachers will refrain from discussing your child in his/her presence. We welcome a conversation about your child by telephone or appointment.

## PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/Teacher Conferences are held twice a year. A third conference may be scheduled if needed. These are established times when parents and teachers are encouraged to schedule a conference. Informal conferences can be held by appointment only before or after school at other times during the year. Please telephone or email your teacher to schedule an appointment.

## SURVEYS

The central office sends out various surveys to parents, staff and children annually. Survey data helps us improve upon our service for all of our community and your feedback is appreciated and considered in school decisions and direction.

## TELEPHONES

School telephones are reserved for faculty/staff use and for children, as necessary. Exceptions will be made in the case of an emergency. Important messages will be given to students or staff members upon request. If you have a change in your child's schedule please make every attempt to notify the school in a timely matter.

We prohibit cell phone use during school hours. If your child brings a cell phone to school, it will be

stored in the central office until the end of the school day.

## **PEACE PROCESS**

From time to time, many of us find we have concerns that need to be addressed. This is a natural part of being a community and something we fully support. When working with the children of Leelanau Montessori, we have a peace process that is modeled and supported for the peaceful resolution of conflicts. This process includes talking respectfully to the person they have a concern with and expressing their feelings appropriately.

As adults, we have our own 'peace process' to facilitate healthy communication in our community. If a parent/guardian has a concern about something happening at school they are asked to follow the protocol laid out below:

- 1) If the concern is specifically regarding a faculty/staff member or a situation that occurred in their classroom community, the parent/guardian will discuss with the faculty/staff member first. The staff member will inform the Head of School of the issue and what action was/will be taken.
- 2) If the concern cannot be resolved with this first step, the parent/guardian will discuss it with the involved staff member and their supervisor. The supervisor will inform the Head of School of the issue and what action was/will be taken.
- 3) If the concern cannot be resolved with this second step, the parent/guardian will make a request for a conference to the Head of School. If the concern is regarding the Head of School, the parent/guardian should submit a written request for a conference to the Board. This request should include the following:
  - The specific nature of the complaint and a brief statement of the facts giving rise to it,
  - The respect in which it is alleged that the complainant (or the child of the complainant) has been adversely affected,
  - The action the complainant wishes to be taken and the reasons why it is felt that such action is needed.
- 4) If matter is still not resolved, the complainant shall request, in writing, a hearing by the Board.

## **PERSONAL ITEMS**

The school will not accept responsibility for the personal items of your child. We encourage children to leave home belongings that are not necessary for their education. More specifically, electronic games, cell phones, toys are not allowed in school unless special permission has been granted. Any other personal items that staff members judge to be unsafe or inappropriate for school will be removed from the child's possession and held in the office or remain in the possession of the staff member until the parents retrieve them. Any unclaimed items at the end of the school year will be properly disposed of or donated to charity.

Parents shall claim any confiscated item within 30 calendar days from the school office. Unclaimed items will be discarded at no expense to Leelanau Montessori. During the school day teachers will guide students toward appropriate materials when accessing the Internet. Outside of school, families bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they interact with other information sources such as television, telephones, cell phones, movies, radio, and other potentially offensive media. Leelanau Montessori is not

responsible for any lost personal items. Please refer to the Acceptable Use Policy. Violations will result in disciplinary or legal action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Please properly label your child's clothing and personal property so that lost items can be returned. The lost and found area is located outside the school's main office. At the end of the school year unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

## ACADEMICS

### EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Leelanau Montessori embraces an authentic Montessori approach to education. We will provide philosophies and practices that will empower the child to direct his/her own life and development, based on prepared environments that stimulate and enable various activities that aid in social, emotional, physical, cognitive and intellectual development. The Montessori Method of education reflects the educational and psychological research and data-based instructional strategies of both Dr. Montessori and various educators of her day. These practices are now supported by current brain research and findings on appropriate child development.

### CURRICULUM

Some of the tenets of Maria Montessori's philosophy of education that will be practiced at Leelanau Montessori follow:

- A holistic approach to education
- Long uninterrupted work cycles
- Mixed age groupings
- Integrated Specials
- Ungraded work
- Child-paced schedules
- Active engagement and movement
- Dynamic teaching materials
- Carefully prepared and maintained dynamic learning environments
- Flexible and diverse spaces
- Individual and group instruction
- Child-centered discipline
- Peace Education

### ASSESSMENT

Leelanau Montessori recognizes that growth and change occur, though not always at a predictable or expected rate. Assessment therefore, has many different facets in our Montessori environments. In Montessori, continual assessment is part of the essential functioning of an authentic classroom. Following the educational philosophy and understanding of child development that Dr. Montessori put forth, we expect each child to grow and change every year. We also respect the plateaus which naturally occur due to countless factors in and beyond the school and home, and which are vital to growth. Montessorians refer to these plateaus as planes of development and recognize that each level has its own developmental markers and milestones that must be considered. Creating and maintaining developmentally appropriate learning environments is a hallmark of Montessori education. As a public Montessori school, Leelanau Montessori works hard to help parents understand the natural fluctuations of child development. Assessment has many different facets in our Montessori environments and is represented in a diverse inventory of tools. Screening and assessment data is shared with parents during conferences, home visits, parent meetings, school communication folders and upon parent request.

