



Family Handbook

And

Code of Responsibility, Respect and Self-Control

2011-2012

**Philadelphia Montessori Charter School
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Family Handbook

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Mission & Montessori Education

The mission of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School is to provide early childhood and elementary school children in inner-city Philadelphia with a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate Montessori education that will enable them to become young adults possessing strong self-discipline, independent and analytical thinking skills, and an enduring love of learning. By the time students leave us at age twelve, they will be accomplished readers, skilled researchers and will be able to apply math skills to solve real world problems.

The purpose of PMCS goes beyond helping students to acquire basic academic skills. Students should graduate with both academic skills and the ability to act independently, think analytically, resolve conflicts peacefully, and realize their responsibility to others and to our world. Below are some key aspects of the school that help us realize this goal.

1) Student-Centered Classrooms:

Following the Montessori method, PMCS gives children, within a controlled environment, the freedom to choose their own activities. This stems from the belief that children learn by doing, and this requires movement and spontaneous investigation. Individualized “lesson plans” are developed for each child based on observations of the child’s previous skill attainment. Each child is given lessons at his/her own developmentally appropriate level in all subject areas. Lessons are re-presented until the child attains mastery. Presentations and teacher follow-up establish the foundation for spontaneous choice.

2) Specially Trained Teachers:

Because of the unique role of the teacher in the Montessori classroom, the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School requires its teachers to have undergone specific Montessori education, which includes rigorous training in child development, psychology, observation, student teaching, use of Montessori materials, and classroom management.

3) Multi-Age Classrooms:

The charter school organizes children in multi-age class groupings that correspond with the developmental stages of childhood (ages 3-6 and 6-9) rather than traditional grade groupings (K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd). Younger students are stimulated by older role models, who in turn blossom with the responsibilities of leadership. Students not only learn *with* each other, but also *from* each other.

4) Prepared Environment:

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School has carefully prepared each classroom environment to reinforce the children’s independence and intellectual development. Rather than rows of desks, the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School’s classrooms are set up to facilitate student discussion and stimulate collaborative learning.

5) Montessori Materials:

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School uses hands-on Montessori learning materials (other than textbooks and workbooks) that are designed to stimulate the child into logical thought and discovery. The materials are provocative and simple, each

carefully designed to appeal to children at a given level of development. Each material isolates and teaches one thing or is used to present one skill at a time, as the child is ready.

6) Focus on Peace Education:

In the Montessori classroom peace education is not taught as a separate curriculum but is the unifying thread throughout the child's academic, social and emotional experience in the classroom. It is "taught" through the interactions between teacher and child, child and child(ren), and children and their use of the materials in the environment. Children are taught continually to respect everyone and everything in the environment and to solve problems through peaceful means. In the elementary level, children will move from the ability to solve problems in their own classroom into a growing understanding, compassion, and tolerance for their world.

Arrival and Dismissal

Hours of Operation

The school office will be open each day from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. Students are in class on Mondays – Thursdays from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM. Fridays are short days to allow for ongoing staff development. Students are released at 2:15 PM.

Arrival

- **Students are to be dropped off at 8:30 AM.**
- **Elementary students who walk or are dropped off by parents will gather on the playground and will be escorted to their classrooms by their teachers at 8:30 AM.**
- **Primary Students (3, 4, and 5-year-olds)** shall be escorted to their classrooms and signed in by a parent or other authorized adult. Because teachers need time to prepare their classrooms, children will not be invited into the classroom until 8:30 AM.
- **Bus children will enter through the door closest to the playground.**
- **Bus Students** – if the bus arrives early, the children will remain on the bus until a PMCS member comes to greet them and escort them to their classroom.

Late Arrivals

Instructional time is very important. Late students often miss special activities or directives for the day. Parents will be notified in cases of excessive tardiness.

Dismissal

- **Primary Students** – Dismissal is 3:30 PM (and 2:15 PM on Fridays). Parents or other authorized adults are asked to sign children out in their classrooms.
- **Bus Students** – Students are escorted to the bus and signed out by their teacher.
- **Elementary Students (who do not take the bus)** will be dismissed from their classrooms at 3:30 PM. Parents or other authorized adults are asked to sign their children out in their classrooms.
- **Late Pick Up** - At 3:45 PM all children remaining in the building will be brought to our after-school program to wait for parents, so that teachers can prepare for the following day's activities. Starting at 3:45, a late fee of \$25.00 will be charged for the day. The cost reflects the need for additional staff to care for your children. Please note: this is not an after-care program. For those of you who need care on a regular basis, please sign up for the after-care program.
- **After-School Enrichment Program** – Pickup for after-care is at 6:00 PM. The cost for after-care is \$60/week.

Early Dismissal

It is very important that students remain in class for the duration of the school day. However, an occasion may arise when a student needs to be taken out of class before regular dismissal. In this instance, a parent should provide the student with a note for his/her teacher stating the time and reason. All early dismissals must be signed out by the parent/guardian in the Main Office (3-6 year old children may be signed out with their classroom teacher). *In order to ensure the safety of all our students, they will only be released to adults listed on the Emergency Contact Form. A valid picture ID is required.* Early dismissals will not be granted after 3:00PM.

Attendance/Truancy

It is essential to the success of our mission that every student attend school each day. We understand that due to illness or family emergencies, students will be absent from class. If your child is going to be absent, please call the front office to let us know by 9:30 AM.

In order to excuse the absence, the parent/guardian must provide a signed, written explanation within three school days. A doctor's note must be obtained for a student to be admitted back to school after three (3) or more consecutive days of absence.

Parents of elementary students are asked to contact their child's teacher to make arrangements so that the child can keep up with missed class work and homework.

After missing ten (10) school days, the absence is unexcused, and may trigger a conference with the principal or a home visit. Without a valid doctor's note, your child runs the risk of losing his/her place in our school to a child on the waiting list. In addition, in the state of Pennsylvania, a child can be considered truant when he or she

does not attend school for three or more days in a row without a valid excuse.

Every effort should be made to schedule doctor and dental appointments outside of school hours. Vacations should not be planned during the active school year.

