



Parent Handbook

2019-2020

The Near North Montessori School (“NNM” or the “School”) Parent Handbook (the “Handbook”) is published and distributed to members of the NNM community for the purpose of providing information on aspects of student and campus life so that students may gain as much as possible from their experience at the School.

Students, parents, faculty, administration, and staff should all read and be familiar with the contents of the Handbook, so that each member of the community knows and understands our community expectation.

While policies in this Handbook will generally apply, the School may take actions that it determines to be in the best interests of the School, its faculty and its students. This Handbook does not limit the authority of the School to alter, interpret and implement its rules, policies and procedures, before, during and after the school year. This Handbook is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to create, nor does it create, a contract or part of a contract in any way, including, but not limited to, between NNM and any parent, guardian or student affiliated with or attending the School. The terms and conditions of the Enrollment Contract determine the relationship with the School. The School may, in its sole discretion, add, revise and/or delete School policies before, during and after the school year.

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NNM PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Form acknowledges that I/we understand that as Near North Montessori School parents, I am/we are asked to support the School and its mission and to acquaint my/ourselves with and abide by the School's policies and procedures.

I/We understand that this Handbook is for informational purposes only, and is only meant to be used by those affiliated with the School community. It is not intended to create, nor does it create, a contract or part of a contract in any way, including, but not limited to, between the School and any parent, guardian, or student affiliated with or attending the School. I/We understand that the terms and conditions of the Enrollment Contract signed by me/us determine my/our relationship with the School. I/We further understand that the School may, in its sole discretion, add, revise, and/or delete School policies before, during, and after the school year and such updates need not be in writing or incorporated into this Handbook.

My/Our signatures below indicate that I/we have received the 2019-2010 Parent Handbook, accessible through the Parent Portal, and will familiarize my/ourselves with the contents and agree to abide by the School's policies and procedures, as outlined in the Handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
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Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
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Print Full Name of Student(s)

Please sign and submit this Acknowledgement by September 20, 2019.

WELCOME FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Parents,

Near North Montessori School is a vibrant learning community of students, parents and staff. NNM is a community where we model the most civil and respectful behavior and understand what it means to be a contributing member of a community. With that in mind, we know that the more you understand the program and School operations, the more comfortable you will feel at the School. Our community is built on a foundation of respect and understanding.

In speech as well as action, it is the responsibility of everyone within the community to keep the good of the whole community top of mind and not the individual, so that we can all grow, learn and thrive together.

It is in this spirit that we provide you with the Parent Handbook so that you may first seek to understand our School policies and procedures and be familiar with NNM's core values and the corresponding expectations that we place on all of our community members – students, parents, guardians, caregivers and staff. I respectfully request you to review this Handbook and hope that you find it to be a valuable resource and your first step to discovering all that helps to create and sustain our very special learning community.

Warm regards,

Audrey Perrott
Head of School

INTRODUCTION

Mission

Near North Montessori educates students to reach their inherent potential. A partnership between home, school and the community fosters intellectual growth, independence, responsibility, a respect for differences and a sense of self-worth.

Vision

In keeping with Dr. Montessori's goal of making the world a better place for all humanity through education, it is incumbent upon us to prepare our students to be tomorrow's ethical leaders. Graduates of NNM are taught to be skilled communicators, innovative and creative thinkers, collaborative problem solvers and to take responsibility for their actions. Our students are taught to consider the interests of others when making decisions and consider the impact of their decisions on the larger community. Our community of parents, faculty and staff models ethical stewardship and promotes an empathetic and compassionate outlook. NNM promotes a culture of high academic standards, strong moral and ethical values and a passion for learning and self-fulfillment.

Philosophy

Dr. Maria Montessori created her educational philosophy based on the study of human development from birth to maturity. The Montessori method is a unique blend of philosophy, psychology, educational theory and prepared environment that develops many aspects of a student's potential. In addressing the needs of the whole student, Montessori education presents challenging academic work for the head and the hand, as well as a preparation for life as a citizen in a dynamic, complex world.

NNM is committed to furthering the rights of all students. The faculty creates specific, prepared environments in which a student's personality and potential may unfold. Students are given opportunities to make decisions in order to help develop their judgment and will. The ability to make their own choices often results in a balance of freedom and responsibility for each student.

