



WLS General Information

2019-2020

World Learner School

2019-2020

Address: World Learner School
112050 Hundertmark Road
Chaska, MN 55318

Telephone: Office: 952.368.7398
Fax: 952.368.6094

School Hours: 9:25 a.m. – 3:55 p.m.
Children may start arriving at 9:10 a.m.

Transportation: Positive Connections
952.361.0899

School Lunches: Lunch \$3.70 per day (order month in advance)
Milk \$3.00 per card of 20 punches

Before/After Care: 7:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.
3:55 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Contacting the School

All phone calls must be made through the main office at (952) 368-7398. Calls to the teachers should be made before or after school hours. Teachers are not available to speak on the phone during class time, but you may leave a message with the office, and the teacher will call you back. The best way to communicate with teachers is through email. Each teacher has a school email address consisting of their first initial, last name, @wlschaska.org. For example, Director Deana Siekmann may be reached by emailing dsiekmann@wlschaska.org.

2019-2020 Staff

Administration:

- Deana Siekmann, Director
- Lisa Mostov, Assistant Director and Intervention Specialist
- Shireen Mahabadi, Office Manager

Lower Elementary:

- Carrie Baker-Rantala, Montessori Lower Elementary Teacher
- Ashley Godinez, Montessori Lower Elementary Teacher
- Debi Forsyth, Montessori Lower Elementary Teacher
- Bonnie Pascual Lee, Lower Elementary Assistant
- Alicia Williams , Lower Elementary Assistant

Upper Elementary:

- Melissa Bullerman, Montessori Upper Elementary Teacher
- Patti Daly, Montessori Upper Elementary Teacher
- Emily Strafelda, Montessori Upper Elementary Teacher
- Megan Talley, Upper Elementary Assistant
- Alicia Williams, Upper Elementary Assistant

Middle School:

- Beth Wilson, Montessori Guide & Humanities (Language Arts) Teacher
- Eva Maher, Math Teacher
- Nathaniel Nordberg , Science
- Lisa Paynter, Middle School Assistant

Special Education:

- Maddy Skoglund, Special Education Teacher
- Tina Lyder, Special Education Teacher
- Susan Olsen, Special Education Teacher
- Other interventionists are contracted as needed.

Specialists:

- Karen Squires, Reading Guide
- Alyssa Bohn, Literacy Group Interventionist
- Lauren Greeley, Music Teacher
- TBD, English as a Second Language
- Allison Sherman, Lower Elementary Special Assistant
- Randi Shapiro, Lower Elementary Special Assistant
- Prayati Ockenga, Lower Elementary Special Assistant
- Ingrid Cortes, Middle School Special Assistant
- Sylvia Chandler, Upper Elementary Special Assistant
- Laurel Miller, Upper Elementary Special Assistant
- Heather Hamilton, Upper Elementary Special Assistant

Before/After School Care:

- Randi Shapiro, (Morning Kids Club)
- TBD, (Morning Kids Club)
- Ingrid Cortes, (Afternoon Kids Club)
- Megan Talley, (Afternoon Kids Club)
- TBD (Afternoon Kids Club)

Our Mission Statement

The World Learner School's mission is to create a school that supports an experiential collaborative learning (Montessori) program that empowers children to unfold their full potential as whole and unique persons in classroom, local and world communities.

Children with varying academic abilities, learning styles and challenges complement each other in a multi-age classroom designed to promote cooperative learning. The World Learner School continues Dr. Maria Montessori's work in developmental psychology and education, incorporating the work of others in these fields while adapting to the needs of the children in the twenty-first century.

The World Learner School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities available to students at the school. The World Learner School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and the school-administered programs.

What is Montessori Education?

Montessori is a method of education that is based on hands-on learning, collaborative play and self-directed activity. In Montessori classrooms, children make creative choices in their learning while the classroom and the teacher offer age appropriate activities and lessons to guide the process. Children work in groups and individually to discover people, places and knowledge of the world. Montessori classrooms are specifically designed to meet the developmental needs of children within this age range. Dr. Maria Montessori discovered that experiential learning in this type of classroom led to a deeper understanding of language, math, science, music, social interactions and so much more. Each tool and material in a beautifully designed Montessori classroom supports specific aspects of a child's development, creating a match between the child's natural interests and the available activities. Because of the match, children can learn through their own experience at their own pace. Children are allowed to follow their natural curiosities that exist in all humans, to build a solid foundation for life-long learning.

Who is Dr. Maria Montessori

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952) was an Italian physician and anthropologist (twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize) who studied how children develop socially, intellectually, physically, and spiritually. Through her careful observations of children all over the world, she discovered universal patterns of development which are found in all children regardless of their culture. She believed that each child is born with a unique potential to be revealed, rather than a "blank slate" waiting to be written upon.

Dr. Montessori created an educational method based upon these natural patterns and grounded in a profound respect for all life. Over the past one hundred years, children throughout the world have benefited from this educational approach that supports, nurtures, and protects natural development.

The Montessori Philosophy and Curriculum

*“The essence of independence is to be able
to do something for one’s self.
Adults work to finish a task, but the child works
in order to grow, and is working to create the adult,
the person that is to be.”
- Maria Montessori*

The general philosophy for each child in our school is to provide Montessori education, which is an education of independence and freedom. In order to develop physical, intellectual and spiritual powers to the fullest, the child must have freedom. This is obtained in our classrooms through the practice of independence, order and self-discipline. We believe that self-motivation is the single most important impulse to guide the children through their learning.

Each child is viewed as an individual learner, with unique learning style and capabilities. The children are allowed to move through the elementary curriculum at their own pace. This is why the multi-age grouping works so well. Something that may have held little interest for a first-year student, may become fascinating in the second or third year. In this way children experience the freedom to make choices in their work, and develop a sense of control over their education. This also virtually eliminates the child’s fear of being “behind.”

The mixing of ages also helps to strengthen the social development of the child. The relationships formed between the younger and older children are invaluable. The younger children look to the older children as inspiration in both behavior and work. The older children take pride in guiding the young ones through the ways of the classroom. The three-year cycle also helps the children build an extremely strong bond with their teacher. The teacher and child get to know and trust each other in a most profound way.

The teacher is responsible for helping guide the children to find their own motivation for learning. By preparing the environment and observing each child carefully, the teacher “follows the child.” Children expand their knowledge by being guided toward materials that reflect their interests.

The Montessori teacher has, what Maria Montessori calls, a “Cosmic Task.” This task is to work with the children’s imagination to help them realize the interconnectedness of the universe. One of the foundations of Montessori education is to present the concrete, which leads to the abstract. By first striking the child’s imagination with a wonderful story or lesson, the teacher taps into the child’s self-motivation to begin a search for more information.

In short, the Montessori elementary and middle school classrooms provides the children with the freedom to learn at their own pace in a varied age group, with a teacher to help guide them through the curriculum. There is much more to know about the Montessori Method in addition to what is mentioned here, and we encourage all parents to educate themselves about this philosophy by reading about it, attending parent education nights, and observing in our classrooms. We assure you that the more you know about the Montessori philosophy, the more excited you will be to have your child join this community!

Charter Schools

A charter school is a public school and is part of the state’s system of public education. The World Learner School is located within the boundaries the local district, Independent School District 112 – Schools of Eastern Carver County. According to MN statute, charter schools are required to work with an authorizer to ensure due diligence as a public school. The authorizer for WLS is Audubon Center of the North Woods and more information on ACNW can be found at www.audubon-center.org.

The World Learner School is organized and operated as a public, non-profit organization offering a non-sectarian educational program. Its Board of Directors is elected by parents of students enrolled in and staff employed by the charter school. The Board of Directors create policies for the school to operate by while the management of the school ensures those policies are implemented and adhered to. The Board of Directors hires a director who assumes responsibility for

development of the curriculum and management of the school. Charter schools are required to provide their annual report of academic goals, progress and achievement in addition to submitting a financial audit to the Department of Education and to their authorizer each year.

Our History

Local families and Jonathan Montessori School staff started the World Learner School with an interest in extending Montessori education beyond the preschool years. Jonathan Montessori has, since 1972, offered high-quality preschool experiences to children 2½ to 6 years old. Both schools are non-profit organizations where parents are highly involved in the leadership of the school and in classroom support. It was the vision of these families and of the Jonathan Montessori staff that led to the creation of The World Learner School. While several options were considered for creating a Montessori elementary school, the concept of a charter school was the first choice. Charter schools are public schools and funding comes from the State's per pupil allocation, as it does for other public schools. Therefore, tuition is not charged to families for their child's attendance. The families and staff who developed the school wanted to create a learning community open to all families without finances being a concern.

The World Learner School did work closely with the administration, teaching staff, and school board of District 112, our original sponsoring district. While the authorizer does not provide financial support for the charter school, they do agree to work together to ensure success. The State of Minnesota Department of Education has complimented The World Learner School and District 112 for their exemplary cooperation and positive working relationship.

The school opened on September 5, 1995 with one class of children 6 to 8 years old. The class was made up of learners with both previous Montessori experience and those who had not attended a Montessori preschool. Since some of the children were familiar with the Montessori materials and learning procedures they served as mentors to new students entering the class.

The following year, the school expanded to include another class of children 6 to 9 years old. The World Learner School was housed in the lower level of the Jonathan Montessori building and at that point filled both classrooms in that space.

During the 1997-1998 school year, the school added its first upper-level class consisting of 12 children 9 and 10 years old. These students became pioneers, attending class at the campus of The World Learner School in downtown Chaska. With the completion of our building project in 1999, the upper elementary class joined the rest of the school in the Jonathan Montessori building in December of 1999. Our most recent building renovation project and expansion was completed in January 2003. The building is now owned by the WLS Building Company. In 2004-2005 we added our middle school which serves 7th and 8th grade students, and we graduated our first eighth graders on June 7, 2006!

In 2011, as MN statute for charter school authorization changed, WLS sought to engage in a relationship with Audubon Center of the North Woods. As an established authorizer of several charter schools, many which are Montessori, working with ACNW was determined to be a natural fit for WLS. Since becoming authorized by Audubon Center of the North Woods, WLS administration and Board of Directors has collaborated with ACNW to meet the contractual obligations of the agreement between the two entities. Various reports on the operations, financials and academic performance are available for review. Please contact the office to receive a copy of the reports

In late 2011, WLS embarked on another huge adventure as both JMS and WLS determined that the current building footprint was not large enough to meet the needs of both schools. As a result, the schools made arrangements for the refinancing of the mortgage to allow for WLS alone to pay for the rent of the facility. Shortly after, JMS was able to purchase the existing facility directly to the west of the building from St. Andrew Church. Beginning in fall of 2012, WLS occupies the entire building at 112050 Hundertmark Road and JMS owns the facility at 112090 Hundertmark Road, effectively creating a Montessori campus!

Board of Directors

The school is governed by a Board of Directors, which sets the policies for school operations. The World Learner School operates under a contract with Audubon Center of the Northwoods. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 124D.10 Subd. 4 (c), the majority of the Board may be comprised of licensed teaching staff of The World Learner School. Board members are elected for the next school year in an open election held during the annual meeting of all parents and staff members, the members of our corporation.

The Board meets every fourth Monday of the month at The World Learner School, starting at 6:00 pm. If you have a question about the Board, please feel free to contact one of the Board members. Board members are given email addresses through the school that follow the same format as the staff email: first initial, last name @ wlschaska.org. For example, Tom Boardmember can be reached at tboardmember@wlschaska.org.