Our goal is that all of the school's students will benefit from our unique learning environment. The only way to accomplish this is for the children to attend school and participate in class. Lateness, early dismissals and absences are interruptions of the student's education.

Communications

The school will communicate with parents in various ways:

- Phone calls/emails to parents
- Wednesday Envelope (Please sign and return the next day.)
- Letters home in backpacks (elementary students)
- Letters home in cubbies or given directly to parents (primary students)
- Letters mailed home
- Quarterly newsletters
- Monthly calendars
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Other parent meetings
- Information posted on our website: www.philadelphiamontessori.org

Likewise, parents may communicate with the school in a variety of styles:

- Phone calls
- Letters
- Visits to the school to meet with your child's teacher, to observe your child, to volunteer, or to attend conferences or other meetings.
- If you wish to meet with the CEO, please schedule appointment.
- Fill out parent surveys in the (we DO read these and use them to inform our improvement planning for the following year)
- Attend Home-School Association meetings and events.
- Speak to the parent representative to the Board of Trustees.

Discipline

Please see the Guiding Principles Code.

Extended Day Program

We will be providing after-school care services for Philadelphia Montessori Charter School students. After-school care will run from 3:30 – 6:00 PM (2:15 – 6:00 PM on Fridays). Fees are as follows:

After-School Care
3:30 – 6:00 PM \$60/week for first child

Children will have the opportunity to play games (both indoors and outdoors), relax with friends, read stories and do artwork. A light snack will be provided.

SES Tutoring

While Philadelphia Montessori Charter School works to improve our PSSA standardized test scores, we will provide support to students whose families wish to seek supplementary educational services from a state approved provider. One such provider will provide tutoring services on-site at the school. Day and times to be determined. SES tutoring services are available on a limited basis. Letters inviting participation will be mailed in late August/early September.

Field Trips

Throughout the school year, teachers plan educational trips for students to various destinations. The school will provide transportation; however, there may be admission fees for which the parent/guardian is responsible. A permission slip that

must be signed and returned to the student's teacher, along with specific information about the trip, will be sent home to parents.

When students participate in class trips, they represent The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School. Therefore, they are expected to be on their best behavior at all times. Parents of students who have exhibited excessive discipline challenges will be required to serve as chaperones on future trips.

Head Start & Pre-K Counts

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School runs a Head Start program and a Pre-K Counts Program for our 48 3-year-old and 4-year-old children. Because charter school funds are not available for this age group, these programs support the school's mission to provide a Montessori education to children ages 3 - 12 years.

Head Start and Pre-K Counts students are integrated into the primary classrooms - we do not have a separate Head Start or Pre-K Counts classroom. Head Start and Pre-K Counts students receive the same PMCS education, and they also have access to additional health and social service resources available through the Philadelphia School District Head Start/Pre-K Counts Office.

In addition, regardless of income, all Head Start and Pre-K Counts children will receive free breakfast and lunch.

Health and Safety

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

No student will be admitted to The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School without the proper immunization required by the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Philadelphia County Board of Health. Proof of immunization must be provided at the time of registration. The following vaccinations must be completed by the start of kindergarten:

- DPT (Diphtheria—Pertussis—Tetanus) **4 doses**
- Polio **3 doses**
- MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) **2 doses**
- Hepatitis B **3 doses**
- Varicella (chicken pox), or history of the disease

OTHER HEALTH SERVICES

PMCS ensures that all students have had the following state mandated screenings:

- Vision and hearing screenings
- Height and weight checks

If a student's medical record does not indicate that these screenings are up to date, they will be offered at the school.

Students who have colds, stomachaches, sore throats, or diarrhea before coming to school in the morning are to remain at home.

MEDICATION

If required by a family physician, it may be possible to have medication administered by authorized school personnel. Please see the school nurse for the required paperwork which must be filled out by a physician. Children **MAY NOT KEEP MEDICATION IN THEIR BOOKBAGS**

Literacy

At PMCS, we want children to develop a love of language that will last them a lifetime. We try to build this love in many ways including: adults reading aloud regularly to children; early exposure to the music of poetry; having a wide array of fiction and nonfiction books at various reading levels available in all classrooms; daily journal writing; teaching students the fascinating history of language; and taking regular trips to the local library.

For parents, it may be helpful to know that at a Montessori school, children do not always learn language skills the same way many of us did when growing up. Here are some examples:

- *Sandpaper Letters* – Using this tool, our students learn letter sounds before letter names. Say aloud the letters F or M. You say “ef” or “em” right? When sounding out a word starting with F or M, this can be very confusing for a beginning reader. Instead, we teach “fuh” or “mmmm.”
- *Movable Alphabet* – With these cut-out letters, small children who may not yet be able to use a pencil well, can “write” words. Montessori children often learn to write before learning to read.
- *Grammar Boxes* – Do you remember learning nouns, verbs and adverbs? Was it fun and exciting work? Imagine learning adverbs by sitting with a friend and following instructions on a card, such as: “run quickly around your table” or “sing Old McDonald slowly.” Your friend would have to guess which adverb is on your card or **HOW** you are running or singing.

In addition to the Montessori curriculum, PMCS uses a balanced literacy approach to improve student literacy, including:

- Kindergarten through 6th Grade students receive Reading/Language Arts instruction during the 90 minute reading block utilizing Harcourt Brace Reading/Language Arts resources.
- Student Independent Reading – PMCS purchased libraries for each

classrooms of “leveled” books through the 100 Book Challenge program – fiction and non-fiction books at a variety of reading levels, so that students can select books and read independently.

- Writer’s Workshop – Students are also instructed in writing, revising and editing skills.
- Teacher Read Alouds – Teachers read to students every day. This helps to improve student comprehension and to instill a love of reading.
- Poetry Circles – Every week, students select, memorize and recite poetry to their peers. This culminates in our annual Poetry Café.
- Wilson Reading Program – An reading intervention program utilized by PMCS in order to help students improve decoding skills and reading fluency. It is a helpful tool to quickly improve basic reading skills

Lunch and Breakfast

BREAKFAST

The school building is open at 8:30 AM, and breakfast is served at that time in the classrooms. A nutritious breakfast has been proven to have a positive effect on academic performance and student behavior, and we encourage all students to take advantage of this service.