An integral part of the Montessori philosophy is that classes are structured in three-year age groupings. As a result, students experience an academic and social environment that is diversified and stimulating. Multi-age groupings allow more opportunities for social cooperation and academic exchanges.

Since a student's first environment is the home and the second is the school, collaboration between home and school is essential for a student's success.

Near North Montessori believes in, and bases its practices on, the following ideas:

- Education nurtures the intellectual, physical, emotional, moral and spiritual needs of students—so that every member of the human race can make a positive contribution to the world and work toward human solidarity, social progress and peace.
- Education is not limited solely to the academic curriculum; it includes the development of essential attributes such as curiosity, empathy, creativity, self-discipline, independence, responsibility, leadership and civility.
- Students deserve the best possible conditions at every stage of their development.
- Students should be free to develop creative and flexible minds, easily adapted to the complexities of human society.
- Students can demonstrate discipline as well as joyful, tireless and focused work.

These ideas are at the core of all we do as we strive to educate students to reach their inherent potential.

History of School

Founded in 1963 as an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, NNM began with the commitment of three families who wanted their children to receive a useful and comprehensive education. As the cornerstone, they chose the developmental philosophy originated by Dr. Maria Montessori in Italy at the turn of the 19th century because this approach considers the academic, social, physical and psychological needs of the whole student.

The families pooled their resources, hired teachers and launched the School with one Montessori 3-6 program. Five years later, NNM began its first Elementary level class. The School continued to grow its population and enhance its programs to serve students through the junior high years. In 1989, after 26 years at 1010 West Chicago Avenue, NNM purchased the building at 1434 West Division Street. In 2012, the Jacqueline A. Bergen Building (named after the School's retired Head of School) was completed. The Bergen Building includes a gymnasium and areas for both free and organized play.

In 2017, NNM purchased a city parking lot between Bosworth and Greenview streets. This additional space allowed the school to act on the goals in the 2015 board approved strategic plan. In Spring of 2019 construction of a new addition to the building began and is expected to be completed in the fall of 2019. This new facility, yet to be named, will provide NNM with a new school entrance, community room, teaching kitchen, workshops for technology, woodworking, theater, art, recording, video production, and textiles. The building will be crowned with a rooftop urban farm for exploration and experimentation in growing food and sustainability.

Non-Discrimination

NNM is committed to equal opportunity and respect for diversity. The School admits qualified students of any race, color, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or religion, and extends to them all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School. The School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, order of protection status, marital status, military discharge status, or source of income in the administration of its admissions, scholarships and loans, and its educational, athletic and other programs.

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

At the heart of Montessori philosophy is the belief that every child is an individual with specific needs, identities, talents and backgrounds. It is with this philosophy in mind that the School community embraces diversity and inclusion as central tenets. As a community, NNM seeks to develop cultural competency through a deepened understanding of all members of our School community and to promote a School-wide atmosphere of windows and mirrors.

For NNM, windows are moments that allow us to understand and acknowledge the reality of others' experiences. We strive to form deep bonds with people who are different from ourselves, allowing us to explore beyond our own experiences. In a sense, we encourage our students to be cultural investigators. Mirrors are moments in which we see our own lives, experiences, identities and culture reflected back to us. By intentionally creating opportunities for people to interact with others who are similar to them, the NNM community strives to experience the validation and security that is essential to learning and building community.

On a continuum from Parent/Infant through Junior High, our goal is to embed anti-biased and anti-racist practice and pedagogy in each classroom, in an effort to nurture culturally competent human beings who can contribute to society in a meaningful and transformative way.

All members of the NNM community are expected to practice intentionality in alignment with the School's core values. The home-school partnership requires parental commitment and engagement in self-reflection, acknowledging implicit biases and blind spots, modeling active anti-racism in your family life, and initiating and responding to courageous conversations with students.

CHARACTER AND CODE OF CONDUCT

NNM promotes a safe, healthy and inviting learning environment for all. Students are encouraged to practice self-discipline and consider how their personal choices can impact themselves, as well as their community. Self-control and situational awareness are valued characteristics that contribute to a harmonious learning environment. This Code of Conduct is designed to provide students, parents and School personnel clear guidelines for expectations of behavior.

Expected student conduct is based upon NNM's fundamental, valued characteristics (see also, Portrait of a Graduate). This Code of Conduct is in effect at school, as well as, but not limited to, School-sponsored trips or off-campus and School-sanctioned activities.