2019-2020 Board of Directors

Parents

- Michelle Strain
- Joel Suiter
- Lynn Zorn

Community Member

- Amy Mittlestadt

Teachers

- Eva Maher
- Melissa Bullerman
- Tina Lyder
- Nathaniel Nordberg
- Emily Carlson

Educational Philosophy of World Learner School

Philosophy Implementation

We follow the educational philosophy of Maria Montessori. In order to develop physical, intellectual, and spiritual potential to the fullest, the child must have freedom: freedom achieved through order and discipline. We provide an integrated curriculum which is child-centered and teacher-facilitated, allowing children freedom and choice within a carefully prepared environment. At The World Learner School great work is expected and respected.

What We Believe and What We Do

The World Learner School is a public (charter) Montessori school serving children from 6 to 14 years of age. World Learner School practices the Montessori Method of education. For us Montessori is a view of and an attitude toward the whole child. The curriculum consists of a physical environment, a psychological environment, materials, presentation of the materials, and the children's follow-on work, all within a Montessori framework. We WLS teachers share a number of beliefs which underlie our practice of Montessori Method. We try to act based on those beliefs:

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|-------------------------|--|
| What We Believe: | Each child is an individual whose interests and abilities are unique. |
| What We Do: | Teach each child at his/her own level. Remove any obstacles to growth, irrespective of the rate at which that growth occurs. |
| What We Believe: | Communities are based on respect. Respect as an individual is a right of each community member. |
| What We Do: | Show respect to the children, our colleagues, parents, animals, and our belongings, and protect everyone's right to be respected. |
| What We Believe: | In order to teach the child, we must understand the child. In order to understand, we must follow the child. That is, we observe the child closely, and determine from the open-minded observation what we can do that will be most helpful to the child's mission. |
| What We Do: | We practice to become keen observers. We observe all the time, noting signs that tell us the child's needs. And we move quickly to meet those needs, or to remove the obstacles in front of the child's own pursuit of those needs, so as to catch the child at his/her most sensitive period to whatever the need might be. |

- What We Believe:** The natural sequence of work moves from the concrete to the abstract.
What We Do: Guide the child through a sequence of work opportunities from a base of hands-on, quantitative activities toward more mental work.
- What We Believe:** The best work involves many senses.
What We Do: Encourage work that involves as many senses as possible.
- What We Believe:** Elementary age children need to move when they work.
What We Do: Children are encouraged to move around the classroom however they need to, as long as they respect others.
- What We Believe:** Elementary age children need to socialize when they work.
What We Do: Children are encouraged to communicate with each other and work together.
- What We Believe:** Children learn best when they do what interests them.
What We Do: Provide a framework for children to choose work in which they are interested and competent.
- What We Believe:** Responsibility and freedom come in a delicate balance.
What We Do: Cultivate an environment of freedom, in which children are competent to meet their responsibilities.
- What We Believe:** All subject areas are important.
What We Do: Ensure that children are exposed to a wide variety of subject areas and approaches to the same subject.
- What We Believe:** Some, but only some, sequences of work are essential.
What We Do: Prepare to follow the sequence when that is appropriate, and to depart from it when that is appropriate.
- What We Believe:** Being accountable means being able to show progress using standardized, objective measuring tools that are faithful to our principles and understandable to parents.
What We Do: Prepare our children for required tests, while influencing change where we can, and accepting rules when we have to. We develop and use our own tests as part of the compilation of each child's portfolio, which consists of the child's work history (with examples), our observations, a record of parental questions and concerns, and test results.
- What We Believe:** Individual adaptation and self-construction are fundamental to human development.
What We Do: Help the child find work he/she needs to do to best build his/her own mind, and then allow the child the opportunity to do it.
- What We Believe:** Children are driven to develop their capacities for orientation, exploration, and order.
What We Do: Involve the children in a fundamental way in the organization of the environment, including the schedule, the meals, transitions, maintenance, everything. And go out whenever we can, on field trips, walks, to play on a nice day, etc.
- What We Believe:** Elementary age children have a burgeoning imagination (intelligence) that allows them to contemplate beyond the here and now into the remote past, the future, the fantastic, the unreal, the logical, the negative, and the hypothetical.
What We Do: We plant small seeds of interest in a superordinate context of nature and history, and encourage the child to pursue his/her own individual interest in the subject.

- What We Believe:** The children retain some of their earlier drive toward perfection, exactness, repetition, and control of self.
- What We Do:** Recognize stages of development as having distinct characteristics, but a lot of overlap as well. Recognize any positive tendency within any child as that child's mission of the moment in their journey toward self-construction.

This is a brief summary of our beliefs and practices at The World Learner School. We feel it is important for anyone who is interested in our approach to education to come into our classrooms to observe how we implement our beliefs. We also highly recommend that all parents and staff read the literature on Montessori and related subjects.

General Educational Goals of the Montessori Program

Goals: Physical Development

- Developing a body whose movements are mastered and controlled;
- Developing the fine coordination necessary for writing and manipulation of materials;
- Learning sports and games which can be enjoyed into adulthood;

Goals: Emotional Development

- An awareness of one's own feelings;
- Sensitivity to and consideration for the feelings of others;
- Developing a good self-image;

Goals: Intellectual Development

- The mastery of skills (such as reading, writing, etc.) in order to be able to pursue knowledge;
- An understanding of how to find information and use various media;
- To become a learner who can learn with a minimum of assistance from an adult;

Goals: Knowledge Development

- A sense of stewardship of the earth and all life;
- An understanding of the evolution of life;
- An understanding that all people have the same basic needs;
- An appreciation for the variety of ways in which needs are met;
- An awareness of the integration and interdependence of humankind and nature;
- An awareness of the interdependence of people and nations, with a desire for cooperation and peace.

Subject Overviews

Overview: Language

Language is an important part of the entire Montessori curriculum. Our presentations in language guide the children toward a conscious awareness of language, for its own interest's sake, and as a means to use language more effectively. There is a great variety of lessons in word study, penmanship, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization. Much of the child's experience in reading and writing comes through work in other areas of the curriculum, such as geography, history, botany, etc.

Because children have different learning styles, they are provided with different means for learning to read within the environment. In this way, the children will be able to select the components of reading which fit their learning style and put them together in the way that is best for them.

World Learner School is unique in having a specially-trained Reading Guide, who works with children who need extra guidance in reading. In addition, a Literacy Interventionist works with children following lessons from Montessori teachers as a way to enhance the learning.

Overview: Mathematics

Manipulation of concrete and symbolic materials with built-in error control develops sound mathematical skills and guides the children from the concrete toward the abstract.

As in other parts of the Montessori curriculum, experience with a material comes first, then the spoken language or naming. This is followed by the symbolic representation or written symbol. So, the sequence is: the material, related language, and then its symbolic representation, and all along the way there is the essential recognition of the associations among these various features.

Much like the Reading Guide, WLS's Math Guide supports the work of children needing additional tutorial options to master math skills.

Overview: Geometry

Geometry in Montessori follows the historical development of the subject. Geometry is experienced sensorially through manipulation of plane and solid geometric figures. These materials inspire creative activity that involves two and three-dimensional construction of various forms, artistic drawings, and ornamentation.

Overview: Social Studies and Science

Social studies and science at the elementary level are integrated in the classroom as they are in life. Therefore, there are no clear distinctions among the various areas that are included in this section. These two classes are two of the main four subjects taught at the middle school level. Even when taught separately, every effort is made to integrate all subject areas.

Montessori biology is structured in such a way as to guide the children toward a means of classification - so that they can structure and relate the facts of biology. The ultimate goal is an ecological view of life and a feeling of responsibility for the environment. The child will see that each individual life on earth is selfish in its own way, but also each serves the good of the whole in its own way. Montessori calls this the "Cosmic Plan."

Montessori history follows the development of the solar system, life on earth, the development of humankind, early civilizations, and recorded history. The child sees the long labor of humankind needed to accomplish all that is enjoyed here today.

The study of geography is designed to show how the physical configurations of the earth contribute to history. The study of geography and physical geography is the basis for the study of economic geography - which shows the interdependence of all people.

The first science experiments are designed to give the child basic knowledge which will make possible the understanding of the development of the solar system, the earth and its configurations, life on earth, and the needs of plants and animals.

Overview: Foreign Language

The Montessori teachers integrate Spanish into the lower elementary curriculum. The classrooms have invested in a Spanish Montessori materials that mimic the English Montessori materials and are used to accentuate language skills.

Overview: Art

In the Montessori class, the adult aids the children in the development of skills in order that they may creatively express themselves through various media. In addition to art expression for its own sake, art is an integrating factor in the rest of the curriculum. The child may utilize art in such ways as geometrical drawings, geographical maps, mathematical graphing, or illustrations for history, botany, zoology, social studies, geology, geography, etc.

Overview: Music

Our music program includes singing, the playing of instruments, rhythm, notation, composition, music theory, and music appreciation. We make a special effort to provide choices in music for students at all levels. Singing provides opportunities for understanding scales, expression of feelings, and understanding other cultures. Singing provides children with a repertoire of melodies that they can use in the production and analysis of music.

The emotion expressed by a piece of music such as a folk song, a symphony, or a marching tune can be absorbed, felt, and

recognized by children. This in turn may lead to quiet listening and contemplation, to expression of the feeling in writing or in art, to the examining of qualities and characteristics of different musical instruments, or to the understanding of an era or a group of people through the music which they produced. This may lead to the study of style and musical form. The opportunities for expansion are limitless. The World Learner School offers other musical opportunities that vary from year to year, either during or after school, such as private instrument lessons, band, jazz band, rock band, and choir.

Overview: Physical Education

The World Learner School utilizes its easy access to the outdoors, as well as the services of the Chaska Community Center as well as other local facilities for physical fitness, swimming and other activities. The children also have daily recess, held outdoors whenever possible.

Biological studies relating to physical education include human anatomy, physiology and nutrition. Practical life areas such as carpentry, sewing, weaving, etc. and movement activities in the music area also relate. We focus on the development of skills that can be used in later life is the emphasis, along with the challenge of competing with oneself rather than competing with others.

Subjects: Summary

The Montessori Elementary and Middle School programs are based on developmental psychology first put forward by Maria Montessori. This type of learning takes place in a multi-aged classroom that offers the opportunity for children to remain with the same teacher for multiple years. This establishes intimate contact among the children, the teacher and the work. It permits a variety of approaches, using dynamic, colorful, concrete manipulatives from which abstract concepts are drawn. Materials are used throughout the curriculum, in math, language, geometry, geography, history, biology, art, music and natural sciences.

Parent Volunteers

WLS depends and thrives on parental participation to accomplish a variety of goals. Each WLS parent is asked to be involved in one or more volunteer activities. Currently the WLS PTO is collecting information from parents about ways to volunteer and support the school. However, if you know of a specific way that your talent can benefit WLS, please don't hesitate to contact the Office! Your participation is critical to making our school successful.

Volunteers: Student and Staff Support

Parents are much needed and greatly appreciated for their work in supporting students and staff. There are myriad classroom and office tasks that can be ongoing or a one-time event.

Volunteers: Communications and Hospitality

Parents participating in the communications and hospitality aspect of our school will promote and coordinate communication among parents, staff, and the Board. They help in the planning and set-up for meetings, parent celebrations and other events as well as staff appreciation events.

Volunteers: Facilities

Parents with the talent and interest in how things work are needed to work with staff on room, building, and grounds maintenance.

Volunteers: Technology

Parents with skills in technology are invited to assist with its use in the school. In general, computers play a very minimal role in the elementary curriculum. In the middle school, their role becomes quite important.

Teacher Training

Montessori teachers at WLS are certified in Montessori Method, with both the main training schools represented: Association Montessori International (AMI), and American Montessori Society (AMS). Philosophy and practice are highly integrated in Montessori training, and every Montessori teacher must make a sincere commitment to the philosophy, to the child, and to self-preparation. All teachers in a public school such as ours must meet or be working toward the general state licensing requirements for teaching as well. There are situations when teachers are in training,

either for Montessori certification or for licensure. Each teacher in training works closely with the Director on his or her timeline for completion of training or licensure.