LUNCH

A warm, nutritious lunch is served daily in each classroom. Monthly menus will be posted the first day of each month. Parents are encouraged to fill out the Application for the National Free and Reduced Lunch Program and return it to the Office. This form must be filled out each school year, and will be mailed out during the summer for the parents to complete for the upcoming year. A new form must be submitted to the Office each year. The lunch prices for the 2010-2011 school year are as follows:

	Regular	Reduced
Breakfast	\$ 0.75	\$ 0.30
Lunch	\$1.90	\$ 0.40

If your child will not participate in the National Free and Reduced Lunch Program, we ask that they eat breakfast at home, and carry a nutritious lunch with them. Candy, caffeinated, drinks and soda will not be permitted in school.

However, all families are required to complete a National Free and Reduced Lunch Program form.

Regardless of income, all Head Start and Pre-K Counts students (3 and 4 year-olds) are able to receive a free breakfast and lunch.

Parent Involvement

Volunteering - The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School is committed to involving parents, family and the surrounding community in programs that improve the quality of our students' educational experience. Therefore, we ask that all parents volunteer in some way. This may be:

- volunteering to be a room parent
- volunteering in the classroom or in one of our after-school programs
- volunteering to coordinate or help with a special event
- helping with fundraising activities
- chaperoning a field trip
- providing snacks or supplies for your child's classroom
- volunteering in the office
- helping clean up the school facilities on scheduled "cleanup days"
- volunteering on our new academic committee

When parent volunteers arrive at the school for their shift they must first sign in in the front office, and obtain a volunteer badge. This badge must be worn at all times. Be sure to record your hours with your child's teacher. Any volunteers working in the building must (by law) get a police background check. PMCS can pay for these background checks if needed for volunteers.

Your Child At Home –

- It is important for parents of elementary students to support them as they do their homework **EVERY NIGHT**. Help your child find a quiet place **BY TURNING OFF THE TV**, MUSIC, VIDEO GAMES, etc for a minimum of 1 hour. Check over your child's homework when it is completed. Encourage your child for his or her hard work.
- We also ask that parents read to your child for at least 20 minutes **EVERY NIGHT**.

Home and School Association – All families and teachers are automatically members of the PMCS Home and School Association. We hope that you will actively participate in this group as it supports PMCS this year.

Donations – We encourage every family to make a donation (of any amount) to the school in support of your child's education.

PMCS Peace Program

Peace education is the cornerstone of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School. We believe that children cannot learn in an environment where they have to be afraid for their physical or emotional safety. Peace education is woven into every aspect of the Montessori curriculum. In addition to aspects of peace education that are inherent in the curriculum, we also implement a multi-faceted peace program, which includes the following:

- Peace Tables/Peace Centers – Each classroom has a peace table or a peace center where children can go to cool off if they are angry, frustrated or upset and where they can bring a friend to resolve a dispute.
- Peace Flower Conflict Resolution Training – All staff and students are trained in a process using a “peace flower” to facilitate talking out problems. This process includes sharing using “I messages,” listening to the concerns of others, and working together to find a mutually agreeable solution.
- Counseling/Social Work – A professional social worker will be available on site to support students and their families during crises and to refer families to outside counseling.
- Body Movement – Students will develop better body awareness, concentration, self-control, flexibility and coordination, in hopes that they will carry these skills beyond class and into their daily routines.

Progress Reports and Parent Conferences

In the Montessori method, the emphasis is on learning rather than on grades. As such, the traditional method of communicating to parents the individual progress of their children (i.e. quarterly report cards, graded unit tests) is not part of our educational program. Instead, parents receive information on their child’s progress both through written evaluations (three times a year), as well as, through their constant involvement in the school program.

Parents who visit the school frequently have an ongoing opportunity to evaluate the quality of the education that their children are receiving and witness their how their child is progressing in the classroom environment. There will be at least two scheduled parent-teacher conferences a year, where parents have the opportunity to review student work and talk with teachers. Some of the items that may be discussed are developmental checklists, written progress reports on student milestones and anecdotal narratives. Additional conferences can be scheduled on an as-needed basis. (SEE SECTION ON VISITORS AND OBSERVERS.)

There are also opportunities throughout the school year for parents and grandparents to observe the children as they work with the teachers and their classmates in the environment. One of the best demonstrations of accountability is the parents’ own observations of fundamental behavioral changes in their child as evidenced by exhibiting more positive attributes (i.e. more willingness to share with siblings, more independence, better sense of order, positive self-image, empathy for others, etc.).

Snow/Emergency Policy

Due to inclement weather or other emergency issues, the school may have to close. Tune in to your local news for closing updates. We will follow the Philadelphia Public School closing information but PMCS also utilizes the messaging system in order to inform parents of school closing information.

Fire drills are held monthly throughout the year

Student Withdrawal

Students moving to another district will need to first withdraw from The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School before their records can be sent to the new school. If a parent requests a withdrawal because the student is having difficulty at the school, we encourage an open discussion of the issue with the teacher and/or the CEO. If a resolution cannot be reached, then it may be in the best interest of the child to seek a different educational environment. The following is the procedure to officially withdraw a student from the school:

1. Parent must complete the Withdrawal Form.
2. The principal will sign the form.
3. The student will be removed from the School Computer Network.
4. Parent will provide us with the new school's address, so that we may transfer the student's records.

Title I

PMCS receives federal funding through Title I, Part A – Improving Basic Programs. This federal program provides financial assistance to schools with high percentages of economically disadvantaged students to ensure that children meet challenging state academic standards.

Since more than 40 percent of the PMCS student body are classified as economically disadvantaged (as determined by participation in the National School Lunch Program), PMCS uses Title I funding to operate a school wide program to upgrade the instructional program for the whole school. Our school wide Title I program is based on effective means of improving student achievement and includes strategies to support parental involvement.