- Lifelong learning: problem solving abilities; an ability to find appropriate resources; an open mind, the pursuit of knowledge;
- Integrity: honesty; perseverance; personal responsibility for one's actions and choices; care of one's self;
- Community: an awareness that one is part of a larger whole and that one's choices and actions have an impact on others; situational awareness and a consciousness of what is happening around oneself; patience for others and one's self; responsibility for others; a contribution to a positive and peaceful school environment;
- Concern for Others: an awareness of the needs of others; empathy; appreciation for diversity in all of its forms;
- Civility: respect toward others, self, materials and the environment; self-control that prevents one from rudeness or insensitivity toward others; an ability to disagree without being disagreeable; and
- Leadership: modeling of good behavior for other students; proactive problem solving; making choices that benefit the larger community.

A Code of Conduct supplementary document specific to the Junior High level is distributed each September to Junior High students (See [Appendix B](#)).

Disciplinary Guidelines

These guidelines and the School's Code of Conduct are based on the School's philosophy and principles regarding good character, and reflect the School's commitment to providing a safe and healthy environment for students. The School strives to promote effective and caring communication among faculty, students and parents that supports students in their personal growth and provides room for a young person to make mistakes and learn from them. These guidelines apply to all conduct by students, whether on or off campus, as long as they are enrolled in the School.

As students progress through the School, a great deal of time is spent striving to teach them to honor their own and others' unique qualities and characteristics. Teachers seek to build each

class to be a community of learners, and the classroom itself strives to be a safe environment where mistakes become the vehicle for learning acceptable behavior.

As a School, we want to work with our students and their families in changing behaviors in students that interfere with the learning climate of a classroom or pose problems of safety. Occasionally, students need to be reminded about expectations and consequences of behavior. Both expectations and consequences are age and developmentally appropriate, and consistent with the degree of misconduct. The School may, in its sole discretion, involve parents in all such matters.

Consequences of misconduct (and/or attempting misconduct) applicable to all students are detailed below. These examples are intended to provide students and their families with a general understanding of the School's disciplinary approach; however, the School will respond to each situation with a response that the School determines, in its sole discretion, is appropriate. Such disciplinary consequences are intended to heighten a student's sense of responsible citizenship and allow the faculty to deal quickly with disciplinary issues in an objective fashion.

Disciplinary Consequences

If the School determines, in its sole discretion, that a student has violated any of the School's rules, policies, or expectations, the School may issue a disciplinary consequence. The Head of School, in consultation with her designees, but at her sole discretion, may discipline the student in her sole discretion. Such consequences may include, but are not limited to, any *one or more of the following actions (not necessarily in this order)*:

- Conference between the student and teacher(s)
- Participation in a Restorative Circle.
- Conference with the student, student's parents/guardians, teacher(s)
- Conference with the student, student's parents/guardians, teacher(s), and appropriate Academic Director and/or Head of School.
- Require the student to re-do school work or assign a failing grade for the assignment or class
- Confiscate an offending electronic device(s) until the end of the school day or for 24 hours.
- Require the student to amend the student's behavior and apologize, if appropriate, for such behavior.
- Require the student to replace/repair any physical damage and/or pay for the necessary repairs.
- Place the student on an in-school suspension of a period of time determined by the appropriate Academic Director, Head of School or other designated administrator, in consultation with the student's teacher(s). Teachers will not offer extra help or makeup work for lessons missed.
- Depending upon the seriousness of the behavior, mandate formal intervention and/or counseling that may involve the student, teachers, advisors, parents and anyone else the School deems appropriate.

- Suspend the student from particular privileges, including, but not limited to, computer usage, School activities or School trips.
- Place the student on at-home suspension for a period of time determined by the appropriate Academic Director, Head of School or other designated administrator, in consultation with the student's teacher(s). Teachers will not offer extra help or makeup work for lessons missed.
- Certain policy violations occurring on School property may be required to be reported to the Illinois State Police pursuant to applicable laws. In such instances, the Head of School or the Head of School's designee will submit any violations through the School Incident Reporting System ("SIRS").
- Dismissal from the School.