Admissions Procedure

The World Learner School holds two informational meetings for prospective parents in the fall of each year to educate them about Montessori and charter schools. Also, The World Learner School strongly encourages a classroom observation visit and attendance at both meetings before enrollment.

The World Learner School shall admit any eligible student who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the program, class, or grade level. Any student continuing at The World Learner School will be re-enrolled for the next year without reapplication.

To the extent the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the program, class, grade level, or building, siblings of continuing students and children of full-time, siblings. WLS teachers will receive preference for admission following siblings. For all other openings, students shall be accepted by lot. To the extent the number of applications exceeds the number of openings; WLS will notify our Authorizer, Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW) at least one week prior to any drawing of the number of applications and the lot procedure to be used. The World Learner School will also promptly inform ACNW of the results of the selection by lot.

Most of the openings at The World Learner School occur for six year olds (children whose 6th birthday is prior to September 1st) in Lower Elementary classes at the beginning of the school year.

Occasional openings occur during the school year for children of other ages and are dependent on space available in the classrooms. Openings are filled from the waiting lists that were selected in the lottery for each grade level.

Grade designation is downplayed at The World Learner School. For purposes of standardized testing, children are designated in grades, but in the class, children are given lessons with any academic peers. Generally, the transition between lower and upper elementary is made with peers on a grade-level basis. However, the Montessori Method allows and encourages work at the child's own level, regardless of the classroom environment. Therefore, every child will be working at their own academic level, whether they are attending a lower or upper elementary class. Questions regarding early or late transitions between the two levels will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and decided by the principal, in consultation with the teachers and parents.

Reporting and Accountability

WLS Assessment Tools and Schedules

Our general approach to assessment is to recognize the value of assessment tools to inform parents, teachers, and students about skill levels and rates of progress. At the same time, we want to recognize the limitations of each tool, and to use a combination of tools to give a comprehensive and accurate assessment. We also want to integrate assessment tools into routine work, defining a rightful place for them in each child's educational experience.

Here is a schedule of assessment activities that we do at The World Learner School, with a bit of explanation about each:

MAP: WLS administers the MAP (Measuring Academic Progress) test, which is used by many other local schools in Minnesota and around the country. The reasons are numerous:

- To coordinate closely with local high schools for the purpose of comparing and sharing data;
- To administer a test which is more closely aligned with the Montessori curriculum and the Minnesota State Standards;
- To use a test which is closely connected to learning and to guiding subsequent teaching, rather than a score-oriented once-a-year dramatic and sometimes stressful event;
- To be better able to organize and display our testing data in a variety of ways for a variety of purposes;
- To shift the medium for testing from paper and pencil to the computer;

The MAP test is administered in Reading and Math for all students in grades 1-8, most likely three times per year, in the

fall, winter and spring. It is also administered in Science for grades 4, 7, and 8. The tests are designed so that each task is isolated on the computer screen; that is, the student will see only words and pictures that pertain to the task at hand. The format is multiple choice. The test adapts to the level of the student as he/she proceeds. You can infer from that that the student's score is going to be more meaningful as a reflection of the level they were functioning at on the test, rather than a tally of right and wrong answers.

For more on the MAP test, visit this website:

<http://www.nwea.org/products-services/computer-based-adaptive-assessments>

GAT: Teachers may opt to administer, in the first days of school, a test that we have developed ourselves which we call the General Achievement Test for Measuring Achievement in a Montessori Environment, or GAT, for short. The purpose of administering the GAT pre- and post was to get an early reading on students' skills, and target weak spots for focused work. We will still be doing early diagnosis of academic skills, but the GAT will be only one way in which that information is gathered. As a kind of parallel effort to continue early assessment which guides our emphases with each child, we will be working more from the teacher side, consolidating and coordinating the way in which we document which child has had which lesson, and the subsequent level of their mastery, among all the 1500 or so Montessori lessons there are for each teacher to give.

CONFERENCES: We consider conferences the mainstay of our reporting plan. Conferences consist of discussion of general performance, the portfolio of work, the student's self-assessment, parent input (we have a form for parents to fill out ahead of time), the record of lessons given to the student, and test results.

MCA (specific grades): MCA is the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment. This is a standardized test required by the state. Currently, the MCA requires all 3rd through 8th grade students to participate in the Reading and Math Assessments and the testing mode is transitioning to a computer based model. 5th and 8th grade students also are required to participate in the Science Assessment.

The tests are administered in March or April and results are delivered to schools and families in late summer. The scores are reported to parents in a format that compares their child's scores with scores of other children at their child's age/grade level in the state. This test is really a proficiency test, in that it measures general levels of skill in general skill areas. We practice for it, but the practice is in the format, not the content. The content of this test is meant to be so general that children from anywhere in the state should be able to score within the average if they have been attending school and learn at an average rate.

One asterisk on this test is that it doesn't allow for spontaneity, and if Montessori children have rightly pursued their interest in an academic area, they may not have had much time for some other area. In our view, they might be well balanced, but on the test they may have weak scores in an area that they have acceptably made a lower priority. Of course, over time it is our responsibility to guide them toward a more thoroughly rounded balance of interests and skills.

Student Participation in Statewide Testing

Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.31, subdivision 4a, requires the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to publish a form for parents/guardians to complete if they refuse to have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. It includes some basic information to help parents/guardians make informed decisions that benefit their child and their school and community. The form to meet this legislative requirement is available at the link below; it was updated in May 2018. When completed, it must be returned to your student's district; your student's district may require additional information. The form is in the appendix or on the WLS website.

Year-End Progress Reports: We report results from the tests as well as some general performance observations. These are sent out after the end of the school year.

If you have any questions about assessment or accountability at WLS, the best source of information is your child's teacher. For philosophical and technical questions about the tests, reporting formats, schedules, etc., feel free to contact the Director as well.

Minnesota Academic Standards

The World Learner School is required to meet the academic standards of the state of Minnesota. The standards are the

basis for much of the testing we do, including the General Achievement test we have designed for middle school students. Parents can access the standards by going to the website for the Minnesota Department of Education.

WLS General Operating Procedures

Absences

Please notify the school at 952-368-7398 before 9:15 a.m. if your child will be absent. Please leave the name of your child, teacher and reason for absence. If we do not hear from you when your child is absent, our Office Manager will contact you to verify the absence. For multiple day absences due to an illness, a daily courtesy call from a parent is also appreciated.

Excused Absences

There are times when a child cannot attend school for legitimate reasons. Excused absences are occurrences considered legitimate reasons for non-attendance. Excused absences include:

- Illness: extended illness related absences might result in a request for a doctor's note
- Sickness or death in the family
- Impassable road (Normally the school will be closed on a snow day but there may be good cause for absence for a child who lives in an isolated area where roads have not been properly cleared of snow or other debris.)
- Observance of religious holidays not recognized by public schools.
- Suspension, Exclusion, or Expulsion from school (This refers to students who have been removed from school following 121A.40 Minnesota Fair Pupil Dismissal Law.)
- The student needs emergency medical or dental treatment
- Other Absences (This refers to special cases of family travel or other special circumstances where the absence from school is agreed upon by the parents, teachers, and the administration prior to the absence.)

Unexcused Absences

The school does not recognize unexcused absences as legitimate reasons for non-attendance. Examples of unexcused absences may include (but is not limited to) the following:

- The student didn't feel like going to school and health reasons did not prevent attendance.
- The student went shopping.
- The student was helping at home.
- The student was caring for younger siblings.
- The non-attendance was deliberate on the part of the student ("skipping")
- The student was being punished/grounded.

Tardiness

Tardiness is any late arrival or early departure without a legitimate reason. It is important that your child arrives at school on time every day. Tardiness not only affects a student who is tardy but causes a disruption in the classroom and is a loss of educational time for your child.

If students have excessive tardiness the following procedure will be followed by The World Learner School administration: 1) Parents or guardians are sent a letter from the administration if their child is tardy six or more times in a trimester. 2) If tardiness continues, the administration may at its discretion, total the amount of tardy time to equal unexcused absences with unexcused absence procedures to be followed.

Activity Fee

Each year an activity fee will be collected for each child to help defray the cost of transportation and fees related to co-curricular physical education experiences. If you cannot contribute the amount requested, please speak to the Director. Families who can afford to are invited to contribute more than the required amount in order to establish a financial aid fund.

Arrivals and Departures

School begins at 9:25 a.m. Please make sure that your child arrives at school on time. Late arrivals are disruptive to the teachers and classes in session. Children being dropped off should not arrive prior to 9:15 a.m. Elementary children arriving before that time will go into before school care and will be charged the appropriate fee. Students that are in the building for a band lesson may wait in the Music Room before and after lessons but will not be allowed to roam to other areas of the school. Students in Middle School must also report to Before/After Care prior to 9:10 a.m.

Your child will be dismissed only to their designated bus or to a parent or other pre-authorized adult. A note signed by a child's parent is necessary in order for someone other than the parent or pre-authorized adult to pick up the child or for the child to ride a different bus. A picture ID will be checked. Any elementary child not picked up by 4:05 p.m. will be put in after school care and will be charged the appropriate fee.

Parents are asked to follow the expectations listed below when dropping off and picking up students. Please remember that buses always have the right-of-way.

DROP OFF PROCEDURE: (between 9:10 am and 9:25 am)

1. If you choose to park to walk your child in, pull into a parking spot. Do not park –even temporarily – in the Bus Lane.
2. If you choose to drop off in the bus lane, please follow the flow of traffic and do not exit your car. Immediately move out of the bus lane after your child is safely on the sidewalk. Please merge with moving traffic responsibly.
3. BUSES ALWAYS HAVE THE RIGHT-OF-WAY.
4. Walk your child across the parking lot and down the sidewalk to the EAST ENTRANCE. Here they will be greeted by the Director or other designated adult.
5. We ask that parents do not enter the school with their child at this entrance. One of our goals is to foster independence. This also allows for a smooth transition into the ‘school day’. If your child needs additional support, as WLS staff member will assist your child down the stairs to his or her classroom.

PICK UP PROCEDURE:

1. Pull into a parking spot. Do not park – even temporarily – in the Bus Lane.
2. Your child will be available for pick up in the Multi-Purpose room. Please enter the school through the main doors and then enter the Multi-Purpose room through the interior entrance. A staff person will be waiting in the Multi-Purpose room to support departure. Please exit through the direct door to the exterior.
3. Please merge with outgoing traffic responsibly and remember BUSES ALWAYS HAVE THE RIGHT-OF-WAY.
4. We ask that parents wait in the Multi-Purpose room to pick up children and to not pick them up earlier than 3:50 unless prescheduled or emergency. The end-of-the-day routine in classrooms is a deliberate part of the school day to foster independence. In addition, staff strive to maintain order in a very busy environment and last minute requests for early departures can contribute to a chaos that may be difficult for staff and children.

Background Check

World Learner School Board of Directors has established a policy that requires annual checks for all staff employed by WLS. These checks will be conducted by a third-party vendor and include federal and state reviews. In addition, all volunteers and contracted vendors working with students will also be subjected to an annual check according to the state system. Results of all findings will be kept on file according to data retention schedules. A fee may be collected for processing of individual background checks.

Bicycles

Bicycles are permitted as a mode of transportation to and from school. Students bringing bicycles are asked to walk their bicycles on school grounds and park them in the bike rack. For the safety of all students, bicycles may not be ridden on school grounds. Parents and guardians are reminded that students bring bicycles to school at their own risk and that bicycles should be locked throughout the school day.

Billing

All billing for Kids Club School Care or any additional outstanding bills will be invoiced once a month through email or postal mail. Payments can be made in person to the school office, mailed or brought to the office by your child in an

envelope and marked with the family name and the type of payment. When writing a check, please write the check to World Learner School and write a brief note on the comment line as to the purpose of the check. We would ask that you keep all payments current.