More than 50,000 public schools across the country use Title I funds to provide additional academic support and learning opportunities to help low-achieving children master challenging curricula and meet state standards in core academic subjects. For example, funds support extra instruction in reading and mathematics, as well as special preschool, after-school, and summer programs to extend and reinforce the

regular school curriculum.

In 2011-2012, PMCS will use our Title I funds to:

- Place a highly qualified paraprofessional (teacher's aide) in each classroom to help our low-achieving students to master our challenging curriculum and to achieve to state academic standards.
- Recruit and retain highly qualified professionals and instructional para-professionals
- Provide high-quality professional development and training to our teachers to ensure that our staff members have the skills necessary to raise student achievement and implement the Montessori curriculum.
- Provide free tutoring to qualifying students.

PMCS' Federal Program Coordinator is Ms. Melanie Burke Reiser. She can be reached at 267-992-4346 or melanie.b.reiser@comcast.net.

Annual Title I Meeting:

PMCS invites parents to attend our annual Title I information meeting, which will be held in the Fall at PMCS. At this meeting we will describe our participation in Title I, Part A programs, explain the requirement of Title I, and explain parents' right to be involved (including developing our Title I Parent Involvement Policy and Parent Compact).

Parent Rights Under Title I:

Under Title I, Part A, PMCS parents have the right to:

- ***Be involved in our Title I, Part A programs*** – PMCS, with the help of its parents, will develop and implement a Title I Parent Involvement Policy and a School-Parent Compact.
- ***Request regular meetings*** – Requests for meetings to discuss Title I programs should be put in writing and submitted to the Federal Programs Coordinator in the Main Office.
- ***Know teacher and paraprofessional qualifications*** – Parents may request, and PMCS then will provide, certain information on the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals providing services to their children. *Requests should be put in writing and submitted to the CEO in the Main Office.*
- ***Know non-highly qualified teachers*** – PMCS will provide to each individual parent timely notice that the parent's child has been assigned, or taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified as defined by *No Child Left Behind* guidelines.

Title I Complaint Procedures

A parent who feels that the school is not meeting its Title I or other responsibilities as outlined in this policy, should first discuss the problem with the school CEO, or Federal Programs Coordinator. Examples of violations would be such things as:

- An annual meeting was not convened by the principal to explain Title I offerings to parents.
- Parents were refused information on the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teacher.

If the concern was not resolved at the school level, a parent should begin a formal Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) complaint procedure as outlined below. A complaint is defined by the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School as a written, signed statement. It must include the following:

- a. A statement that PDE or PMCS has violated a requirement of federal statute or regulations which apply to programs under the No Child Left Behind Act.

- b. The facts on which the statement is based.
- c. Information on any discussions, meetings or correspondence with PDE or PMCS regarding the complaint.

PDE Complaint Resolution Procedures

- 1) ***Filing a Complaint*** – Complaints should be addressed as follows:
 Renee Palakovic
 Chief
 Division of Federal Programs
 Pennsylvania Department of Education
 333 Market Street, 7th Floor
 Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
- 2) ***Referral***—Complaints against PMCS or appeals from PMCS decisions regarding complaints will be referred to the Regional Coordinator for PMCS.
- 3) ***Notice to PMCS***—The Regional Coordinator will notify PMCS’ chief administrative officer that a complaint or appeal has been received, will provide a copy, and will direct PMCS to respond.
- 4) ***Investigation***—After receiving PMCS’ response, the Regional Coordinator will determine whether further investigation is necessary. If necessary, the Regional Coordinator may carry out an independent investigation on-site at PMCS.
- 5) ***Opportunity to Present Evidence***—The Regional Coordinator may, in his or her discretion, provide for the complainant, the complainant’s representative, or both, and PMCS to present evidence. Such presentation may include the opportunity for each side to question parties to the dispute and any of their witnesses.
- 6) ***Report and Recommended Resolution***—Once the Regional Coordinator has finished any investigation and taking of evidence, he or she will prepare a final report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint or appeal. The final report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint or appeal, the nature of the complaint or appeal, a summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution, and the reasons for the recommendation. The regional Coordinator will issue the report to all parties to the complaint or appeal. The recommended resolution will become effective upon issuance of the final report.
- 7) ***Follow-up***—The Regional Coordinator will insure that the resolution of the complaint or appeal is implemented.
- 8) ***Time Limit***—The period between PDE’s receipt of a complaint or appeal and its resolution shall not exceed sixty (60) calendar days.
- 9) ***Extension of Time Limit***—The Chief of the Division of Federal Programs may extend the 60 day time limit if exceptional circumstances exist with respect to a particular complaint or appeal.
- 10) ***Right to Appeal***—Either party may appeal the final resolution to the United States Secretary of Education.

Procedures for Resolving Complaints Against PDE

- 1) ***Filing a Complaint --*** Complaints should be addressed as follows:
 Renee Palakovic
 Chief
 Division of Federal Programs
 Pennsylvania Department of Education
 333 Market Street, 7th Floor
 Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
- 2) ***Referral***—Complaints against PDE will be referred to the Chief of the Division of Federal Programs.
- 3) ***Acknowledgment***—The Division Chief will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing.
- 4) ***Investigation***—The Division Chief will investigate the complaint.
- 5) ***Opportunity to Present Evidence***—The Division Chief may, in his or her discretion, provide

for the complainant and/or the complainant's representative to present evidence. Such a presentation may include the opportunity for each side to question parties to the dispute and any of their witnesses.

- 6) **Report and Recommended Resolution**—Once the Division Chief has finished any investigation and taking of evidence, he or she will prepare a final report with a recommendation for resolving the complaint. The final report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint, the nature of the complaint, a summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution, and the reasons for the recommendation. The Division Chief will issue the report to the complainant and the complainant's representative, if any.
- 7) **Appeal to Secretary of Education**—In appropriate cases, the complainant may appeal from the recommended resolution to the Secretary of Education of the Commonwealth. In all other cases, the recommended resolution will become effective upon issuance of the final report.
- 8) **Follow-up**—The Division Chief will insure that the resolution of the complaint is implemented.
- 9) **Time Limit**—The period between PDE's receipt of a complaint and its resolution shall not exceed sixty (60) calendar days.
- 10) **Extension of Time Limit**—The Division Chief may extend the 60 day time limit if exceptional circumstances exist with respect to a particular complaint.
- 11) **Right to Appeal**—Either party may appeal the final resolution to the United States Secretary of Education.