The School's Junior High program uses Restorative Circles to address most disciplinary issues, as well as interpersonal conflicts. Restorative Circles are meetings that address the interpersonal conflict and any damage to a relationship because of the conflict. Restorative Circles are facilitated by the Junior High Director and include students and adults/teachers involved, plus the student's Advisor and a neutral adult/teacher not directly involved in the conflict. Restorative Circles allow all parties to answer the same set of questions with the purpose of each party understanding the perspective of the other parties and reaching an agreed-upon resolution. The main purpose is to repair the harm to the relationship between parties. After the Circle, the School will determine if additional consequences (including those listed above) and/or communication with parents is necessary.

Speech and Respect for Community Members

NNM seeks cultural competency for all community members and expects all community members to respect others, especially around race, gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, ability and other aspects of people's identity. We strive to combat prejudice in all forms, including in speech. We recognize that words have the power to negatively impact others and we prohibit speech that discriminates, attacks, disparages, demeans, intimidates or deliberately mischaracterizes an individual or group based on their identity. Offensive speech and hate speech can take many forms, including, but not limited to, negatively biased categorical statements, stereotypes and epithets.

The School invites sincere discussion and questions, and recognizes that there will be moments when insufficient information, erroneous belief or faulty presentation will create opportunities to review statements and clarify impact. When appropriate, we encourage students to address those incidents directly when they occur, but we recognize that not all students may feel comfortable doing so. Students who have concerns about another's speech, whether in person or online, should inform their teacher or the Student Wellness Director so that the School can respond appropriately.

Respecting and Responding to Differences

Whether intentional or not, insults, attacks or demeaning words or behavior directed toward a student's race, ethnicity, religion, gender expression or sexual orientation are unacceptable. In tandem with the NNM discipline policy, such incidents will be addressed as an opportunity to learn from our mistakes, acknowledge the power of our words and actions, reinforce our NNM values, increase awareness, and strengthen partnerships among families, and between home and school.

In alignment with our NNM mission, vision and values, especially as it pertains to our commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), the incident will be addressed through the following process to build community and encourage growth:

1. The children involved will engage in a facilitated conversation or restorative circle, and work towards making amends.
2. The school will share the incident with families in the classroom, level or junior high house (no names), and include pertinent resources to support proactive, age-appropriate conversations around differences
3. The parents of the children directly involved will participate in a facilitated community conversation to strengthen the partnership among parents, and between home and school. This conversation will include the Academic Director and Diversity Director.

Behavioral Expectations While Away from School

Students should be aware that they represent the School community at all times, both on and away from campus. While it is not the School's intention to monitor students in all of their off-campus activities, the School may take disciplinary action, as noted in the Disciplinary Consequences section, in response to inappropriate conduct occurring outside of campus.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to approach their academic work with the utmost care and integrity in order to reflect positively on self, family, school and community. NNM promotes healthy and honest work habits and encourages a sense of responsibility among the students, encouraging them to make good work choices and seek help from peers and teachers when needed.

Plagiarism, cheating and other kinds of academic misrepresentation are regarded as serious breaches of conduct. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's words or ideas without appropriate acknowledgement. We recognize that students may use sources too closely when paraphrasing or that they may inadvertently build on someone's ideas without citation that may result in accidental plagiarism.

In the event that a student fails to meet the expectations stated above or plagiarizes intentionally or unintentionally, the classroom teacher will intervene with appropriate consequences or measures. These may include actions noted in the Disciplinary Consequences section above.

Disclosure to Next Schools

If a student applying to secondary school, or who has recently been accepted to attend a different school, is suspended or expelled, or experiences any significant change in status at the School after the student's applications have been submitted to secondary or other schools, the School may, in its sole discretion, communicate with each secondary or other school regarding the situation. The School will generally work closely with students and families to support the honest reporting of disciplinary matters, in order to support student success at next schools.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Curriculum

At NNM, we strive to prepare our students for life by offering them a rigorous academic program that aims to develop important skills for success, such as creativity, communication, critical thinking, independence, confidence and resilience. Dr. Montessori referred to this approach as “Educating the Whole Child,” that is, catering to each student’s academic, physical, emotional, spiritual and moral development. Montessori’s developmental approach recognizes that each student reaches certain milestones at different stages. As such, the Montessori lessons are presented to students when they are developmentally ready and have mastered certain prerequisite activities.

NNM has compiled a “Curriculum Scope and Sequence” document that gives more information on lessons and materials within each of the levels. A copy of this document can be found on the School’s website in the Academics section.