### Observation and formative assessment

The daily use of observation, combined with the attributes of the Montessori materials that reveal a child's understanding and paired with rigorous record keeping enable Montessori teachers to closely follow the child's development. In the elementary class there are additional tools, such as the daily record

of activities by the child and regular one-on-one conferences with the child that assist the guide in monitoring progress in development. The adult observes the child's contributions during a group or individual lesson, whether the child goes on to utilize the concept presented and the child using Montessori materials for evidence that s/he has understood a presentation. Finally, the guides and child discuss the child's work on an on-going basis of reflection and ownership. For each child, records are kept of all concepts presented, all material practiced, and all concepts understood by the child. The staff use the information gathered through this process of evaluation to provide information on the child's progress, to plan appropriately for each child's needs and to assess the child's interests, skills and strengths. This record keeping system can be utilized by other teachers when the time comes for the child to move on to another class or school. Parents also may request access by speaking to their child's guide. We keep digital comprehensive records of lessons on a platform called Montessori Compass.

**The Three Period Lesson:** this lesson format provides formative as well as summative information about student progress. As teachers observe students working through a lesson, skill mastery is assessed and the teacher makes a determination as to whether additional practice is required or if new work will be introduced. The Three Period Lesson is also one of the main tools that teachers use to improve teaching and learning. The careful observations and notes that teachers take during lessons, and in watching practice work, provides the teacher with repetitious opportunities to change a delivery method, to ask the child different questions during the lesson, to offer guided practice, and to encourage different pairs of children to work together.

**Practice work:** After a child has received a lesson, he/she will journal and practice that work as needed to reach competency/mastery. There are controls for the work a child performs so that after the work is finished, the child can check and review their efforts, ask questions and receive further instruction and/or guidance and new work and lessons. When either child or teacher feels the child is ready to move on, a mastery check will be given, sometimes verbally, sometimes written. These ongoing, daily assessments of each child and each subject are performed and recorded by the teacher and are used to establish daily individualized lesson plans for new work and new lessons.

Additional modes of assessment are employed by the school that include work sampling, progress reports, benchmark documents, progress monitoring and screeners to measure social emotional and academic development. We do administer state standardized tests that provide another point of data related to academic growth and proficiency.

Interim and on-going assessment is an integral part of the instructional integrity and monitoring process. LMPSA subscribes to NWEA and Delta Math as two such tools that show growth over time.

### **Benchmark Documents for Final Year**

Leelanau Montessori Public School Academy offers an authentic Montessori approach to education, nurturing the whole child, academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually. Children are part of multi-age communities that support the natural stages of development. By the end of each developmental period, it can be expected that children have mastered specific skill benchmarks related to these developmental domains. Instructional staff uses these documents to plan, assess, monitor, and inform specific skills children are expected to "master" at the end of the developmental stage (K, 3rd, 6th). These documents are meant to inform future guides and parents and are not seen as the end.

This process begins as early as the beginning of the child's Kindergarten year and all final children will have a benchmark document record in process by February.

Completed benchmark documents for each child will serve as an update for receiving teachers (Kindergarten to 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>, and exiting 6<sup>th</sup> year students).

If a child is not in their Kindergarten, 3rd, or 6th year, copies of the benchmark documents are available upon request.

#### **District specific screeners and tests:**

NWEA-Measures of Academic Progress – MAP

Delta Math

Orton-Gillingham

MKEO-KRA (kindergarten only)

#### **State specific tests:**

Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress – M STEP

### **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

In general, a child who has mastered the grade level curriculum is promoted to the next grade or level each spring. The structure of Montessori provides an individualized curriculum and a multi-age environment therefore largely eliminating the stigma surrounding retention. Community is valued over competition, process over grades and the individual nature of development is valued. The decision to retain a student is a joint decision among the guide, parents, and Head of School with the teacher taking the lead in the decision-making process beginning in January. Specific written notification to parents by teachers considering retaining a child will be sent to parents at the end of the 2nd marking period in January, again in March (around spring Parent- Teacher Conferences), and a final notice by May 31<sup>st</sup>. The following factors are considered but not limited to when making a retention recommendation and decision:

- Student academic performance in the grade level curriculum
- Standardized State mandated assessments tests if appropriate
- Montessori rubrics and teacher observations
- Attendance and discipline record
- Chronological age and maturity level
- Capability vs. performance and likelihood of academic success at the next grade level

The Head of School reserves the right to retain a child in the same grade according to his/her judgment, despite the objections of the parents, when a combination of the above listed factors strongly suggest that a child needs the benefit of another year of growth in order to be successful at the next grade level. Such a decision is made with ample consideration and is preceded by numerous communications between the teacher and the parents throughout the school year. The Head of School has the final responsibility to promote or retain the child.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

It is the policy of Leelanau Montessori to provide Special Education services within the Academy. Children with specific needs have the right to a quality education appropriate to their needs, abilities, and interests. Special Education services are provided for all children within the district including children of migrant workers, the homeless, and children in residential facilities. It is the goal of the Special

Education staff to act as a resource to the classroom teacher in the development and implementation of appropriate instructional and socialization strategies. Implementation of these strategies will occur within the general educational setting, and through small group and one-on-one remediation. Children will not be excluded or expelled because of the need for additional medical or behavioral support, assistance with toileting, or staff attitudes or apprehension.

### **Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

Leelanau Montessori complies with all Federal and State legal requirements that every child identified as having a disability is provided with an Individual Educational Plan. The IEP specifies goals, level of service, ancillary services, and a least restrictive learning environment placement. Ancillary services that may be provided are Speech and Language Therapy, Social Work, and Occupational Therapy.

Registration forms are screened to identify current IEPs from other school districts. Parents are fully informed of their rights, procedures, and responsibilities under Special Education law. Procedural safeguard booklets are distributed to parents before evaluations are conducted, and at IEP meetings.