Transportation

Philadelphia provides bus service to charter school students beginning at age six. As with school enrollment, the child must be six by September 1st to qualify (i.e. they must be an elementary student at our school – primary students who turn six mid-year will have to wait until the following year). Bus service is contingent upon where the student lives.

BUS SAFETY RULES

School bus transportation is a privilege. We encourage parents to discuss bus safety with their children, and how inappropriate behavior can result in the loss of bus privileges. All students must comply with the following rules or they will be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension from the bus.

1. Students must be at their assigned bus stop on time.
2. Until the bus comes to a complete stop and the red lights are flashing, students must stay on the sidewalk.
3. Students must remain in their seats at all times. Only when the bus has reached a full stop may students begin to exit.
4. Students may talk *quietly* on the bus. Any loud noise can distract the bus driver.
5. Students may not eat, drink or throw objects on the bus.
6. Students must ask permission to open the windows.
7. Students must keep all body parts inside the bus window.
8. Students may not call or shout out of the bus window.
9. Students must obey the bus driver at all times, and treat him or her with respect.

CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION

For permanent changes on a bus route or other transport, please forward a letter to the Front Office staff who will then forward your new proof of residency to the transportation supervisor at the Philadelphia School District. If these procedures are not followed, your child will be placed on his/her usual bus. Your cooperation in these matters will ensure the safety of our students.

Uniform Policy

- Shoes must be navy or black with no designs or lights.
- Sneakers in good condition may be work but they must be all navy or all black.
- Open toed shoes (sandals, crocs, flip-flops) are not permitted.
- Burgundy polo (with a collar) at least one with school logo
- Navy bottoms (pants, skirts or jumpers)
- Denim may only be work on school spirit Fridays.
- Socks and tights must be navy or burgundy.

Logos:

Students must have at least one shirt with the school logo. You can purchase uniforms at:

Nam's Kiddie World
14 South 60th Street
Philadelphia, PA

Totally Kids
69th and Market, Upper Darby
610-734-3109

Cramer's Uniforms
4533 Frankford Avenue
215-743-0750

School Spirit Fridays

- Students may wear a PMCS Peace T-Shirt (available for sale at the front desk, \$10)
- Students may wear blue jeans in good condition (no holes or tears)

Consequences for Non-Uniform Compliance **Progressive Discipline**

Step One

- Teacher must account for students being out of uniform during attendance; Teacher then must report student names to the Front Office; Front office will generate an infractions ticket for parent to sign and return acknowledging child out of uniform.
- First time verbal warning to student.
- Next day student(s) will lose recess.
- Second infraction, student will lose recess and serve one day of in school support

- Third infraction, teacher will conduct a telephone call home to parent, followed up by a telephone call from Dean of Students resulting in a \$3.00 fine.
- **Student will have a counseling session with social worker (encouragement).**

Step Two

- Continual violation of uniform policy will result in an in person parent conference with social worker, counselor, and teacher.
- Next violation will result in a one day break from the community.
- Dean of Students will contact parent to levy a \$5.00 fine.
- **Student will have a counseling session with Dean of Students (encouragement).**

Step Three

- Student will not have the privilege of participating in field trips.
- A mandatory in person conference with Dean of Students, social worker, counselor, student, and parent will be scheduled.
- Next infraction will result in three day break from the community.
- Dean of Students will set up meeting with parent and set final uniform rate for infraction

If there are any challenges to having the appropriate uniform, please let us know.

Visitors and Observations

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School welcomes parents and guests. Parents are asked to schedule conferences with their child's teacher in advance, so they do not interfere with instruction time.

Beginning in October, parents are welcome to observe in their child's classroom daily between 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM through the end of May. All visitors must sign in at the office and obtain a visitor's pass. Those involved in the Parent-Volunteer Program must display their passes for the duration of the day.

Please do not be insulted if a teacher or other staff member asks you to return to the office for a pass, they are required to do this as a part of our safety plan.

Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs, Services for Gifted Students, and Services for Protected Handicapped Students

Notice to Parents

According to state and federal special education regulations, annual public notice to parents of children who reside within a school district is required regarding child find responsibilities. School districts, intermediate units and charter schools are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For additional information related to Section

504/Chapter 15 services, the parent may refer to Section 504, Chapter 15, and the Basic Education Circular entitled Implementation of Chapter 15. Also, school districts are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for gifted services via 22 Pa Code Chapter 16. For additional information regarding gifted services, the parent may refer to 22 PA Code Chapter 16. If a student is both gifted and eligible for Special Education, the procedures in IDEA and Chapter 14 shall take precedence.

This notice shall inform parents throughout the school district, intermediate unit, and charter school of the child identification activities and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities or eligible young children. In addition to this public notice, each school district, intermediate unit, and charter school shall publish written information in the handbook and on the web site. Children ages three through twenty one can be eligible for special education programs and services. If parents believe that the child may be eligible for special education, the parent should contact the appropriate Regional Office or Charter School Principal identified at the end of this public notice.

Children age three through the age of admission to first grade are also eligible if they have developmental delays and, as a result, need Special Education and related services. Developmental delay is defined as a child who is less than the age of beginners and at least 3 years of age and is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists: (i) The child's score, on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas. (ii) The child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. Developmental areas include cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional and self-help. For additional information you may contact Elwyn SEEDS at (215) 222-8054.