Montessori education is structured around four distinct planes of development:

- First Plane of Development covering ages 0 to 6;
- Second Plane of Development covering ages 6 to 12;
- Third Plane of Development covering ages 12 to 18; and
- Fourth Plane of Development covering ages 18 to 24.

At NNM, we focus on the first three planes. Students in each “Plane” share similar physical and cognitive traits. The classroom environment, curriculum and instruction are specially designed to meet these developmental stages.

Parent-Infant and Toddler Community

The Parent-Infant program is available to students 6 months to 23 months as of September 1 of the year of entry. The child’s caretaker attends the class with the child to learn more about the Montessori method and philosophy. With guidance from the teachers, caregivers are encouraged to learn alongside the child, gently fostering the child’s independence, curious nature, and desire to explore within this safe and engaging space. Children at this young age need much practice developing their large and small motor skills as well as numerous opportunities to continue expanding their language. The classroom materials and layout are designed with this young child in mind. Caregivers generally gain many practical skills and tips from observing the teachers, the environment, and how the child interacts with the materials. Classes meet once a week on Friday mornings, from 8:45 am -10:45 am. Class sizes are limited to 12 children per class.

The Toddler Community is a bridge between home and school. The classroom is home-like in its appearance and feel, yet provides students ample opportunities to develop the foundations of their Montessori education. The Toddler Community provides students the opportunity for social interactions and to develop their physical and psychological competencies outside of the home.

At this level, students work on developing greater independence and confidence through working with materials that are sized for this age group. As toddlers learn through their senses, the School offers them exercises to heighten and refine the senses. NNM strives to develop students' language skills through direct instruction and vocabulary building as well as through the casual social conversations that go on daily between the students and the teachers. NNM also strives to help students develop and refine fine and gross motor functions while working with the many activities in the class. The School's Spanish speaking classroom assistant introduces the Spanish language to students in the form of songs and preliminary words and phrases.

The Toddler program is available to students who will be 24 months of age, but not yet 3 years old by September 1 of the year of entry. There are two classrooms, one is offered as a half-day, four day-a-week class and the other is offered as a full-day, five day-a-week class.

- The four-day program runs from 8:25 am until 11:35 am, Monday through Thursday.
- The five-day program runs for a full day from 8:35 am through 3:30 pm Monday through Friday, with the option of early care beginning at 7:45 am and extended care ending at 5:30 pm.

For both Toddler programs, class sizes are limited to 16 students with a student to teacher ratio of approximately 1:6.

Students in both classrooms are offered a morning snack. The School serves students in the full-day program a hot lunch and an afternoon snack. Lunch is catered by Gourmet Gorilla and snacks are ordered through Peapod. See sample menus below. Students in our full-day Toddler program are required to nap/have downtime and are provided nap cots. The School provides sheets and changes them weekly.

See Appendix D for the Toddler Program Late Pick Up Policy.

3 to 6 Year Old

At the Primary level, classrooms are divided into mixed-age groups of students between the ages of 3 and 6 years old. The School strives to balance each class in number of students' ages and gender. The goal of this mixed-age grouping is to foster opportunities for collaborative work, social engagement and peer mentorship.

Each 3-6 classroom has a selection of activities of daily life that aid in the development of coordination, concentration, order and independence. There are manipulative materials that engage the student in the study and exploration of numbers, counting, mathematical operations, phonetics, spelling, writing, pre-reading and reading skills. The cultural subjects of geography, history, science, art and music are all offered to the students through the Montessori materials as well as through their own explorations and creative expression.

Students learn Spanish vocabulary and phrases through the study of different Hispanic cultures, foods, games and songs.

The School offers developmental gym to this level daily as an activity of the child's choosing. Students choose to go to gym at their will to participate in a circuit of activities that are designed to promote a strong core and keen physical coordination.

As a work choice, students also have the freedom to visit the Open Art Studio several mornings a week, to expand on lessons through various mediums of artistic expression.

Opportunities for parents to learn about Montessori philosophy, curriculum and student progress abound. A few examples:

- Back to School Night: Held in early September for parents to get to know each other, and for the teacher to share important classroom information.
- Harvest/Spring Breakfasts: In the fall and spring, families bond over potluck meals and students have a chance to host their parents in their classrooms.
- Parent Teacher Conferences: Formal and informal parent teacher conferences are held several times throughout the school year.
- Parent Education Workshops: Approximately each month throughout the school year, the School offers workshops, either in the morning or evening, to familiarize parents with the curriculum and how it can be supported at home.
- Guest Speakers: Throughout the year, NNM invites expert speakers in their field to lend outside expertise and focus on topics of specific interest.