### **STUDENT PERMANENT SCHOOL RECORDS**

Access to children's records is governed by Michigan's Freedom of Information Act and Board of Directors' policy.

The Board of Directors policies for inspection, review, and copying of a child's records with a description of the types of records maintained by the school district and the procedures seeking correction of student records is available on our website under Board Policies.

Access to a child's records is available, in consultation with the school officials, to authorized school personnel, to the child's parents or legal guardian, and the child (if over 18). Arrangement for review may be made through the Head of School.

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

Under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 USC Section 1232g) and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto, all parents and guardians of children under eighteen (18) years of age and all students eighteen (18) years of age or older have the right to examine student records directly related to a child and maintained by the school district in accordance with the terms of the law and regulations.

**Complaints with regard to violations of rights can be submitted in writing to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, D.C. 20202.**

Other than in certain exceptional circumstances described in the Board of Directors' policies concerning student records, no personally-identifiable information from the Head of Schools' records of a child shall be released to third parties without the prior written consent of the parent, legal guardian, or child over eighteen (18) years of age.

### **PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS**

Parents have the right annually to request information about the professional qualifications of classroom teachers.

# CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

## DISCIPLINE

We use positive methods of discipline which encourage self-control, self-esteem, self-direction and cooperation. We see discipline as an ability to direct oneself in a way that meets one's own need for growth and care, while respecting the rights of others and the harmony of one's surroundings. As such, discipline is not something that is enforced, but rather a state of inner balance at which children arrive through their efforts, guided by the adults. Discipline is primarily an internalized learning experience and less a punitive experience for the student. Each teacher develops his or her own individual way of addressing behavior within the principles of the Montessori philosophy.

Furthermore, the teacher demonstrates ways of conflict resolution and behaving throughout his or her own example, as well as through carefully prepared lessons. Adults encourages children, help them talk out their problems and think of solutions at age appropriate levels. Our community models appropriate ways to solve problems. In the Toddler room, adults will set limits and provide choices, alternatives and redirection. Story books and other materials may be used to show and model prosocial behavior. In the primary classroom, grace and courtesy lessons might include how to excuse oneself, how to move a chair quietly, and how to determine whether a table is in use by someone else. In the elementary classrooms these lessons might include how to negotiate a compromise, how to assert oneself politely and how to employ good table manners. We structure the physical classroom and the classroom atmosphere to minimize frustration and maximize success, thus avoiding the need for inappropriate behaviors. Children are shown respect for their feelings and their reasons. The Elementary children are continuously involved in making and modifying classroom rules. Perhaps most importantly, freedom of choice among appropriate, satisfying activities within reasonable limits, allows children to gradually get in touch with their inner abilities to guide their own exploration and evaluate their own performance.

In our classrooms, children are allowed to experience the "natural consequences" of their actions. Hasty movement might cause a vase to fall, blatant misuse of material may result in the loss of privilege to use that material for a time, or antisocial behavior may result in brief removal from the group.

Through example and natural consequences, the child develops an ability to direct him or herself in a way that meets his or her needs without infringing upon the rights of others and without disrupting the harmony of his or her surroundings. The gentle but firm guidance of the teacher and the support of a mixed-age group environment usually eliminate the need for "rewards and punishments." Our aim is to share objective observations of the child's behavior and its consequences without angry moralization; to constantly teach, showing the way to more appropriate behavior so that the child gradually grows into both the ability to direct him or herself and her willingness to be responsible for what he or she does.

If the child does not respond and cooperate with these discipline techniques, parents will be notified and included in a planning process for the child. The Head of School may ask for written agreement outlining a behavior plan.

### DISCIPLINE POLICY SPECIFICS

The following guidelines are used by our staff when guiding children's behavior:

Hands off unless

- a child is harming him/herself
- a child is harming someone else
- a child is destroying property

No need to correct any behavior except when:

- A child is harming him/herself
- a child is harming someone else (physically or verbally)
- a child is destroying property
- a child is disrupting learning

We “correct” unacceptable behavior by:

- Doing our best to prevent it by
  1. for the child who habitually demands attention by misbehaving, offer positive attention before any misbehavior occurs
  2. For the child who habitually misbehaves to test limits, provide limits for minor misbehavior , so the child won’t have to escalate his misbehavior.
  3. For the child who isn’t engaged in an activity and acts out in frustration, provide a reasonable alternative to the activity.
  4. Maintain compassion. Ask the child's what’s happening with him/her. Demonstrate positive behavior (i.e always speak kindly to him/her. ) Be flexible when possible.
  5. Keep children's needs first and foremost. The purpose of our interaction with the children is to serve the children.
- Physically stopping it (if and ONLY IF the child is physically hurting someone or something)
- Calmly, compassionately and unequivocally telling the child to stop
- If that doesn’t work, we calmly compassionate and unequivocally tell the child to leave the area ( and specifically where s/he should go)
  1. If the child argues, (pleads, refuses,etc)
    - tell the child that you won’t argue the situation
    - tell the child you are going somewhere else for a few moments
    - tell the child you expect him/her to do the appropriate thing.
  2. If the child flat-out refuses to go or ignores the instruction to go:
    - calmly compassionately and unequivocally remind the child that refusing such directions is incompatible with classroom courtesy and adult will have to monitor classroom freedoms in the future.
    - If the child still will not go, notify parents to discuss the incident and to make a plan for change if a behavior is a pattern.