Birthdays

Treats

Many children like to celebrate their birthdays at school by bringing a treat. Treats must be commercially prepared and only one treat per child is allowed. We appreciate treats that are healthy. Non-food items such as stickers or pencils are also welcome. A book or gift to the classroom in lieu of a treat is another option. Please talk with your child's teacher to learn what procedures they use to celebrate birthdays.

Invitations

If you are planning a home party for your child, please do not hand out invitations at school. We have found that these situations can be upsetting for those who are not invited.

Booster Seat Use in WLS Vehicles

When riding in the WLS van, children under age 8 (eight) will always ride in a booster seat. Children under 57 inches in height will always ride using a booster seat unless the child's ears are hereby raised above the back of seat and headrest.

Bus Ridership

According to charter school law, busing will be provided to all students residing within the District 112 boundaries to travel to school at the start of the day and from school at the end of the day. The World Learner School has adopted a bus ridership agreement which was developed by District 112 along with the State of Minnesota. In order for a student to ride the bus, the student and his/her parents must sign the agreement. All expectations and responsibilities are outlined in this agreement. Service for children who are bussed to and from school is provided through contracted bus companies through ISD 112. It is the parent's responsibility to contact Positive Connections (952-361-0899) if their child will not be riding the bus that day. Families will receive their busing schedule in the fall.

Calendar

A calendar is given out at the beginning of the school year listing many events and other useful information. Updates of calendar items are announced through the Friday newsletters (both classroom and office) and on the WLS website (<http://www.wlschaska.org>). Parents may also access the PTO website for calendar information at www.wlspto.org.

Change of Address

Please notify the school office promptly concerning any change of address, phone number or emergency information. This courtesy will help keep our records current.

Changing Buses

Students who wish to ride a bus other than their own must bring a note to their teacher. The note should indicate which bus is to be taken and must be signed by the parent/guardian. Prior permission must be obtained by the parent as such arrangements will not be allowed to be made during school hours.

Child Abuse Reporting

Under Minnesota law, the reporting of suspected physical abuse, sexual abuse and neglect are required of educational and health care professionals. The World Learner School staff members are mandated reporters and will comply with these reporting laws.

Clothing

The World Learner School encourages individuality in its students. Clothing is one way in which students express this individuality. The policy does not interfere with a student's right to express political, religious, philosophical or similar opinions in words on garments they wear to the World Learner School.

However there are exceptions based on the following:

- Clothing that materially and substantially interferes with schoolwork or discipline.
- Clothing that is not opaque and exposes genitals, buttocks, breasts, and nipples.
- Clothing that provides a consistent distraction to students.
- Clothing that causes other students to feel uncomfortable, threatened or afraid.
- Clothing with inappropriate messages of a racial, sexual or lewd nature, or other wording that is “wholly inconsistent with the fundamental values” of public schools.
- Clothing that does not meet state requirements for health and safety (for example - State law requires that shoes must be worn in public buildings)
- Clothing worn inappropriately

Off-site

The World Learner School dress code extends to school-sponsored activities off the school premises.

Swimwear is restricted to “Tankinis” or a single piece suit for female students and swimming shorts for male students. Bikinis and Speedo-style trunks are not permitted.

Hats or headgear of any style may not be permitted in certain venues that require a level of decorum or respect. WLS staff reserve the right to instruct students to remove headgear when decorum requires.

Each child should also be equipped with outdoor clothing suitable to the season. We make an effort to go outside every day, except for pervasively rainy days and if the temperature is below -10 degrees Fahrenheit. Please provide a full set of clothing including socks, underwear, pants and shirt. Changes of clothing may be necessary due to accidents, wet weather, or other reasons. Please keep a pair of soft-soled indoor shoes at school. It is very important that each child has indoor shoes. Not only do they protect their feet, they allow muddy or wet shoes to be removed, thereby preserving our carpets and the beauty of our classrooms.

Communication

A good communication flow with your child's teacher is highly desirable and should be the principle vehicle for questions that may arise. Parent conferences are scheduled during fall and spring for this purpose. However, feel free to contact your child's teacher for any additional meetings. It is difficult to communicate with teachers during the school day as they are often not readily available via email or phone. If there is a message that must be attended to during the day, it is best to leave the message with the Office Manager for direct delivery to the teacher.

Problem Solving – This process of problem-solving pertains to issues in the classroom.

I. A parent with a concern about a classroom or curricular issue should voice the concern to their child’s teacher. We believe that the best way of understanding the issue and effecting positive change is for the people closest to the issue to communicate frankly and respectfully about it.

II. If the parent communicates with the teacher about a concern and feels a lack of satisfaction, the parent should voice the concern to the administration (the Director). Typically, the administrator will either suggest approaches to the problem, or offer to join the conversation between the parent and the teacher, or both.

III. If the parent tries the new suggestions and/or engages in a conversation with the teacher and administrator together and still feels a lack of satisfaction, they may voice the concern to a board member.

When a parent comes to a board member with a problem, the board member will confirm that the parent has followed the communication channel (first: teacher; next: administrator). If the parent has not, the board member will offer to facilitate the parent’s following of the steps in the communication channel. If, with such facilitation, the parent is still not satisfied with the response, either the parent or the facilitating board member may take the issue to the board.

The board may then decide to appoint one or two facilitators from the board (note that this appointment need not be done at a board meeting), with at least one being a staff member, to listen to the parent’s concern, and work toward resolution.

The appointed board facilitator(s) will contact the concerned parent within 48 hours of the appointment and will subsequently make a written report to the board, preferably with the parent’s participation.

If a parent has a problem with an administrator, the parent is encouraged to meet in person with the administrator and work toward resolution. If the parent tries that and is not satisfied with the result, they may follow the steps above to involve the board.

Administration and staff will work to inform parents of school policies, procedures, and practices, so that parents know what to expect, and can ask questions and clarify issues. We hope to get to know each WLS parent through frequent interaction. We believe that good communication is based on first-hand knowledge of all parties' perspectives, and a comfortable familiarity based on a history of dialogue.

Problem Solving Flow Chart for Parents at WLS

YOU

|
|-----> #1 Teacher
Your child's teacher is the natural first point of contact for any concerns you as a parent may have.

|
|-----> #2 Administration
The director is always available to help with any concerns you may have. Deana has an 'open door' policy.

|
|-----> #3 Board of Directors
The board members are generally available and can help you if your concerns remain unresolved after you have spoken with your child's teacher and the administration. There is also a Parent's Forum at the start of each board meeting in which concerns may be voiced.

Community Relations

We invite you to become involved with the faculty, the staff and other parents and guardians of The World Learner School. We encourage families to attend open houses, Parent Education Nights, informational meetings, concerts, picnics, Parent Advisory Council meetings, Board of Directors meetings and other planned activities. Another way to get involved in supporting World Learner School is through the Parent-Teacher Organization, PTO. The website for the PTO is www.wlspto.org.

Computers in the Montessori Classroom

Computers are not on the traditional inventory of materials for a Montessori classroom. But Maria Montessori left a wealth of philosophy to apply to answers to questions regarding modernizing classrooms in Montessori schools.

The sequence of lessons in Montessori education follows a pattern of concrete toward abstract. Generally, the climb to abstraction opens up new concepts and skills to exercise in concrete ways, giving the sequence of concrete to abstract a recursive quality. As a person matures and their brain develops fully, the abstract tends to dominate their thinking and their work. However, most people retain a real need to continue to work in the concrete realm to a greater or lesser extent throughout their lives.

In the WLS Montessori program, in the lower elementary the children's psychological plane generally requires them to work more extensively on a concrete level. With burgeoning abstracting power developing in the upper elementary, the children spend more of their time in the abstract realm, with there being a rough balance between concrete and abstract levels of work. In the adolescent program, the children's psychological plane shifts dramatically toward the abstract, making them capable of very advanced abstract thinking (but note that they also have a resurgent need for work in the concrete realm: building things, growing things, and exercising intensely).

Computers are by nature abstract. When you move a mouse on a computer, the actual movement of the arrow on the screen is many abstract steps removed from your concrete act of pushing the mouse across the pad. Images on a screen are not "real", or concrete: they are virtual; they are simulations of some other real things. For that reason, computers play a minimal role in lower elementary, if they are used by children at all (and some of us would prefer that there is no computer use by children for the greater portion of the lower elementary experience). The greater abstracting ability and need in upper elementary allow for the slightly increased use of the computer at that level: learning keyboarding, doing some word processing, doing some research on the internet, and getting some lessons in spreadsheets are all appropriate in a limited way.

In the adolescent program, computers are an important part of daily work. A student can still go through the two years of our adolescent program without using a computer, but in the interest of their preparedness for their next educational environment and their life in the modern world, we want them to have adequate skills on the computer and will work to develop them in students in the adolescent program. The role of the computer at this level is still as a tool, though; not as an end in itself.

With the above in mind, World Learner School does utilize a variety of technology devices in classrooms, especially as students gain more understanding of the abstract concepts embedded in technology use. This stage of development is typically observed in students in grades 4 - 8.

To facilitate opportunities for learning in a digital world, WLS does establish gmail addresses for school use. Students can access Google Drive and communicate with staff and fellow students through this email address. The gmail address is maintained by WLS and will be suspended if the technology agreement is violated. It is also suspended upon withdrawal of WLS.

Custody Determination

In cases where parents are separated or divorced, and one parent has primary, physical and/or legal custody, the school must have proof in the form of a copy of the court order that spells out both custody and visitation rights. School must have on file appropriate legal documentation in order to assure compliance with any limiting court order.

Data Privacy Policy

Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records

World Learner School complies with federal and state laws governing the release of student record information. These laws require the school to release 'directory information'. Directory information includes the student's name, address, telephone listing, photograph, student's date of birth, gender, dates and schools of enrollment, grade level, school special honors and achievement, participation in officially recognized activities, and photos or videotapes of a student engaged in academic, non-academic or co-curricular activities. Directory information does not include individual grades, testing results, race, religion, or other personal facts.

Should a parent choose to classify their child's directory information as private, their child's directory information will be excluded from official school publications and electronic media including to but not limited to the yearbook, student newspaper, graduation programs, recognition lists, and performance programs.

By law, directory information must be made available to organizations or individuals who request it. PTO groups, scouts, photographers (LifeTouch) are examples of organizations who may request student directory data.

Parents may request that directory information be classified as private by completing the Privacy Form (available from The Office).

Education Records Protected by FERPA

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act requires that every student have the right for information other than directory information to be kept private. Information on Incident or Accident Reports may not disclose identifying information about any student other than the child who is the subject of the report. World Learner School staff are prohibited from disclosing any identifying information to any individual, neither in writing or verbally.

Deep Portage Experience

The Upper Elementary level of WLS traditionally spends a week of the school year in an optional experience at a conservation camp in northern Minnesota, near Hackensack. Deep Portage is a co-curricular event and participation is expected. The Deep Portage Experience occurs every fall during the three years of Upper Elementary. It is expected that lead teachers attend this experience with students, typically leaving on Tuesday morning and returning to WLS on late Friday afternoon. Other staff will be contracted to attend Deep Portage on an individual basis. Volunteer chaperones are also invited to attend, pending completion of a background check. Chaperones are responsible for the full cost of attending Deep Portage. Financial Aid or Payment Plans may be available, please see the Director.

Disability Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of World Learner School to protect students with disabilities from discrimination and to identify and evaluate learners who, within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, need accommodations, special services, or programs in order that such learners may receive the required, free appropriate public education.

Section 504 in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program that receives federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

1. Has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits a more major life activity, including learning; or
2. Has a record of such an impairment;
3. Is regarded as having such impairment.