Evaluation Process

Each school district, intermediate unit, and charter school has a procedure in place by which parents can request an evaluation. For information about procedures applicable to your child, contact the school, which your child attends. Telephone numbers and addresses can be found at the end of this notice. Parents of preschool age children, age three through five, may request an evaluation in writing by addressing a letter to Elwyn SEEDS at 4025 Chestnut Street, 2nd Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

Consent

School entities cannot proceed with an evaluation, or with the initial provision of special education and related services, without the written consent of the parents. For additional information related to consent, please refer the Procedural Safeguards Notice which can be found at the PaTTAN website, www.Pattan.net. Once written parental consent is obtained, the district will proceed with the evaluation process. If the parent disagrees with the evaluation, the parent can request an independent education evaluation at public expense.

Program Development

Once the evaluation process is completed, a team of qualified professional and parents

determine whether the child is eligible. If the child is eligible, the individualized education program team meets, develops the program, and determines the educational placement. Once the IEP team develops the program and determines the educational placement, school district staff, intermediate unit staff, or charter school staff will issue a notice of recommended educational placement/prior written notice. Your written consent is required before initial services can be provided. The parent has the right to revoke consent after initial placement.

Confidentiality of Information:

School districts, intermediate units and charter schools maintain records concerning all children enrolled in the school, including students with disabilities. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality. Your consent, or consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority under State law, must be obtained before personally identifiable information is released, except as permitted under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The age of majority in Pennsylvania is 21. Each participating agency must protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages. One official at each participating agency must assume responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information. Each participating agency must maintain, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the agency who have access to personally identifiable information. For additional information related to student records, the parent can refer to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

This notice is only a summary of the Special Education services, evaluation and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled, and their parents. For more information or to request evaluation or screening of a public or private school child contact the responsible school entity listed below. For preschool age children, information, screenings and evaluations requested, may be obtained by contacting Elwyn SEEDS.

PRESCHOOL (Ages 3 to 5)

Elwyn SEEDS
4025 Chestnut Street, 2nd Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19104
(215) 222-8054

CHARTER SCHOOLS

Please contact the principal of your child’s charter school.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA REGIONAL OFFICES

Central Region
540 N. 13th Street, Room 103
Philadelphia, PA 19123
(215) 351-3807

Central East Region
2603 N. 5th Street, 4th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19133
(215) 291-5696

East Region
2603 N. 5th Street, 5th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19133
(215) 291-5680

High School Region
3133 Ridge Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19132
(215) 684-5132

North Region
201 E. Olney Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19120
(215) 456-0998

Northeast Region
4101 Chalfont Drive
Philadelphia, PA 19154
(215) 281-5903

Northwest Region
1100 E. Mt. Pleasant Avenue, Room 8
Philadelphia, PA 19150
(215) 248-6684

South Region
427 Monroe Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147
(215) 351-7615

Southwest Region
6900 Greenway Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19142
(215) 727-5920

West Region
3543 Fairmount Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19104
(215) 823-5530

The school entity or charter school will not discriminate in employment, educational programs, or activities based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, handicap, creed,

marital status or because a person is a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era. No preschool, elementary or secondary school pupil enrolled in a school district, Intermediate Unit, or charter school program shall be denied equal opportunity to participate in age and program appropriate instruction or activities due to race, color, handicap, creed, national origin, marital status or financial hardship.



2227 ISLAND AVENUE
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19142
(215) 365-4011

2011-2012 SCHOOL CALENDAR

August

22-26	Teacher In-Service
29-31	Teacher in-Service
30	Parent/Student Community Clean-Up Day (9:00 am-3:00 pm)
31	Parent-Student Community Paint Day (9:00 am-3:00 pm)

September (National Hispanic Heritage Month)

1	Teacher In-Service
5	Labor Day
6	Opening Day for Students K-6 Parent Conferences for 3-4 year-olds
12	First Day for returning 4 year-olds
14-16	3 year-olds and new 4 year-olds phased into Primary Classes
21	International Peace Day Celebration
23	Half Day Noon Dismissal for students (Teacher In-Service)
28	Back To School Night 6:00-8:00 pm
29-30	Rosh Hashanah (NO SCHOOL)

October (National Family History Month)

10	Columbus Day (NO SCHOOL)
12	Parent Education Night 6:00 pm (Primary 3-6 Year-Olds)
18	Teacher In-Service Day (STAFF ONLY)
23	Make A Difference Day (Parent, Teacher, Student Volunteers Needed)
27	Parent Education Night 6:00 pm (Lower El. 6-9 Year-Olds)
28	Noon Dismissal for students (Teacher In-Service)

November (National American Indian Heritage Month)

2	Parent Education Night 6:00 pm (Upper El. 9-12 Year-Olds)
8	Election Day: Teacher In-Service (STAFF ONLY)
11	Veterans Day (NO SCHOOL)
23	Half Day Noon Dismissal
23	End of First Marking Period
24-25	Thanksgiving Break (NO SCHOOL)

December (Universal Human Rights Month)

5-7	Half Days for Parent Conferences/Home Visits
23	Half Day Noon Dismissal
26-30	Winter Break

January (National Book Month)

2 New Year's Day **(NO SCHOOL)**
16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day **(NO SCHOOL)**
16 **Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service 10:00 am-2:00 pm**
27 Half Day Noon Dismissal: Teacher In-Service

February (African American History Month)

20 Presidents' Day **(NO SCHOOL)**
23 **Family Night- African American Stories 6:00pm**
24 Half Day Noon Dismissal (Teacher In-Service)
24 End of Second Marking Period

March (Women's History Month)

5-7 Half Days Noon Dismissal- Parents Conferences/Home Visits
12-23 PSSA Math and Reading (Grades 3-6)
28 Mother-Daughter High Tea Party

April (National Poetry Month)

2-6 Spring Break **(NO SCHOOL)**
9 Teacher In-Service **(NO SCHOOL)**
16-20 PSSA Writing (Grade 6)
23-27 PSSA Science (Grade 4)
27 Half Day Noon Dismissal (Teacher In-Service)

May (Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month)

4 Grandparents' /Special Person's Day
11 Father-Son Sleep-Over
24 School Wide Science Fair
25 Half Day Noon Dismissal (Teacher In-Service)
28 Memorial Day **(NO SCHOOL)**

June (National Hunger Awareness Month)

6 School Wide Food Drive
7 End of Third Marking Period
8 Half Day Noon Dismissal (Teacher In-Service)
14 Last Student Day
14 Final Progress Reports Distributed
14 6th Grade Graduation
19 Last Teacher Day

The Board has adopted this Code of Student Responsibility, Respect and Self-Control including policies governing student discipline and a listing of student rights and responsibilities. The Code is available to the public and is distributed to students and parents.