Through the *consistent* application of these disciplining techniques the children will learn to handle conflict, respect others, promote problem-solving skills and become responsible citizens. Within this framework of discipline, children develop the ability to acknowledge and take responsibility for their actions and to learn from their mistakes. The development of self-discipline is fostered and this crucial life skill is developed for the long-term benefit of the child.

Staff shall be prohibited from using the following as a means of punishment:

- Hitting, shaking, spanking, biting, pinching, or inflicting any form of corporal punishment.
- Restricting a child’s movement by binding or tying him or her.
- Inflicting mental or emotional punishment such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a child.
- Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
- Confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar cubicle.
- All forms of corporal punishment

Non-severe discipline or restraint may be used when reasonably necessary, based on a child's development, to prevent a child from harming himself or herself. This would exclude those forms of punishment mentioned above.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

We view conduct as the ability to be self-disciplined while interacting with peers, teachers and the environment. Our expectations for conduct are simply to show respect for others, oneself and the school environment. The Leelanau Montessori community expects each child to:

- treat others with dignity and respect;
- treat herself/himself with that same respect;
- respect both the work and the property of others.

The Board of Directors believes that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. It is the policy of Leelanau Montessori to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Our code of conduct includes a respectful process that recognizes the needs of the child, the teacher and the school community. It aids in the social development of the child and empowers responsibility for one's actions. We include the child as much as possible in the solution and consequence to the situation and offer support towards a peaceful resolution, self-reflection and restoration after an incident.

Children attending Leelanau Montessori are guaranteed the right to a public education. If this right is to be guaranteed, regular attendance in classes is of vital importance. The United States Supreme Court has held that a student may not be deprived of this right to a public education without adherence to procedural due process. In the event that it is proposed a student be removed from school for more than ten consecutive days you will be advised of due process rights attendant to an expulsion from school including the right to a hearing.

It is the responsibility of the Leelanau Montessori staff to ensure that no child is arbitrarily denied the right to an education.

It is the responsibility of each child to behave in a manner that does not threaten, interfere with, or deprive other children of their right to an education.

Leelanau Montessori's Code of Conduct has been adopted by Leelanau Montessori's Board of Directors and will be uniformly enforced by the Head of School and faculty/staff of the school. Children who engage in behavior that violates the Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. The State of Michigan mandates discipline in certain cases by statute where weapons or drugs are brought to school or certain assaultive behavior occurs at school or school sponsored events.

For additional information on the following Codes of Conduct for Leelanau Montessori and/or to refer to the following Board Policies and Procedures on the website.

- Harassment
- Bullying
- Disorderly Conduct
- Controlled Substances: Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco
- Search and Seizure of Lockers and Contents

- Suspension and Expulsion
- Student Seclusion and Restraint
- Weapons
- Student Rights

In the event that a child is unable to adhere to the code of conduct, the following measures will be followed. The Head of School, faculty and professionals will determine the level of responses based on the severity, frequency and duration of the behavior.

**LEVEL A:**

If a child:

- shows disrespect towards staff, peers or school property
- uses inappropriate language or is verbally abusive
- leaves class or grounds without permission
- refuses to follow directions
- exhibits bullying behavior or harassment

The guide will follow up with the child and take steps for responsibility, reflection and repair.

The guide will follow up with the parent.

The guide will notify the HOS in an Incident report.

The guide will follow up with the child within a week to continue supporting the opportunity for growth and maintaining appropriate behaviors.

If the behavior continues or is repeated a 2nd time:

1. The Head of school will conduct the questioning for facts and restoration. An Incident report filed by the Head of School.
2. The Head of School will meet with the student and teacher and any other parties involved to establish expectations and rapport.
3. The Head of school will notify the parent of the resolution and plan moving forward. A meeting may be requested with HOS, parent and student.
4. A Behavior support team may be convened.
5. An in-school suspension may be warranted depending on the severity of the incident. Consideration of an after school or community service activity may result.
6. Staff is responsible for suspension noted and Incident reports updated in child's file.

If the behavior persists a 3rd time :

1. HOS conducts the questioning process to find out the facts and presents findings to all involved in the situation. Staff documents Incident Report.
2. HOS immediately notifies the parent of the incident and may request a meeting at the school. Parent is advised of the student's rights.
3. One to five days in-school or out-of school-suspension depending on the severity of the offense.
4. A Discipline Support Team may be convened at the discretion of the HOS
5. Staff is responsible for suspension noted and Incident reports updated in child's file.

**LEVEL B.**

If a child:

- is fighting or hitting in anger; shoving; kicking; hitting; poking; spitting; biting;

- assault or physical intimidation;
- making threatening comments orally or in writing;
- intentionally using an implement in any way that makes another student or staff member feel threatened or unwanted physical contact.

Head of School (HOS) conducts questioning process with all involved to find out the facts. The parent(s) are immediately notified of the incident and may be requested to attend a meeting at the school.

HOS meets with the student, and teacher and informs the student verbally and in writing of the offense, evidence, and of the accounts of any witnesses. The student may present his or her response to others' accounts of the incident.

HOS documents Incident Report.

The consequence may include a one to three day in-school or out-of school-suspension depending on the severity of the offense.

HOS may request to meet with parent (s) and student prior to student's return to class to review behavioral expectations for the student.

A Discipline Support Team may be convened at the discretion of the HOS.

Suspension noted in the student's file. Incident Report updated.