Learners may be protected from disability discrimination and be eligible for services under the provisions of Section 504 even though they do not require individualized education program services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Questions, comments or concerns regarding disability discrimination issues should be directed to:

Deana Siekmann, Director

A pamphlet entitled Section 504 Guidelines is available in The Office.

Discipline

World Learner School is committed to maintaining a learning environment that ensures no interference with the educational process. Freedom and Responsibility are key Montessori tenets that allow for such an environment to exist. WLS promotes the building of peace through our classrooms and allows for the culture of peace to flourish. Through this effort, students have responsibilities and freedoms.

Discipline in a Montessori environment is not imposed on the child but, rather, is created in the child when there is a beautiful blend and perfect balance of freedom and structure. Maintaining this delicate balance is one of the foundations of the Montessori environment. It is on this foundation of freedom and structure that the child builds discipline. Freedom is not often associated with discipline. Usually, people assume that since the child is offered freedom – to move, to choose, to repeat – there is no structure to the environment. Freedom, however, does not mean one can do whatever one wants. Responsibility to oneself and one's community are essential components of freedom. We offer freedoms, but with limitations that facilitate the development of responsibility and an internal center of control. The development of self-discipline in this manner allows the individual to choose the right behavior because it is right for him or herself and for the community. Inner discipline is not something automatically present within the child, but rather evolves under the right care and in the proper environment. As adults in the child's life, we need to be a model and guide while supporting the process of developing self-discipline. We offer limited freedoms based on the child's ability to make appropriate choices at that particular time. As the child's ability to make choices and follow rules improves, more freedom is offered.

Every year WLS students, families, teachers and administrator sign a personalized contract for every student focused on school behavior and work expectations. The contract is included in the appendix.

Our Freedoms

WLS students have the freedom to **MOVE, COMMUNICATE and CHOOSE**.

Our Responsibilities

With each freedom comes responsibility.

- **Moving** responsibly means we move with purpose, carefully and quietly so that others can continue their work.
- **Communicating** responsibly means our words are respectful, they do not disturb others' work, and they are words about our work.
- **Choosing** responsibly means we choose challenging, meaningful work. We choose appropriate materials and supplies to respectfully do that work. We record our work choices in our work journals and conference with our teachers about those choices. We also choose to master required skills as defined by Minnesota State Standards. We choose to use our time wisely.

In the event that the balance between freedom (rights) and responsibility become imbalanced, intervention is warranted. Typical intervention begins with a process of student/teacher consultation and the retraction of freedom until responsible actions prompt reinstatement of freedom. This process may include conflict mediation with students and restitution, constantly focused on a peaceful outcome. Other interventions may include personal attention, redirection, distraction, substitution or removal from the situation. Most instances resolve themselves as the child experiences the logical or natural consequence of his/her actions (i.e. correcting a shelf that was pushed over).

Offenses by students requiring more than the usual Montessori-based intervention/counseling will require engagement with the Director and/or Parents. It is crucial to understand that each situation requires a unique and individualized approach. However, the outline below provides a guide that is deployed in addressing each situation.

The school may take disciplinary action resulting from:

- *truancy (absence unapproved by parents or school);
- *property violations such as unauthorized use of school property, damage or destruction of school property, theft, vandalism, arson, etc.;
- *assault, fighting, harassment, etc.;
- *abusive, threatening, profane or obscene language; racial, ethnic, religious or sexual slurs; degrading remarks, spoken or written;
- *defiance, cheating, bomb threats, disobedience and disrespectful behavior;
- *violation of district 112 transportation rules, parking lot/school traffic rules;
- *slander or libel;
- *attire or grooming which creates danger to health or safety or disrupts the educational process;
- *sexual, racial or religious harassment or violence;
- *use, consumption, possession or selling dangerous or nuisance substances on school property, at school-sponsored activities or away from school that lead to dangerous or harmful activities on school grounds. Examples of such substances or articles include but are not limited to: alcohol, drugs, inhalants, tobacco; possession of a weapon or firearm on school grounds or at school activities. Examples of weapons include, but are not limited to: firecrackers, pea shooters, stink bombs, smoke bombs, knives of any size, clubs, metal knuckles, throwing stars, rockets, stun guns, mace, pellet guns, etc. Examples of firearms include but are not limited to guns, (loaded or unloaded, functional or non-functional), explosives, rockets, bombs, grenades, etc. activities inappropriate in a school setting (e.g. gambling); violation of other school rules, policies, procedures; violation of any federal, state or local law.

Actions WLS may take following these violations may include, but are not limited to:

- *student conference;
- *parent contact;
- *parent conference;
- *family group counseling;
- *personal and/or financial restitution toward victims;
- *suspension from co-curricular activities;
- *detention;
- *schedule adjustments;
- *removal from class;
- *referral to community services or outside agencies;
- *assignment to alternative education program;
- *suspension from school (in-school or out-of-school);
- *expulsion/exclusion from school for a period that may be as long as 365 days or more.

Donations to WLS

World Learner School is honored to be able to accept donations from individuals, groups or corporations. If you are interested in making a donation to WLS, please do so through the office so the procedures in place can be followed. These procedures include submission for Board approval and proper depositing and recording, in accordance with IRS regulations and WLS policy.

It is law that schools accept donations with procedures in place to ensure equity in education. WLS will not be able to accept donations that give unequal advantage to a class of students. If you have any questions about this policy, please

see the Director. Thank you for your understanding.

Dual Reporting

In the case of a student whose parents are not living together, the names and addresses of both parents and guardians will be in the student's file. Unless otherwise decreed in a court order, information commonly made available to parents or guardians of any student will be provided to both parents and guardians.

Electronic Devices

The school accepts that technology is pervasive and that many students bring electronic devices to school for both entertainment and safety. Nevertheless, electronic devices can be a distraction in a learning environment and the school needs to set limits on electronic device usage.

- The World Learner School recommends that students do not bring any electronic devices to school. WLS is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- Electronic devices that are brought to school will be powered off during normal school hours (including break times) and stored out of sight.
- Electronic devices can only be used during normal school hours with the permission and under the direct supervision of the student's classroom teacher.
- Students are forbidden to use electronic devices in rest rooms.

Failure to comply with the school policies regarding use of electronic devices will result in the electronic device being confiscated for the day and parents may be called to retrieve the item. Repeated violations of the policy will result in a complete ban on the student's use of personal electronic devices on school premises.

Emergency Closings

Should an emergency situation arise in our community while school is in session, we want you to be aware of the preparations WLS has made to respond effectively and appropriately to such situations. WLS has a detailed emergency plan that has been formulated to provide direction to staff and students during such an incident.

In the event of an emergency, we ask for your cooperation in the following procedures:

1. **Please do not telephone the school.** Phone lines must be kept open and available for emergency communication.
2. **Please do not come to the school** unless requested to pick up your child.
3. ***In the event of an emergency that requires us to evacuate and relocate,*** students may be picked up at a designated reunification location by an adult who has been identified on the student's emergency form. Emergency cards must be filled out by parents/guardians at the beginning of every school year and kept updated as necessary.
When authorizing another person to pick up your child, please consider the following requirements:
 - He/she is at least 18 years of age.
 - He/she is usually available during the day.
 - He/she could walk to school or other location if necessary.
 - He/she is known to your child.
 - He/she is both aware and able to assume this responsibility.
4. **You can expect WLS** to respond in the following manner:
 - a. For weather-related incidents, please follow WCCO radio and television announcements for weather updates and school emergency announcements.
 - b. Information will be made via:
 - i. Email notification system
 - ii. Text messaging system
 - iii. Website updates
5. **Please impress upon your children** the need for them to follow the directions of any school personnel in times of an emergency.

Emergency Drills

Fire drills are conducted throughout the year at unannounced and varied times. All persons must leave the school in a quick, quiet and orderly fashion. Students will file to their designated locations and each teacher will take roll to account for each student in their classroom.

Tornado drills are conducted throughout the year at unannounced and varied times. Students will file to their designated locations in a quick and quiet fashion. Teachers will take roll to account for each student in their classroom. If a tornado warning is in effect when school is in session, students will not be dismissed until the warning has been lifted. If disaster occurs and students are not able to return to the school building, radio announcements will inform parents or guardians where their children have been taken for shelter.

Lock-down drills are conducted throughout the year at unannounced and varied times. Based on the specific nature of the lock-down drill, the students will file to designated locations in a quick and quiet fashion. These drills are meant to prepare staff and students for the potential need to react to an emergency situation.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important use of community resources to supplement the objectives taught in the curriculum. All field trips will be chaperoned by teachers, staff members and parents. A Field Trip Information Form with a Parent Permission Statement will be distributed to students before each field trip. There may be a required fee for a field trip to defray the entrance fee and transportation cost of the field trip.

If a permission slip and designated fee is not returned by the due date, the student will be unable to attend the field trip. All students are expected to be a part of a field trip; however, any student whose behavior has been routinely inappropriate will remain at school.

Parents or guardians who accompany students for field trips are required to complete a Volunteer Questionnaire and have a completed Background Check on file.

Field Trips are different than Montessori "Going Out". Please see that section below for more information.

Fundraisers

The World Learner School Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and other groups hold fundraisers each year. These funds are used to finance special projects, field trips, school programs, classroom wish lists, etc. All of the funds raised are used to support education activities or materials for student use or participation. We ask for your support and encourage parent participation. WLS PTO is a 501c3 non-profit organization.

Going Out

The concept of "going out" is very important to Montessori elementary and middle school programs. It means that we want to start to see the world at large as part of our classroom, part of our environment, and to go out into it as a routine part of a fuller, richer, broader learning experience. Staff will drive the school-owned van for "going-out" excursions. Staff is approved annually for insurance through a Department of Motor Vehicles license check and is trained annually on maintaining and driving the van. Staff completes a pre-trip inspection prior to each excursion.

Children accompanying a staff member on a going-out trip sit in a seat unless they are required to be in a booster seat according to the WLS policy. Children are required to wear a seat belt. These trips are short, generally to local businesses or points of interest relating to work the children are doing in the classroom. This feature of our program is important, and we would like all children to participate, but it is ultimately optional for parents. Since only a small number of students go on some of these trips, the teacher will have a fair way of choosing the limited number of students who go on a given trip. Since the groups are small (3-4 Teachers will be in touch about this with the families of the children participating and will notify prior to departure. Specific permission for Going Out excursions will not be sought.

Gum/Candy Chewing

Gum/candy chewing is prohibited in the lower or upper elementary classrooms at all times. Please contact the student's teacher if there is a therapeutic need for gum. Students in Middle School may be allowed to chew gum during various times in the Middle School classroom but not in any other area of the building. Candy is not allowed in Middle School except during lunch.

Harassment and Bullying

It is the goal of WLS to provide a working and learning environment that promotes equal opportunities and is free of harassment in which the dignity of all individuals is respected. Therefore, it shall be a violation of WLS policy for any student or personnel of WLS to harass a student or any employee as defined by WLS policy, or to inflict, threaten to inflict, or attempt to inflict violence on any student or school personnel.

The term harassment includes, but is not limited to, intimidating, aggressive humiliating behavior or intentional harm towards one person or group. It may be single incident or carried out repeatedly over time.

Such behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal, written or electronic; such as insulting someone or making threats
- Psychological; such as spreading rumors or shunning the individual
- Inappropriate physical behavior; such as gestures, punching or hitting the person.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for students who commit an act of harassment range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and expulsion.

World Learner School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person or group who reports an act of harassment. The consequence and remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the Director after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, in accordance with district policies and procedures.

World Learner School prohibits false accusations of bullying. Should false accusations be made, appropriate consequences will be assigned.

All members of the school—staff and students—are responsible for helping to ensure that individuals do not suffer any form of harassment and that they are encouraged and supported in any legitimate complaint. The school will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, of harassment or violence and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student or personnel who is found to have violated this policy.