Code of Responsibility, Respect and Self-Control

Updated July 2011

*"Establishing lasting peace is the work of education;
all politics can do is keep us out of war."
- Maria Montessori*

Montessori and Peace

According to Maria Montessori, "true peace...is a state of harmony and balance in which basic needs are met for all the citizens of the world...The hope of peace is lost when society [demands]...that the child should be molded in the exact image of the adult. The natural tendencies of children must be supported and nurtured. Montessori believed that given...the opportunity to grow in an environment of cooperation and mutual respect, and to make decisions and choices for themselves, children would become the pioneers of real and lasting peace in the world."¹

"At the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School, peace education is not taught as a separate curriculum, but is the unifying thread throughout the child's academic, social and emotional experience in the classroom. It is "taught" through the interactions between teacher and child, child and child(ren), and children and their use of the materials in the environment. Children are encouraged continually to respect everyone and everything in the environment and to solve problems through peaceful means. The ultimate aim is to develop children with a strong, active commitment to solving problems and living together in harmony."²

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School believes that all members of the school community have a role to play in creating a peaceful school environment. This includes school staff, parents and students.

As such, our school community lives by the following 4 Guiding Principles:

1. **Be respectful**
2. **Be safe**
3. **Be responsible**
4. **Be part of the team**

Responsibilities of School Staff

Respect and Compassion

"To be understood and accepted without criticism is the first step to feeling safe. In such an atmosphere [a child] can dare to risk. He can make mistakes without feeling that he has failed."³

¹ Salkowski, Claire. (1994). Peacemaking: Establishing the Potential for a Peaceful Society by Achieving Community in the Elementary Classroom. *Montessori LIFE*. p. 32.

² Paraphrased from the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School charter application, p. 11

³ Salkowski, C. p. 33

- Staff will model active, empathic listening. When a child speaks, staff will strive to hear and accept both feelings and content.
- Staff will treat students, parents, and other staff respectfully in all situations.
- Staff will model the use of quiet, calm voices and kind words.
- Consequences for violating our 4 Guiding Principles will be administered calmly, fairly and consistently, always with the students' self esteem in tact.

Expectations

*“The first dawning of real discipline comes through work.”
- Maria Montessori⁴*

- Rules and expectations will be clearly communicated to students.
- Teachers and staff will hold high expectations that children have the capacity to work independently.

Encouraging Appropriate Conduct

“Our task is to show the way to discipline. Discipline is born when the child concentrates his attention on [work] that attracts him.” - Maria Montessori⁵

- Discipline and self-control grow out of concentration on interesting work.
- Teachers are responsible for preparing and maintaining a learning environment that will captivate a child's sustained attention.
- Teachers will communicate with parents about children's positive and negative behaviors as needed.
- Teachers are responsible for ensuring that students use the classroom Peace Center to resolve problems in a peaceful manner.
- All adults in the school will remind children to use positive words instead of physical violence to solve problems. Parents are encouraged to do the same.
- When a conflict cannot be resolved in the classroom, students will be sent to the office where conflict resolution.

Responsibilities of Parents

- Read and discuss the Code of Responsibility, Respect and Self-Control with your child.
- Parents are asked to treat students, staff and other parents respectfully in all school-related situations.
- While on school property, parents are expected to discipline their child in a positive manner consistent with the Montessori philosophy. Adults who physically discipline their child at school may be prohibited from participating in school activities and may be asked to wait for their child outside the building. In addition, all school staff are legally mandated reporters, and physical discipline will be reported as child abuse to the proper authorities.
- If the school recommends additional services for a child, parental cooperation is expected.
- Encourage your child to resolve problems through nonviolent means.
- Ensure that your child attends school every day unless he or she is ill.

⁵ Montessori, Maria. (1964). *The absorbent mind*. Henry Holt and Company: New York. p.240.

- Ensure that your child always completes his or her homework.
- Read to your child every day.
- Become involved in your child's school life.
- Participate in school/community meetings, functions and projects.
- Communicate with your child's teacher on a regular basis.
- Ensure that your child comes to school dressed in proper uniform everyday.

Responsibilities of Students

- Children will be expected to follow our 4 Guiding Principles, safety, respect, responsibility and teamwork.
- Come to school every day, unless you are sick.
- Take time to read every day.
- Think about how you can make our school a better place.

Consequences for Misbehavior

Minor Misbehavior

- When minor misbehavior occurs, teachers will calmly and consistently implement mild, logical consequences.
- A logical consequence is one that resolves the problem in a way that makes sense, but is not unnecessarily punitive.
- Examples of logical consequences for minor misbehavior:
 1. If a child chooses to paint on a table, rather than on their paper, the logical consequence is to clean it up (as opposed to a time out).
 2. If a child uses unkind words with a classmate, a logical consequence is to go to the peace table and work through the dispute.

Persistent Misbehavior

Some behaviors, if they occur once, are not serious, but if they occur repeatedly are disruptive to the education and well being of students in our school.

- Poor attendance (see attendance policy in Parent Handbook)
- Disrespect of teachers
- Disobedience
- Disruption of educational process

Disciplinary Referrals

Disciplinary referrals and Behavior Referrals ("pink slips") are sent home to alert parents of minor misbehavior and/or one time or persistent serious misbehaviors. For upper elementary students (4th– 6th grades), three Disciplinary or Behavior referrals will trigger a review of that child's behavior history at the school and may trigger suspension or expulsion proceedings described below. For lower elementary students (1st – 3rd grades), six Disciplinary or Behavior referrals will trigger the same review of the student's behavior history and may result in suspension or expulsion proceedings. Primary students (preschool – Kindergarten) will be handled on a case-by-case basis. If suspension or expulsion is warranted, formal suspension and expulsion proceedings as described below will be followed.