HOS notifies all educational professionals working with child beyond the classroom teacher

If the behavior continues or is repeated a 2nd time:

1. Head of School (HOS) conducts questioning process with all involved to find out the facts and the parent(s) are immediately notified of the incident and may be requested to attend a meeting at the school.
2. HOS meets with the student, and teacher and informs the student verbally and in writing of the offense, evidence, and of the accounts of any witnesses. The student may present his or her response to others' accounts of the incident. HOS documents Incident Report.
3. Sanctions will be age appropriate and consistent with the objectives of the school's approach to discipline as stated earlier in this Code. The consequence may include a one to five day in-school or out-of school-suspension depending on the severity of the offense.
4. All school privileges will be revoked during this period. HOS may request to meet with parent (s) and student prior to student's return to class to review behavioral expectations for the student.
5. A Discipline Support Team may be convened at the discretion of the HOS.
6. Suspension noted in the student's file. Incident Report updated.

If the behavior persists a 3rd time :

1. Head of School (HOS) conducts questioning process with all involved to find out the facts and the parent(s) are immediately notified of the incident and may be requested to attend a meeting at the school.
2. HOS meets with the student, and teacher and informs the student verbally and in writing of the offense, evidence, and of the accounts of any witnesses. The student may present his or her response to others' accounts of the incident. HOS documents Incident Report.
3. Sanctions will be age appropriate and consistent with the objectives of the school's approach to discipline as stated earlier in this Code. The consequence may include a one to ten day in-school or out-of school-suspension depending on the severity of the offense.
4. All school privileges will be revoked during this period. HOS may request to meet with parent (s) and student prior to student's return to class to review behavioral expectations for the student.
5. A Discipline Support Team may be convened at the discretion of the HOS.
6. The board president will be made aware of the child's repeated behaviors.
7. Evaluation for special services will be assessed by the HOS and the coordinator of special education.
8. Suspension noted in the student's file. Incident Report update

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT (PBS)**

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is the application of strategies and systems to increase academic performance and safety, decrease problem behavior, and establish a positive school culture. The PBS process is a team-based approach that relies on a strong collaboration among families, school personnel, and members of the community; all working together to provide a continuum of support for all children. Leelanau Montessori teachers attend a P-BIT(Positive Behavior Intervention Techniques) training annually through Traverse Bay Area ISD. We also participate in a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to address the needs of children.

## **Referral Policy**

A teacher or parent refers children experiencing difficulties with educational development to the Leelanau Montessori Student Support Team. The team will then observe in the classroom and will work with the parents to make a referral to the TBAISD team if data from observations indicates the need for an evaluation. The appropriate special education staff members will work with the family and teaching team to assist in the growth and development of the child. The team members will also provide direct services to the child if there is an identifiable need.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Children who are successful in school have strong and positive connections between family, school, and community. Parent involvement in the learning process strengthens learning at home and is linked to positive child outcomes. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to participate at the level they are most comfortable. We encourage parents to be involved by:

- Volunteering in the classroom (reading books, interacting in play, helping with projects)
- Attending parent meetings/workshops/workbees
- Attending family education events
- Serving on an advisory committee
- Sharing skills, talents, and interests with the class

## **VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES**

### **Specific School Guidelines for All Volunteers, including parents.**

The Leelanau Montessori Board of Directors would like to thank our parents for their willingness to help us provide children with the best possible education. Leelanau Montessori places the utmost importance on parental involvement in the formal and informal education of their children.

Please read the following guidelines carefully and acknowledge your willingness to follow them as you work on our behalf. Should you have any questions regarding the guidelines below, please contact the Head of School.

- All unsupervised volunteers must have a Comprehensive Background Check prior to unsupervised contact with children. All volunteers will also have a signed child abuse statement on file with the school and complete the federally mandated Health and Safety training within 90 days of the first day of volunteering.
- All supervised Toddler and Primary volunteers must sign a child abuse and neglect statement prior to volunteering and must remain in the line of vision of staff members who have completed and passed the Comprehensive Background Check at all times.
- When you volunteer at school and on school-sponsored field trips, you are a school representative. Please put the safety and health of the children first. Please follow the instructions and directions of the staff in charge.
- Professional conduct is required as a representative of Leelanau Montessori.
- On school-sponsored events or field trips, please follow all instructions provided by the teacher or Leelanau Montessori.
- No individual electronic devices should be used while chaperoning without prior approval (for purposes of emergency contact and approved photography only).
- As a representative of the school, it is important to ***respect student confidentiality***. This includes student behavior and things you hear from the “mouths of children.” When you are in contact with children as a volunteer, please remember to always respect their privacy by refraining from talking about behavior incidents or things students say with anyone outside of the school faculty/staff. Remember the tales of children are not always accurate. It is our job to listen and share only with those who really need to know.
- If you suspect abuse, it is your legal responsibility to report to CPS (child protective services) and immediately after notifying the Head of School of your report.
- It is important that you show no preference for any one religion over any other or a preference for religion over non-religion. Please be aware that it is inappropriate for you to force your personal religious views to children when acting as a volunteer.

## FIELD TRIPS

**All chaperones must have a central registry and criminal background check (ICHAT) for overnight trips.** The Leelanau Montessori Board of Directors must approve all extended field trips in advance. No child shall be penalized academically for non-participation in any school sponsored trip but must attend an assigned classroom during the trip. All academic and co-curricular field trips are subject to cancellation without notice for lack of parent drivers.

Whenever any LMPSA children (K-6 or preschool) are traveling away from school, they are subject to the same rules, regulations, and appropriate behavior and civility observed at Leelanau Montessori. As in the classroom, the guide will judge what acceptable or unacceptable behavior is, including compliance with the Student Dress Code. Signed permission slips must be on file with the guide for each child for each field trip.