A complete copy of the Harassment Prohibition Policy is available on the website.

Head Injury

In the event of a student incurring a head injury of any type, WLS staff will notify a parent with 60 minutes of the injury. Parents will then have the option of seeking additional care or permitting staff to continue to monitor and care for the student. If a parent is not available, a message will be left at all phone numbers connected to the parent(s). Staff will attend to the injuries and apply first aid. If staff determines the student needs additional medical care and no parent can be reached, emergency personnel will be called.

Head Lice

Anyone can get head lice. Head lice are very small, brownish-colored insects that live on the head. Lice are difficult to get rid of and it typically takes at least two weeks to rid a home of lice.

1. A student found to have live lice will be immediately referred to parents for treatment and may return to school following treatment.
2. A student found to have nits will be referred to parents at the end of the school day for treatment and may return to school following treatment.
3. Notification of families in impacted classes will occur through teacher notification system.
4. WLS will not conduct class-wide or school-wide “head searches” of students.

Health

The presence of a child in school signifies that he or she is able to play outdoors. Parents or other pre-designated adults will be called if a child is found to be sick while attending school. The school requests that parents provide two alternate telephone numbers to call so that an adult can be reached should a child need to be released from school. The teacher has the authority to send any child home if he/she believes a child is too sick to be in the classroom or that the child's illness may jeopardize the health of the other children in the class.

If a child has any signs of illness, such as pinkeye, skin rash, fever, sore throat, etc., please keep the child at home. The child's fever needs to be normal for 24 hours before the child may return to school. A child that has vomited at school or at home, must be kept out of school for a full 24 hours. If an accident occurs that requires emergency medical care, we will call (911) immediately. There is always a staff person on duty that is trained and certified in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

Many children experience a fair number of minor accidents and variations in how well they feel from day to day. The teachers do their best to minimize accidents and handle sickness sympathetically and reasonably. When accidents and illness that are clearly very minor occur, teachers help to process the learning that comes from them. If it is clear that the situation warrants it, (911) will be called. In the case of a (911) call or head trauma, parents will always be contacted immediately.

In most accident/illness situations that do not require a 911 call, a call to the parents is routine. The purpose of the call may be to let the parents know that their child is not well enough to be in school, and to come and pick up their child. If, in the teacher's judgment, the child is well enough to stay in school, the teacher, assistant, or office staff will call just to let the parents know what has happened. The parent has the option of taking the child home in such situations.

If a parent cannot be reached by phone, the teacher, assistant, and office staff will leave a message, monitor the situation, and update a course of action depending on conditions, as they continue to call to try to speak directly with a parent about the situation. It is vitally important that parents provide the WLS office with telephone numbers, which ensure that the parents can always be reached in case of a real emergency as well as in a minor accident/illness situation.

Holidays

World Learner school does not celebrate holidays from a religious standpoint. Our staff employs simple, fun traditional events for students to interact socially with their classmates. Curriculum centered on holidays may provide students the opportunity to explore holidays from various historical and worldly religious vantage points. No specific religion will be highlighted or promoted through such explorations. We strongly discourage costumes that include weaponry, blood or other associations of violence unless under the direct supervision of a teacher.

Homework

Homework is intended to support your child and his or her development. This can sometimes mean familiar homework like regular practice on memory work, such as basic math tables. It also means expanding the creative and integrative work that the children do from the classroom to the wider world. In this sense, "homework" is any activity that augments and amplifies the curiosity and exploration of the child. Homework in the broader sense includes many activities the children may participate in with their families and peers, such as scouting, campfires, shell/rock collection, working in community shelters, reading aloud, sports, etc.

The purpose of homework at World Learner School is to support the child in development and lead to establishment of healthy work habits outside the formal work environment and fostering each child's innate desire to learn, to know and to be a participant in their family and community. Homework should be an activity for each individual outlined in collaboration with parents and teachers.

In general, homework expectations at WLS are as follows:

LE – 1 x per week on same day of week to include review of math facts and reading

UE – 1 x per week on same day of week (additional assignment of uncompleted work if needed) to include test preparation

MS – as needed to complete daily work as well as projects, typically 2-3 times per week

Immunizations

In accordance with the School Immunization Law, students are required to provide an immunization record showing they have received the proper immunizations against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, varicella and polio. Most children have already had these shots and only need a DPT and Polio booster when they are five years of age. TD (tetanus-diphtheria) boosters are recommended every 10 years for everyone. Minnesota's school immunization law also requires that seventh and twelfth graders in Minnesota must provide written proof that they have had a second dose of MMR vaccine, in addition to the MMR vaccination that is given in early childhood.

Records kept by parents are acceptable, provided they include the specific date of each immunization. Physician records will not be needed, but parents need to attend to this requirement by September. Immunization requirements can be waived for medical reasons or for those who are conscientiously opposed to immunizations. Please obtain the necessary form for notarization from the school office.

If your child has a medical reason for not being immunized or if you conscientiously object to any or all immunizations, you are required to have a signed and notarized statement on file at school. The school may permit a thirty-day grace period for students transferring into school. All others are expected to be in compliance on the first day of school.

Indoor Shoes

Every student at WLS will need a clean pair of shoes that can solely be used inside the Montessori environment. As our students often work on the floor, our teachers and staff take extra care to provide an environment that is clean, beautiful and well prepared. The student's responsibility in that is to wear footwear that does not track in dirt or other residue to the classroom. These indoor shoes should be kept at WLS in lockers and changed into upon arrival each day.

Instructional Materials

All Montessori materials, novels and library books, textbooks, computers and other resource materials are supplied by World Learner School. Teachers will discuss with their students the appropriate use and care for these materials. If through carelessness, a student damages an instructional material or classroom furniture; a replacement cost will be assessed.

Instrumental Music Program

Students in Grades 4-8 are invited to participate in the Instrumental Music Program. The band instructor will provide information regarding the instrumental music program.

Late Start

In the 2019-2020 school year there will be four days in which school starts two hours late. WLS follows the lead of ISD 112 in providing this time to its teachers for professional development. Please check the WLS Calendar for this year's Late Start dates. School will start at 11:25 a.m. on these dates and will end at 3:55 p.m.

Library

The library offers a variety of materials for checkout by students. The librarian will designate fines for replacement costs for lost or damaged books. The fines and replacement costs are expected to be paid in a timely fashion. Volunteers for the Library are sought and appreciated. Please see Karen Squires or Deana Siekmann for more information regarding opportunities.

Lockers/Cubbies

Students in the Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary and Middle School have lockers. Each student will be assigned a locker and the locker will be located in the vicinity of the classroom. No student is to switch or share a locker with another student. Each student will be held responsible for the condition of the locker assigned to him/her and for the contents of that locker.

The State-Mandated Locker Policy

"School lockers are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched only when school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practical after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school authorities must provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials."

Lost and Found

The school maintains a lost and found. Please label your child's belongings carefully and try to locate the item immediately upon discovering it is lost. Use caution in allowing articles of sentimental or monetary value to be brought to school. Following Fall and Spring Parent Teacher Conferences and at the end of the school year, items in lost and found will be donated or disposed of.

Lunch

Table manners and courtesy are expected of all students. Students eat in classrooms and may enjoy lunch with schoolmates in other classrooms.

Cold lunches may be brought from home on a daily basis. We encourage students who bring their lunch to include a variety of nutritious foods and drinks. Please limit the use of candy as a dessert. Soda pop and fast food lunches are not allowed during students' lunch periods.

Lunches must be packed in containers that prevent spillage. The use of recyclable containers allows students to participate in learning how to limit waste in our environment. The World Learner School does not have the ability to heat children's lunches in the classroom. Any hot food bought for lunch should be kept warm in a Thermos, etc.

All students have the option of purchasing a hot lunch each day. Hot lunch is catered by Lancer Dining Services. The cost of a student lunch is \$3.70 and must be pre-ordered the month before desired. Hot lunch menus will be distributed with the school Friday newsletter once per month. Parents and guardians may apply for Free and Reduced Lunch benefits by completing the Free and Reduced Lunch Application form and returning the form to the school office.

Medication

If your child needs to take medication during the school day, a doctor's written order must be obtained for prescription and over-the-counter medications (including ibuprofen or cough drops). In addition, the parent must complete a form entitled "Permission to Administer Medication" and give the medication to the office for placement in a locked cabinet until administration.

Prescription medications must come to school in the prescription bottle with the doctor's name on it. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original packaging with the name of the medication on the packaging.

Please call the school if medication is being sent with your child so we may receive it appropriately.

Milk

If children want milk, they may purchase a "milk ticket" for \$3.00. The milk ticket is punch card worth 20 cartons of milk. Each time a student has milk the ticket is punched. When a new milk ticket needs to be purchased, the parents will be notified.

Multi-Cultural Assurances

No person at World Learner School, shall on the grounds of race, color, age, sex, national origin or physical handicap, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored by World Learner School.

Observations

You are encouraged to come and observe your child's class and other classes as well. As movement to the next level approaches (i.e. from lower elementary to upper elementary, and from upper elementary to middle school), it is very important for you to observe the level that your child will be moving to.

Observations are scheduled on Tuesday mornings. Observations begin about six weeks into the school year, when classrooms are settled, and when visits won't disturb the children. The first-time observation consists of a brief orientation/introduction with a staff member, including review of the observation guidelines, followed by 15-minute observations in each of the three levels: lower elementary, upper elementary, and middle school. The observation concludes with a Q and A with the Director or other designee, making the total time of the observation an hour and a half.

Subsequent observations may be done without the orientation, focused on just one level, and without the Q and A.

Visiting observers will be escorted to each classroom by the Office Manager and shown where to sit. It is important that the observers remain seated and observe the activities of the classroom, both out of respect for the children and to help them gain a more accurate picture of a Montessori environment.

If you would like to schedule a specific opportunity to observe in your child's individual classroom, please contact the Office to identify a time of mutual convenience with the classroom.

Outdoors

Students must be prepared to go outside every day, that is, they should be in good health and be dressed appropriately. Classes generally go outside at least once a day, except in dangerous weather or if the temperature is below -10 degrees F. Students may be allowed to stay in for special health reasons (such as hayfever on a high-pollen day, confirmed in writing by a physician). However, if a child is too ill to go outside, they are also too ill to be in school, and should stay home or be taken home.

When outside, students are to go inside only with the permission of the adult on duty. The school will supply playground equipment. Snow or ice is not to be thrown in any form. Organized games are encouraged and should be played in an agreed-upon location of the playground. If children do not conduct themselves according to the rules or in a respectful way, the staff may prohibit a child from continuing, or suspend the game.

Parent Expectations

Set the Stage for Learning: The most important thing parents can do is to provide a healthy home in which learning is valued. A child's school experience is set for success when the child lives in a stable, safe home, is fed healthy food, and gets good, ample sleep.

Communication: We need parents to read our newsletters and other communication we send out, and we pledge to listen to parents' questions and concerns.

Permission: We are very busy with lots of activities, some of which unavoidably come up on short notice. We need parents to confirm their permission for their child to participate (they can also deny permission, of course!) in a timely manner.

Attend Parent Connection Sessions: Montessori is a unique, profound methodology that can be counterintuitive. We offer Montessori for Parents nights to inform parents about Montessori philosophy, materials, and techniques, and to show how they are inextricably linked and revealing of one another.

Volunteer: Volunteering in a Montessori school may be different from schools practicing other methodologies. For example, typically we think that if a child is not capable of a developmentally appropriate practical life or academic task, the child needs a lesson in a related material from the teacher. We believe that "help" from a non-teacher often results in the child's becoming dependent on the help, rather than self-sufficient, which is where the teacher's lesson and the child's subsequent work would lead. So typically our volunteer tasks are not helping students so much as helping the teacher prepare for giving lessons in an optimal environment. The exact nature of the volunteer tasks varies from teacher to teacher.