Serious Misbehavior - Offenses

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School's Board of Trustees has determined the types of offenses

that could lead to exclusion from school. The offenses include, but are not limited, to the following areas:

- Persistent misbehavior/disciplinary referrals (see above for explanation)
- Alcohol-related offenses
- Drug-related offenses
- Harassment/bullying
- Physical assaults/fighting
- Theft
- Vandalism of school property
- Weapons (see weapons policy at the end of this document)

Suspensions

If an incident of serious misbehavior occurs:

1. Student will be brought to the CEO.
2. The CEO will inform the student of the complaint against him or her.
3. The student will be given an opportunity to respond with his/her side of the situation.
4. The CEO has several opportunities to resolve the problem:
 - invite the student and any other involved parties to the peace table to talk things out;
 - remove the child from his or her classroom for a period of time (cool down session)
 - contact parent via phone to allow parent to encourage a productive day
 - revoke privilege (e.g. recess, field trip, etc.)
 - assign written work to encourage reflection (e.g. letter of apology, other)
 - request mandatory meeting with student and parent
 - out of school suspension (days determined by violation)

In all of these cases, a Discipline Referral or Behavior Referral will be sent home to notify parents of the situation.

5. If the situation warrants, the CEO can choose an ***alternative to suspension***, by inviting parents to come and witness the school's dispute resolution/peace process, allowing students, parents, and school staff to work together to solve a problem. In this case, a written notice explaining the alternative to suspension process will be prepared for the parents and sent home in addition to a pink slip (disciplinary notice).
6. If an ***out-of-school*** suspension is warranted and other alternatives are either judged not to be appropriate or are attempted but are unsuccessful, a written notice of suspension will be prepared and mailed to the parents and given to the student in addition to a Behavior Referral "pink slip". Parents will also be notified of the suspension by mail. The notice will contain reasons for the suspension.

Suspensions for 1 to 3 days

A student may be suspended for a maximum of three days without a hearing. A written notice of suspension will be sent home. The notice will contain reasons for the suspension. A conference with the parent will be scheduled before the student's return to school.

Suspensions for 4 to 10 days

For suspensions of 4 to 10 days, the student and parent will have the right to an informal hearing with the Leadership Team of Philadelphia Montessori Charter School. The following requirements will govern the informal hearing:

- The informal hearing is meant to encourage the student's parents/guardian to meet with the CEO to discuss ways by which future offenses can be avoided.
- The steps below will be followed to ensure due process:
 1. The student and the parent/guardian will be notified in writing of the reasons for the suspension.
 2. They will be provided with sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing.
 3. A student will have the right to question any witnesses present at the informal hearing, and has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his/her own behalf.
 4. An informal hearing will be held within the first 5 days of the suspension.

For all suspensions, students shall have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by the Board.

Expulsion

The following constitute Philadelphia Montessori Charter School's policies for the expulsion of students:

If an incident occurs:

1. Student will be brought to the CEO.
 2. The CEO will inform the student of the complaint against him or her.
 3. The student will be given an opportunity to respond with his/her side of the situation.
 4. If expulsion is recommended, a committee of the Board of Trustees or a Hearing Examiner will conduct a hearing. A Board decision is required to expel a student **pursuant to 24 PS §1318**.
 - a. Expulsion is exclusion from school for more than 10 days. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing.
 - b. During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the Board of Trustees in an expulsion case, the student, unless on suspension, shall be placed in his normal class except:
 - If it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others; and
 - If it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 school days, if the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed.
- Notification of the charges will be sent to the student's parents/guardian by certified mail along with a copy of our expulsion policy and procedure.
 - Parents will be provided with at least three days notice of the time/place of the hearing.
 - The hearing will be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
 - The student will have the right to be represented by counsel.
 - The student's parents or guardians have the right to attend the hearing.

- The student will have the right to be notified of the names of the witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits, if any, of those witnesses.
- The student will have the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
- The student will have the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf.
- A record will be kept of the hearing, either by stenographer, tape recorder or other modern recording device.
- The proceedings will be held with all reasonable speed.
- In the event the student is dissatisfied with the results of the hearing, an appeal may be filed in accordance with the Local Agency Law to the Court of Common Pleas within thirty (30) days of receipt of that Adjudication. If it is alleged that a constitutional issue is involved, the student may be able to file a claim for relief in the Federal District Court. Student and their parents/guardians will be apprised of these rights.

All due process requirements will be respectively followed for regular and special education students. All attempts to rectify problems will be made before the implementation of sanctions.

Weapons Policy

With regard to §1317.2 (Act 26 of 1995) and Article XIII-A the school prohibits the possession of weapons and shall expel for [a minimum of] one year, any student who is determined to have brought onto or is in possession of a weapon on any school property as required under Act 26.

The school will also report all incidents involving the possession of a weapon to local law enforcement officials and to the Pennsylvania Department of Education all incidents relating to expulsions for possession of a weapon on school grounds, etc.

Building a Peaceful Community

Everyone at the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School is committed to building a peaceful school community. It is our hope that with school staff, parents and students living by the 4 Guiding Principles listed at the beginning of this document, we will not have to spend time responding to serious misbehavior. We greatly appreciate the support of parents in this area, and welcome any suggestions you may have.



Please take the time to read this handbook with your child/children, especially the Guiding Principles Code. It describes the partnership necessary to foster a school climate that is conducive to learning; an environment that demonstrates respect for others; the necessity to be prepared daily and demonstrate good work habits; a commitment to become involved in school activities; and a school that exhibits a safe environment for all. After reading this handbook with your child/children, please sign the insert and return it to your child's teacher no later than September 9, 2011.

Please detach this sheet and return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible.

I/We, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of _____ have read the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School parent handbook and the Guiding Principles. I/We agree to abide by the policies and procedures laid out in this handbook in order to support my/our child's educational experience.

Parent/Guardian

Date

Parent/Guardian

Date