The Board does not endorse, support, or assume liability in any way for any staff member, volunteer, or parent of the school who takes students on trips not approved by the Board of Directors.

Except for extended field trips, Leelanau Montessori sometimes depends on parents to provide student transportation on academic and co-curricular/athletic field trips. All parent drivers are requested to abide by the following requirements:

- Must possess a valid driver's license
- Operate an insured vehicle in good running order
- Accept responsibility for students assigned and follow the directions and prescribed transportation route provided by the trip leader/classroom staff
- Make arrangements for the care of younger siblings during the trip to avoid driver distractions. Enrolled siblings in other grades are not allowed to accompany parent drivers.
- Understand the purpose of the trip is to assist the trip leader/classroom teacher with the instructional information.
- Be able to contact the trip leader/staff in case of an emergency for the duration of the trip.

### **PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION**

When transportation is not provided by other means, the following should be considered regarding private transportation. Leelanau Montessori does not accept financial liability or responsibility for volunteer drivers transporting children to school-sponsored activities. The driver's insurance is to provide primary coverage in case of an accident.

# APPENDICES

## TODDLER ADDENDUM

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Arrival:**

Toddler children meet outside at designated space between 8:10-8:30 daily.

**Dismissal:**

Toddler parents may pick up their child from the outdoor toddler play area.

In the interest of your child's safety and the teachers' preparation time, please pick up your child by 11:15 or 3:10 p.m., depending on his/her schedule.

### DAILY ROUTINE (TODDLER)

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:10	free choice all morning
	small groups meet all morning
9:50-10:15	group snack
10:15	toilet time, dressing and changing
10:40	clean up, group singing, movement
11:15	outside and dismissal
11:30	inside with full day children
11:30	lunch, toileting
12:30	nap
2:30	group snack
3:10	dismissal/pick up

### CENTER FOOD POLICY

*Our nutrition policy is shared in the main handbook and provides guidelines for healthy lunches.*

We are committed to children's health. Research demonstrates the irrefutable link between mind and body. Healthy foods create healthy brains. Children are empowered to develop physically and intellectually by

making healthy, nutritional choices, which increases mental performance and concentration, sharpen memory, and produce consistency of moods. Our curriculum and practices include knowledge and habits of healthful choices, which rely on your support.

**Snack:** Parents are responsible to provide snack once monthly on a designated date as part of our food program and classroom food preparation activity. Snack is served twice daily, mid morning and after nap, and consists of a fresh fruit or vegetable and whole grain. Parents will receive a snack calendar each month indicating their child's snack day, snack options and portions requested. You may send your contribution on that day and your child will help in preparing snack for their classmates for the following day. You will receive a description and instructions for supporting this activity. These are the guidelines we ask you to follow.

1. The snack includes a whole grain, a fruit and/or vegetable.
2. Include your child going to the store to make food choices.
3. The children will prepare the snack here at school.
4. Send enough snack for morning and afternoon, for the entire group.

If a snack is not provided by parents on the designated day, the school will provide snack in accordance to CACFP nutrition policy and food program requirements.

Leelanau Montessori will comply with Licensing rule 400.8330 (3) sub rule to ensure that children with special dietary needs receive meals/snacks in accordance with the child's needs. The form below allows parents to provide information and make a detailed plan to provide specific foods as needed. The staff will always honor allergies as part of health and wellness of children and maintain close supervision to minimize any risk to children.

***Please let us know of any food allergies by completing the ALLERGY FORM provided by the office and your child's guide.***

Leelanau Montessori is a licensed childcare and complies with all State of Michigan Child Care Licensing rules related to food service and nutrition. We are required to follow all guidance regarding snacks and meals that is contained in the Child and Adult Food Care Program. This includes the following:

- Children who have specific dietary needs (allergies, vegetarian, etc...) should be accommodated by the school food program. Parents may fill out an ALLERGY FORM provided by the office and/or child's guide.
- Families of children who have low frequency dietary needs (organic only, Kosher, vegan, etc...) are invited to have a discussion with the lead guide/teacher and complete a SPECIAL DIET form to put a plan in place. We will work together to meet both your family's preferences and the nutrition requirements.
- Shared meals are an important part of the program and whenever possible, all children should learn to enjoy a wide variety of foods in a communal setting. We strive to make our mealtime environment pleasant. We believe that sitting and eating with children provides an opportunity for positive role modeling and social interaction.

### **Appropriate clothing for school**

Simple, non-distracting clothing, which fosters independent dressing and supports focus, is very important. Lights on shoes and decorations of various kinds are distracting. Please keep these shoes at home. Everyone

needs a simple pair of closed, flat-heeled, indoor shoes, which are kept here at school, so that our floors can be kept as clean, work - spaces. Tie-on shoes provide the safest movement and learning the practical life skill of tying. In addition, emergency drills are practiced year-round, regardless of weather, so the children travel away from the building, and remain outside for a period of time.

We ask you to send a complete change of labeled clothing in a labeled gallon ziplock bag, labeled with your child's name. A “What to Bring” form is included in our start-up packet.