Attend Conferences: It is vitally important that parents attend the two main conferences each year, one in the fall and one in the spring. Additional conferences are scheduled as needed.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is a strong component of The World Learner School. Parents serve in two main capacities: to support their child's own class (and this work is organized by the teacher), and to support the school school-wide (and this work is organized primarily by board members). Your child's teacher will be in touch with you about the former. Regarding the latter, parents serve on committees that research, develop, and implement plans to improve many aspects of our program. Some areas include hospitality, building and grounds, technology, grant writing, and fundraising.

Parent Library

World Learner School does own an extensive collection of materials for Parents to review. Materials are related to Montessori education as well as parenting and education of students experiencing challenges. These materials are available for check-out from the Office.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are one of our most important channels of communication between school and home. We're happy that so many parents attend conferences each year. You'll get the most out of your conference if you 1) arrive on time; 2) make a list before you come of items you want to discuss or questions you'd like answered; 3) ask for clarification of any information the teacher gives that you don't understand; 4) follow-up with the teacher in the weeks to come. Watch for notices from your child's teacher for information about conferences.

Parent Teacher Organization

All parents are invited to become active in the WLS Parent Teacher Organization. The PTO is an organization for all parents. It supports the school in many ways including fundraisers, staff recognition, volunteering and programs which enhance the education of our students.

Monthly meetings are held at the school according to the schedule set annually. The WLS PTO website is www.wlspto.org.

Parking Lot Safety

The WLS parking lot is a one-way driving route. When you enter, please stay to the right, on the north side of the lot and follow the One-Way signage.

During drop-off and pick-up, **buses have the right of way** and all other vehicles must pause and allow buses to leave the student zone.

When dropping or picking up students, it is best practice to park in a spot while waiting. Under no circumstances should you park your car in front of the school during drop-off or pick-up. This will allow buses to move freely through the parking lot and ensure the safety of all individuals.

There are times when the WLS lot is very full and parking will be allowed near the school. Please respect the parking restrictions (usually cone placement to prohibit parking). Also be aware that you may be required to park at other locations and walk to the school. NO parking will be allowed to the north of WLS along Village Road, police will enforce this city ordinance.

If you exit the school and there are several buses parked and waiting for students, it is imperative that you and your child do not walk between buses. Bus drivers can't see individuals in those areas and you are also not visible to vehicles on the parking lot side.

Placement in Classes

The placement of at WLS is an administrative decision with input from teachers. The information below outlines three procedures regarding A) placement in one of the three lower elementary classes (first year) or one of the three upper elementary classes (fourth year) at a time when there are several openings; B) the reconsideration or appeal of placement decisions; and C) placing of siblings together in one class.

We gather all the information we can get on children we are placing in our school. For first year students, most of that information comes from the parents. If the child attended an early learning program or Kindergarten, we can also get some pertinent information there. For fourth year students, we generally have a great deal of information from their lower elementary experience.

The principles of placement are the same at both levels: The teachers gather as a team with all of the information they can get about the students and do the placement with these principles in mind:

1. Balance the genders and ages in each class as well as possible;

2. Try to split children who seem to have a negative or overly-dependent relationship;
3. Try to put children together who would benefit from a closer relationship;
4. Distribute special- and high-needs children as evenly as possible among the three classes;
5. Analyze remaining student population and work to balance student placement for entire community of learners.

We realize that parents may have a preference of which of the three teachers they want their child to have. The five principles come first, therefore preference is not factored into placement. We truly hope that parents can understand, especially with this summary of our process, that to factor in preference would make this principle-based process impossible, resulting in classes that are out of balance, contain relationships that are detrimental to the children involved, and which contain an unwieldy presence of special and high needs children. It is not our practice to place siblings together in classrooms.

If, after our announcement of placement decisions for the coming year (typically made with the summer letter in August), we are informed of factors that pertain to the placement but which we were unaware of in the process of making the placement, we will reconsider the placement decision. For the reasons stated above, parent preference is not a factor we would base reconsideration on.

If the factor pertains to a genuine incompatibility of the child (a condition, or pronounced tendency in the child's psychology or physical well-being) with the environment he/she has been placed in, we will reconsider the placement. We reserve the right to make the final decision as a teaching staff.

Play Areas

The World Learner School has several different play areas to choose from. We often visit various local indoor facilities such as the Chaska Community Center. We have a playground behind the school and several areas accessible by a short walk (listed in detail below). Unless the weather is dangerously cold, we prefer to go outside for recess, physical education, and also for certain lessons. Because of this, we ask that your child be properly attired to go outside anytime during the school year. This is especially important during the winter months when boots, mittens, hat and a warm jacket are necessary.

The Back Yard: The boundary of the school grounds is the walking/bike path, which circles around behind the school. The playground there has some very nice equipment. There is plenty of space for games. There are also some nice wooded areas where the children can build forts or play games. A basic rule of the playground is that children need to be where the teacher can see them at all times. If a child starts to go where a teacher cannot see them clearly, the teacher will call them over and remind them of the rule. Elementary children are not allowed to step on the path behind the school unless they are on their way somewhere with a teacher, making the path the absolute outer boundary of the play area (but in places the boundary of the acceptable play area is closer to the school than the path because there is no clear line of sight to there from the area where the teacher generally observes from). The line of sight rule pertains to middle school students as well. However, the middle school students are allowed access to certain nearby areas which are on the other side the path, but only when elementary children are not present on the playground.

The Field: This is the area on the north side of Hundertmark Road. It is accessible through the underpass, so generally it is not necessary to cross any street in order to get there. Classes do sometimes take the over-the-road route because of slippery conditions on the grassy slope, and when they do, they cross Hundertmark at the pedestrian crosswalk stripes. It is a five-minute walk from the school. There is a baseball diamond and backstop there. The huge open area is used for dodgeball, capture the flag, soccer and many other games. The children are allowed to go into the woods and along the creek as long as a teacher can see them.

The Creek: The children are allowed to go near the creek, to wade in the creek if they have appropriate footwear, and to walk on the ice in the winter as long as they are supervised closely by a teacher. The creek is about one-foot-deep at its deepest point. We believe that children's natural attraction to the creek should be encouraged in a safe, educational and fun way.

Lake Grace: The Lake Grace Park is about a ten-minute walk from the school. It has a large, open play area, horseshoe game setup, basketball hoop with asphalt slab and a beach. The children can make structures in the sand and are allowed to wade in the shallow water with bare feet in warm weather or with wader boots in colder weather. They are

not allowed to play in such a way as to get their clothes wet.

We do not consider going to any of these areas as field trips. They are more like extensions of our playground. Teachers accompanying students to these areas carry first-aid kits and Motorola radios that keep them in communication with someone back at the school at all times.

Pledge of Allegiance

Per Minnesota law, students at World Learner School shall recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America one or more times each week. The recitation will take place in individual classrooms. Any student or teacher may decline to participate, and that decision will be respected.

Policies

All policies of the Board of Directors are available upon request from The Office. The WLS Board of Directors may revise, delete or add policies at any time. Parents will be informed of these changes.

Presence of Non-Enrolled Children of WLS in the School

Children of staff are welcome in our school provided they don't pose an on-going distraction to their parent, other staff, and children who are enrolled in the school. If a child of a staff member poses an on-going distraction to the educational mission of the school, the child will not be allowed to continue to be present in the school.

Other school-age children may visit classrooms as approved by the Director.

School Age Child Care - "Kids Club"

The World Learner School offers a before and after school care program for elementary students. Hours for the program are from 7:30 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. and 3:55 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. sharp. The cost is available from the office. General sign-up is done at the beginning of each school year. Drop in care is available on a space-available basis. Please notify the school as far in advance as possible, and note that drop-in may not be permitted, depending on the number of children in the program that day.

Parents and guardians are required to come into school to sign their children in and out of the Program in order to guarantee the safety of children and to assist us with accurate billing of fees. Parents or guardians are asked to list other people who will be allowed to pick up their children from the Program.

The school closes at 5:30 p.m. We ask that parents respect the end of the workday for our staff, and arrive in time to pick up their child(ren), gather belongings and leave the building by 5:30 p.m.

Should the school need to be kept open after 5:30 p.m., the late family will be charged a late fee of \$10 for every 15 minutes or portion thereof, based on the time the family departs the building. The late fee is due on the next business day following the late departure.

School Bulletins, Information and Flyers

Twice monthly on Friday, the World Learner School Office News will be sent via email. Additionally, each classroom teacher will distribute twice monthly newsletters on the opposite Friday's from the Office News. It is important that parents read the News in order to be informed about school events.

School Loan Materials

Textbooks, workbooks, library or other materials are the responsibility of the student. It is our policy to charge students up to the replacement cost of any materials or books which are lost or damaged as a result of neglect or carelessness.

School Pictures

The World Learner School contracts annually to have pictures taken of each child early in the school year and for a group picture in the spring. Information regarding prices, times, and dates is distributed to parents. Middle School students receive a student ID through this program. Return envelopes with payment for pictures must be received before the pictures are taken.

School Records

A permanent record of each student is kept on file in the school office. The records include the following information: progress reports, results of standardized tests and attendance records. A separate health record with immunizations and screening reports is kept on file for each student. There is also a file containing any records related to special education services. A conference to review your child(ren)'s file may be arranged by contacting the Director.

Snacks

Parents are asked to send a small nutritious snack with their child. Some classes have adopted a method of family-style snacks and will present specific information to parents. Please remember that snacks should be high in nutrition and low in sugar. We recommend fruit, crackers & cheese, yogurt, nuts, cottage cheese, etc. The school does not provide snacks.

Special Education

World Learner School provides all special education services for students that qualify for services by meeting state eligibility criteria. If you have concerns about your child's developmental or academic progress, please consult your child's teacher.

Technology Use

Students in World Learner School utilize technology to search for information or create products to meet their educational needs and to communicate with other individuals in the pursuit of learning. Students with exceptional needs are assured equitable access to all technology of World Learner School.

Community members in World Learner School may also be granted access needed to support the mission of World Learner School.

The use of World Learner School technology is in support of learning and consistent with the educational objectives of World Learner School. Occasional and incidental personal use is allowed. Any use of technology that adversely affects learning, teaching, or the operation of the school is prohibited and will be dealt with in accordance with applicable laws, or employee or student policies. Any use that jeopardizes district resources is also prohibited.

World Learner School seeks to provide safe internet access for students and staff, free from visual depictions that are obscene, contain child pornography, or are deemed harmful to minors. To reach this goal, the district has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the material accessed or posted through the system. Students and staff are expected to follow the rules set forth in World Learner School's policies, procedures, and the law in the use of the school's internet services.

Toys

Children may not bring toys to the school or into the classroom. Toys in school tend to cause a distraction from children's work during the day. Books or other educational material that might be of interest to all children are welcome. Please be sure that your child's name is clearly marked on all books.

Truancy

Truancy is defined as absence from school with no legitimate purpose. Truancy laws apply to students who attend grades one through Middle School at World Learner School. Two degrees of truancy are recognized by Minnesota statute: "continuing truant" and "habitual truant":

Continuing Truant

According to MN Statute 260A.02 Sub.3., a "Continuing truant" means a child who is subject to the compulsory instruction requirements of MN Statute 120A.22 and is absent from instruction in a school without valid excuse within a single school year for:

- Three days if the child is in elementary school
- Three or more class periods in three days if the child is in middle school

Habitual Truant

According to Minnesota Statute 260.015 Sub I9., a "habitual truant" is a child under the age of 16 years who is absent from school "without a lawful excuse for seven days if the child is in elementary school or for one or more class periods of seven school days if the child is in middle school..."