### **Guidelines for changing diapers or soiled clothing**

When changing diapers or soiled clothing of any child in the school, the following procedures are followed:

- The child is taken to a designated area.
- Faculty washes hands with soap and water.
- Plastic gloves are used in the changing area.
- Changing paper is used on a floor mat as a clean place on which the child may lie, sit, or stand.
- The soiled clothes/diapers are removed and placed directly in a plastic bag to be sent home that day and out of children’s reach ( if disposable diaper it will be discarded immediately)
- Wet wipes will be used to clean the child and then wipes will be disposed of properly.
- Parents are responsible for supplying diapers for their child. Using the child’s own diaper will avoid any skin reaction to an unfamiliar brand.
- The child will dress and undress on their own as much as possible unless assistance is needed.
- Changing paper/mat, rubber gloves, and toilet seat/potty chair will be sanitized and or properly disposed.
- Any urine, feces, or blood on the floor should be blotted up with paper towel and disposed of properly. The area will be sanitized with a solution and precautions will be taken by using rubber gloves as described in the above procedures.

### **Celebrations & Traditions**

On birthdays, your child will be able to bring in a healthy snack to share at snack time, and we will sing “Happy Birthday” to him/her.

## PRIMARY ADDENDUM

### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### SCHOOL DAY ROUTINE (PRIMARY)

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>
8:10	Arrival	Children are dropped off at school and will undress and sort their things at their hook.
8:15-8:30	Planning Time	Children indicate what they will work on. Adults use an array of strategies to support the child's initiative and interests.
8:30	Work Cycle Snack	Includes planning, choice, cleanup with individual, partner, and small group activities. Breakfast and snacks are offered within this portion of the day.
10:00	Small Group	Children are offered a small group activity. The goal is open-ended but may focus on exploration, peer collaboration and oral language development.
11:00	Recall	Children may choose to reflect, share or present the work they have accomplished that day. Adults model and use strategies to support this opportunity.
11:00	Large Group	A time that is both teacher and student led to build community ground rules, share, sing songs, and practice educational games and early literacy activities.
11:15	Lunch	Children may bring lunch from home.
12:15	Outdoors	The entire primary community joins for supervised free play and gross motor movement.
1:00	Indoors/Rest/Nap	Transition activities from outdoors lead to a quiet time each afternoon.
1:15-1:30	Small group/planning	Usually this time is spent doing a literacy activity with a small group. Afterwards, children indicate what they will work on. Adults use an array of strategies to support the child's initiative and interests.
1:30	Work cycle Snack	Includes planning, choice and cleanup with individual, partner and small group activities. Snack is offered.
2:40	Recall	Children may choose to reflect, share or present the work they have accomplished

		that day. Adults model and use strategies to support this opportunity.
2:40	Group/Prepare for the Next Day	A gathering to reflect and recall on what has occurred in the present day and prepare the environment for the next day.
3:10	Dismissal/Pick-Up	Parent pick-up begins promptly.

### Appropriate clothing for school

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We ask you to send a complete change of labeled clothing in a labeled gallon ziplock bag, labeled with your child's name. A “What to Bring” form is included in our start-up packet.

### CENTER FOOD POLICY

*Our nutrition policy is shared in the main handbook and provides guidelines for healthy lunches.*

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- Children who have specific dietary needs (allergies, vegetarian, etc...) should be accommodated by the school food program. Parents may fill out an ALLERGY FORM provided by the office and/or child’s guide.
- Families of children who have low frequency dietary needs (organic only, Kosher, vegan, etc...) are invited to have a discussion with the lead guide/teacher and complete a SPECIAL DIET form to put a plan in place. We will work together to meet both your family’s preferences and the nutrition requirements.
- Shared meals are an important part of the program and whenever possible, all children should learn to enjoy a wide variety of foods in a communal setting. We strive to make our mealtime environment pleasant. We believe that sitting and eating with children provides an opportunity for positive role modeling and social interaction.

## SNACK

Parents are responsible to provide snack once monthly on a designated date as part of our food program and classroom food preparation activity. Snack is served twice daily, mid morning and after nap, and consists of a fresh fruit or vegetable and whole grain. Parents will receive a snack calendar each month indicating their child's snack day, snack options and portions requested. You may send your contribution on that day and your child will help in preparing snack for their classmates for the following day. You will receive a description and instructions for supporting this activity. These are the guidelines we ask you to follow.

1. snack includes a whole grain, a fruit and/or vegetable.
2. Include your child going to the store to make food choices.
3. The children will prepare the snack here at school.
4. Send enough snack for morning and afternoon, for the entire group.
5. If a snack is not provided by parents on the designated day, the school will provide snack in accordance to CACFP nutrition policy and food program requirements.

Leelanau Montessori will comply with Licensing rule 400.8330 (3) sub rule to ensure that children with special dietary needs receive meals/snacks in accordance with the child's needs. The form below allows parents to provide information and make a detailed plan to provide specific foods as needed. The staff will always honor allergies as part of health and wellness of children and maintain close supervision to minimize any risk to children.

***Please let us know of any food allergies by completing the ALLERGY FORM provided by the office and your child's guide.***

A child will not be deprived of a meal or snack if the parent fails to provide it. Menus will be posted in the rooms with any substitutions indicated. If a meal or snack is inadvertently forgotten by parents, food provided by the school will be in accordance with the Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP).

**Hands are always washed before all meals and snacks.**

Please review our nutrition policy in the family handbook for lunch menu guidelines and expectations.

## Rest/sleep

All children have individual sleep and rest needs for health and wellness. A child is offered rest and provided a nap mat and appropriate bedding according to their individual needs. For children who do not sleep, an alternate, quiet activity will be offered during rest time. Those who rest, do so for an appropriate amount of time. Rest/sleep time will not exceed approximately 60 minutes and will be supervised by staff at all times. We pay attention to the cues and needs of children in an effort to keep resting time a positive experience.