Procedures for Truancy

The third unexcused absence will result in the implementation of MN Statute 260A.03:

"Notice to parent or guardian when child is a continuing truant." The Director will inform the parent that the child is truant. The parent or guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the child's absence. The parent or guardian is obligated to require the attendance of the child at school. Parents who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution. This notification serves as the notification required by Minnesota Statute 260A.03. The parent or guardian has the right to meet with the school administration to discuss a solution to the child's truancy. If the child continues to be truant, the parent and child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings.

The fourth unexcused absence will result in a meeting with the Director and may include representatives from the Police Department, Court Services, and/or Social Services. At this meeting it may be determined that a truancy petition will be filed with the court administrator and a Child Protection Report may be filed with the Department of Human Services.

If truanancies continue after meeting, the Director may initiate further action. After seven truanancies, the child will be designated a habitual truant and a truancy petition will be filed with the court administrator and a Child Protection Report will be made to the Department of Human Services.

Vision/Hearing Screenings

The purpose of a vision/hearing screening is to provide early detection of any potential vision/hearing problems that may impact learning. If a student does not pass the screening procedure according to the Minnesota Department of Health standards, the screening will be repeated. If the student does not pass the second screening, a physician referral notice will be sent to the parent. Parents may opt out of the screening. Screenings are typically held in October.

Visitors

Parents or guardians are welcome to visit World Learner School at any time. Classroom observations are limited to between October and April of each school year. Please call the school office to make arrangements prior to your visitation.

In order to keep the school environment secure, parents and guardians must sign in at the school office and obtain a visitor or volunteer badge before going to your child's classroom.

Other visitors to classrooms, including alumni, are requested to contact specific teachers to determine a mutually agreeable opportunity for visit. This will minimize disruptions to the learning environment.

Website

The World Learner School maintains a website on the Internet and uses it to share school news and updates as well as parent, school board, and staff information. We encourage parents to visit the website often to stay up-to-date on school information. The URL is <http://www.wlschaska.org>

Withdrawals

The following applies to students who transfer from World Learner School:

- The school office should be notified in advance if parents are planning to move or planning to transfer their child to a different school.
- A Request for Record Transfer must be completed at the new school by the parent or guardian to allow the transfer of student records.
- Official school records are not given to parents or guardians but are forwarded directly to the receiving school.

XYZ

There is so much more to know about our school! If you have any questions, we encourage you to email or call.

Appendix

Resources

Some of these materials are available to check out from the World Learner School Resource Library:

Books About the Montessori Method

- Montessori for Parents by Dorothy Canfield Fisher
- The Montessori Approach to Special Education by Lena Gitter
- Teaching Montessori in the Home: Preschool Years by Elizabeth G. Hainstock
- Teaching Montessori in the Home: School Years by Elizabeth G. Hainstock
- Maria Montessori: A Biography by Rita Kramer
- Montessori: A Modern Approach by Paula Polk Lillard
- Montessori Today by Paula Polk Lillard
- Montessori and Your Child by Terry Malloy
- Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work by E.M. Standing
- A Parent's Guide to the Montessori Classroom by Aline D. Wolf

Books by Maria Montessori

- The Absorbent Mind
- To Educate the Human Potential
- The Formation of Man
- From Childhood to Adolescence
- The Montessori Method
- Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook
- The Secret of Childhood

Videos

- What is Montessori Preschool?
- What is Montessori Elementary?
- At Home with Montessori
- Montessori and the Urban Child

This information will help parents/guardians make informed decisions that benefit their children, schools, and communities.

Why statewide testing?

Minnesota values its educational system and the professionalism of its educators. Minnesota educators created the academic standards which are rigorous and prepare our students for career and college.

The statewide assessments are how we as a state measure that curriculum and daily instruction in our schools are being aligned to the academics standards, ensuring all students are being provided an equitable education. Statewide assessment results are just one tool to monitor that we are providing our students with the education that will ensure a strong workforce and knowledgeable citizens.

Why does participation matter?

A statewide assessment is just one measure of your student’s achievement, but your student’s participation is important to understand how effectively the education at your student’s school is aligned to the academic standards.

- In Minnesota’s implementation of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, a student not participating in the statewide assessments will not receive an individual score and for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, including opportunities for support and recognition, will not be considered “proficient.”
- Students who receive a college-ready score on the high school MCA are not required to take a remedial, noncredit course at a Minnesota State college or university in the corresponding subject area, potentially saving the student time and money.
- Educators and policy makers use information from assessments to make decisions about resources and support provided.
- Parents and the general public use assessment information to compare schools and make decisions about where to purchase a home or to enroll their children.
- School performance results that are publicly released and used by families and communities, are negatively impacted if students do not participate in assessments.
- English learners not taking ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs will not receive a score to meet English learner program exiting criteria.

Academic Standards and Assessments

What are academic standards?

The [Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards](#) are the statewide expectations for student academic achievement. They identify the knowledge and skills that all students must achieve in a content area and are organized by grade level. School districts determine how students will meet the standards by developing courses and curriculum aligned to the academic standards.

What is the relationship between academic statewide assessments and the academic standards?

The statewide assessments in mathematics, reading, and science are used to measure whether students, and their school and district, are meeting the academic standards. Statewide assessments are one measure of how well students are doing on the content that is part of their daily instruction. It is also a measure of how well schools and districts are doing in aligning their curriculum and teaching the standards.

<h4 style="text-align: center;">Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the Minnesota Academic Standards; given annually in grades 3–8 and high school in reading and mathematics; given annually in grades 5, 8, and high school for science. • Majority of students take the MCA. • MTAS is an option for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. 	<h4 style="text-align: center;">ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards. • Given annually to English learners in grades K–12 in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. • Majority of English learners take ACCESS for ELLs. • Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an option for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.
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Why are these assessments effective?

Minnesota believes that in order to effectively measure what students are learning, testing needs to be more than answering multiple choice questions.

- To answer questions, students may need to type in answers, drag and drop images and words, or manipulate a graph or information.
 - The Reading and Mathematics MCA are adaptive, which means the answers a student provides determine the next questions the student will answer.
 - The Science MCA incorporates simulations, which require students to perform experiments in order to answer questions.
- All of these provide students the opportunity to apply critical thinking needed for success in college and careers and show what they know and can do.

Are there limits on local testing?

As stated in Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.301, for students in grades 1–6, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 10 hours per school year. For students in grades 7–12, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 11 hours per school year. These limits do not include statewide testing.

In an effort to encourage transparency, the statute also requires a district or charter school, before the first day of each school year, to publish on its website a comprehensive calendar of standardized tests to be administered in the district or charter school during that school year. The calendar must provide the rationale for administering each assessment and indicate whether the assessment is a local option or required by state or federal law.

What if I choose not to have my student participate?

Parents/guardians have a right to not have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Minnesota Statutes require the department to provide information about statewide assessments to parents/guardians and include a form to complete if they refuse to have their student participate. This form follows on the next page and includes an area to note the reason for the refusal to participate. Your student's district may require additional information.

A school or district may have additional consequences beyond those mentioned in this document for a student not participating in the state-required standardized assessments. There may also be consequences for not participating in assessments selected and administered at the local level. Please contact your school for more information regarding local decisions.

When do students take the assessments?

Each school sets their testing schedule within the state testing window. Contact your student's school for information on specific testing days.

- The MCA and MTAS testing window begins in March and ends in May.
- The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs testing window begins at the end of January and ends in March.

When do I receive my student's results?

Each summer, individual student reports are sent to school districts and are provided to families no later than fall conferences. The reports can be used to see your child's progress and help guide future instruction.

How much time is spent on testing?

Statewide assessments are taken one time each year; the majority of students test online. On average, the amount of time spent taking statewide assessments is **less than 1 percent of instructional time** in a school year. The assessments are not timed and students can continue working as long as they need.

Why does it seem like my student is taking more tests?

The statewide required tests are limited to those outlined in this document. Many districts make local decisions to administer additional tests that the state does not require. Contact your district for more information.

Where do I get more information?

Students and families can find out more on our [Statewide Testing page](#) (education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).



Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.31, subdivision 4a, requires the commissioner to create and publish a form for parents and guardians to complete if they refuse to have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Your student's district may require additional information. School districts must post this three-page form on the district website and include it in district student handbooks.

Parent/Guardian Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

To opt out of statewide assessments, the parent/guardian must complete this form and return it to the student's school.

To best support school district planning, please submit this form to the student's school no later than January 15 of the academic school year. For students who enroll after a statewide testing window begins, please submit the form within two weeks of enrollment. A new refusal form is required **each year** parents/guardians wish to opt the student out of statewide assessments.

Date _____ (This form is **only** applicable for the 20__ to 20__ school year.)

Student's Legal First Name _____ Student's Legal Middle Initial _____

Student's Legal Last Name _____ Student's Date of Birth _____

Student's District/School _____ Grade _____

Please initial to indicate you have received and reviewed information about statewide testing.

I received information on statewide assessments and choose to opt my student out. MDE provides the *Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing* on the [MDE website](http://education.mn.gov) (education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).

Reason for refusal:

Please indicate the statewide assessment(s) you are opting the student out of this school year:

MCA/MTAS Reading MCA/MTAS Science
 MCA/MTAS Math ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

I understand that by signing this form, my school and I may lose valuable information about how well my student is progressing academically. As a result, my student will not receive an individual score. Refusing to participate in statewide assessments may impact the school, district, and state's efforts to equitably distribute resources and support student learning; for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, my student will not be considered "proficient."

If my student is in high school, I understand that by signing this form my student will not have an MCA score that could potentially save time and money by not having to take remedial, non-cr edit courses at a Minnesota State college or university.

Parent/Guardian Name (print) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

To be completed by school or district staff only. Student ID or MARSS Number _____

World Learner School



School Behavior and Work Contract
2019-2020

Student Name _____

This contract is an agreement between the children, teachers, Director, and each child's parents or guardians, to support respectful, safe behavior in the classroom and the development of exceptional work ethics.

Our Freedoms

In our Montessori classrooms. We have the freedom to move, communicate, and choose.

Our Responsibilities

With each freedom comes responsibility

- **Moving** responsibly means we move with purpose, carefully and quietly so that others can continue their work.
- **Communicating** responsibly means our words are respectful, they do not disturb others' work, and they are words about our work.
- **Choosing** responsibly means we choose challenging, meaningful work. We choose appropriate materials and supplies to respectfully do that work. We record our work choices in our work journals and conference with our teachers about those choices. We also choose work to master required skills as defined by the Minnesota State Standards. We choose to use our time wisely.

Developing Freedom Balanced with Responsibility

When Freedoms are not carried out responsibly:

1. We agree to accept polite reminders from others. We accept the reminder politely and make a better behavior or work choice.
2. We agree to accept help from an adult if we cannot make a strong choice by ourselves.
3. We understand that an adult may set a limit on our freedom when it is not used responsibly. We agree to work and act respectfully within a set limit until we are able to demonstrate the necessary responsibility to work or behave without the limit.
4. We understand that if we are not accepting our responsibilities or limits, our parents or guardians will be contacted.

Our Precious Community

WLS is an extremely unique school community founded and absolutely dependent upon the principles of respect and decency towards all of our members, and the development of exceptional work ethics. We will not tolerate teasing or disrespectful and unsafe behavior. Aggressive and/or violent play is unacceptable. At WLS, we believe every child and adult is both deserving of being shown the highest level of respect as well as capable of showing that same level of respect for others. We seek and expect the involvement of all parents in supporting the growth of a safe, respectful and inclusive community in which learning can happen at the deepest level and exceptional work can be enjoyed to its fullest. Please discuss this contract with your child and return it to school after you have signed in the spaces on the back. Thank you!

Child Signature _____ date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ date _____

Teacher Signature _____ date _____

Director Signature _____ date _____