## Celebrations & Traditions

We look for opportunities to celebrate life, as well as honor rites of passages and key moments of human experiences, which represent cultural differences but bind us to the Family of Man. As we introduce children to traditions and celebrations from around the world, we want to encourage your participation to share your own stories and traditions with us. We respect religious holidays, which families celebrate at

home, and approach them from seasonal, factual, and historic perspectives. All invitations and gifts, which occur beyond school need to stay home, in the interest of everyone.

We celebrate birthdays with a unique community celebration. You will be informed of how this will look during the pandemic. Please use your birthday celebration form to help you celebrate this important milestone in your child's personal history.

### **Personal Items**

Children in the Primary class like to share. We recognize this interest and see it as an opportunity to foster skills important to self-expression. Children are welcome to bring an object to share with the classroom that is of interest and benefit to the life of the group. We have a museum table to display natural specimens, something from another culture, something a child has made, or an interesting book. Toys, cell phones, money, gum, cosmetics, and similar items are not appropriate.

## ELEMENTARY ADDENDUM

### Appropriate clothing for school

Simple, non-distracting clothing, which fosters independent dressing and supports focus, is very important. Lights on shoes and decorations of various kinds are distracting. Please keep these shoes at home. Everyone needs a simple pair of closed, flat-heeled, rubber soled, indoor shoes, which are kept here at school, so that our floors can be kept as clean, work- spaces. Tie-on shoes provide the safest movement and learning the practical life skill of tying. In addition, pragmatic footwear help as emergency drills are practiced year-round, regardless of weather and the children travel away from the building, and may remain outside for a period of time.

As we talk about the 'needs of man,' clothing around the world and through time is discussed and includes discussion of clothing, which supports our community, daily work and activities. The following guidelines have been established with consideration for everyone.

- Shoes must be worn during the school day. Each child will need a pair of indoor, 'tennis' shoes here at school. Flat-soled, tie-on shoes secure the foot for safe movement.
- Clothing need to cover the body in a way that is appropriate for school.
- Writing/slogans on clothing need to respect our community
- Hats are worn outdoors.
- Jewelry, silly bands and other valuable or collectible items should remain at home.
- Outdoor shoes need to support safe athletic play.
- We request that clothing, supplies, and lunchboxes be cartoon, slogan, and/or advertisement free.

### Celebrations & Traditions

The elementary classrooms look for opportunities to celebrate life, as well as honor rites of passages and key moments of human experiences, which represent cultural differences but bind us to the Family of Man. As we introduce children to traditions and celebrations from around the world, we want to encourage our participation to share your own stories and traditions with us. We respect religious holidays, which families celebrate at home, and approach them from seasonal, factual, and historic perspectives. All invitations and gifts, which occur beyond school, need to stay home, in the interest of everyone.

The Elementary classrooms celebrate birthdays with singing, and, if your child wishes, she may bring a birthday snack for after lunch. A low or no sugar alternative helps maintain focus for afternoon work. Please bring enough for your child's group.

### NUTRITION/FOODS

We are committed to children's health. Research demonstrates the irrefutable link between mind and body. Healthy foods create healthy brains. Children are empowered to develop physically and intellectually by making healthy, nutritional choices which increase mental performance and concentration, sharpen memory, and produce consistency of moods. Our curriculum and practices include knowledge and habits of healthful choices, which rely on your support. ***Please let us know of any food allergies. Our nutrition policy is shared in the main handbook and provides guidelines for healthy lunches.***

### Snacks

A balanced breakfast typically eliminates snacking for the elementary child. However, often during the first year, and from time to time thereafter, a snack may be needed. If your child needs a snack, please

ensure it is a small piece of fruit, cheese, or a vegetable brought in their lunchbox, ready to eat.

### **Lunch**

Please send reusable containers and utensils needed for your child to enjoy their lunch each day. If they have a warm-up it must be in a microwavable container and warmed in a minute or less. We encourage sustainable practices of using reusable and labeled containers for all food and send uneaten foods home, so you are aware of your child's diet. Picnic lunches occur spontaneously, without announcement, when the weather obliges and as the children show interest. These typically take place in fall and spring. Microwave use and kitchen utensils are not available for scheduled picnics. Please keep this in mind as your child plans lunches throughout the year.

The child is eager and capable to plan, shop, prepare, pack, and remember his/her lunch and snacks. Please support this act of independence by guiding practice in a way that can give them ownership as soon as possible.

### **Elementary Field trips and “Going out”**

Travelling outside of the classroom to complete their work or area of study is a need of the elementary child. The 6-12 year olds participate in a wide range of activities and events outside of the school walls. There are guide-led trips, swim lessons, cultural experiences and annual camp LOC experiences. In addition, Montessori termed “going out” as a child led investigation towards an area of spontaneous interest or shared study. It provides the child the responsibility to plan, prepare and execute their experience in the greater community. These serve as very powerful learning tools to build independence, hands-on learning and a dive into new frontiers. Examples may include a 9-12 child planning a visit to a local museum, make an appointment with a specialist, travel to the police station to interview a police officer, etc. Parents and extended family are often approached as part of the planning process to assist with driving or chaperoning their child or classmates.

## **Receipt of Parent Handbook**

I acknowledge that I have received, read and understand the Leelanau Montessori Public School Academy Student/Parent Handbook. I understand that I can also find an electronic copy at:

<http://www.leelanaumontessori.org/parent-handbook.html>

I understand and agree to follow these policies as they pertain to my child's school experience.

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Child's Name

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Parent/Guardian Name(s)

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date