Students in the primary classes may attend for either a half-day (8:25 am-12:00 pm) or a full-day (8:25 am-3:15 pm) program. All students enjoy 30 minutes of recess. Students ages 3 and 4 are encouraged to nap or have downtime if attending the full-day program. Students ages 5 and 6, or in their third year in the class, are not required to nap, but instead, take part in further classroom lessons and other activities, such as Farmessori, Library Read-A-Loud, and Group Gym during the afternoons.

Full-day students eat lunch in their classroom. Lunch can be ordered through our Junior High's Sandwich Shoppe program (October-April on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays). Families are encouraged to check the online calendar to confirm Sandwich Shoppe is in session. Students who do not order from Sandwich Shoppe bring a lunch from home using a reusable bag and containers.

6 to 9 Year Old

The fertile imagination of the 6-9 student is fired through the exploration of the mysteries of our universe. The new 6-year-old considers the origins of our planet on their first days in Elementary. The classroom combines students of three grade levels to promote leadership, collaboration, student modeling and mentoring. The environment allows for movement and group work.

The teacher presents lessons to small groups and individuals across the curriculum including mathematics, language, geography, botany, zoology, history and physical science. The Montessori method of teaching, which focuses on small group lessons, allows the teacher to easily observe what the student is learning.

The goal is for a student and a teacher to have a dynamic relationship that encourages inquiry and discussion. Weekly individual teacher-student conferences allow students to choose their work with adult guidance aiding this process. Independent learning is cultivated through student work journals, where the student records the student's activities throughout the day. Each classroom has an assistant teacher who is available to help students and provide individual support in the mastery of basic skills in reading and math. Learning takes place in many locations including the library, the Farmessori and frequent small field trips around the city.

Spanish classes are offered two to three times a week to expose students to the diverse Spanish speaking cultures as well as an introduction to the fundamentals of the Spanish language.

The connection between movement and learning is aided through purposeful movement within the classroom and physical education classes two to three days per week, providing instruction in team sports, dance, yoga and swimming. The academic year ends with a four-day trip to a camp in Wisconsin where students experience nature first-hand.

Opportunities for parents to learn about Montessori philosophy and curriculum and student progress abound:

- An Open House is held each fall for students entering the 6-9 level;
- In the fall, each level hosts a Back-to-School Night for parents to get to know each other, during which the teacher distributes important information;
- A day trip to campgrounds in October provides parents and children an opportunity to visit and participate in typical camp activities in preparation for the end-of-year camp trip;
- Presentation and Academic Nights are evenings where the student is the teacher and parents watch students demonstrate what they have learned;
- Formal and informal parent teacher conferences are available throughout the school year;
- Parent education evenings are held to familiarize parents with the curriculum and how it can be supported at home;
- Guest speakers visit to lend outside expertise and focus on topics of specific interest; and
- Performances are part of the Elementary level and are opportunities to see learning in a non-traditional format.

9 to 12 Year Old

At this level, fundamental skills have generally been solidified and students are expected to become more independent learners. Hands-on, project-based learning is a critical part of the 9-12 classroom. The teacher gives small group lessons across the Elementary curriculum.

Students keep detailed work journals to set personal goals and record activities. Student-teacher conferences are a constant dialogue about the individual goals and progress of the student. Throughout the year, students work on many long-term projects to refine research and writing skills. These projects demand strong organizational abilities and help to build executive functioning.

Technology plays an important role in the classroom and students have access to a fully-equipped computer lab as well as weekly computer instruction. Classrooms have computer stations with a variety of devices available for student work. Additional laptops can be checked out from the School library and computer lab.

Creativity is woven throughout students' work, evidenced in everything from a beautifully calligraphed letter to a flash animation project depicting a famous battle scene. Students' interests frequently take them out of the classroom for a small group field trip to further research, such as a work afternoon at the Farmessori.

Spanish lessons are given two to three times per week to expose students to the culture of Spanish speaking countries as well as to build vocabulary, grammar, speaking, reading and writing in a foreign language. All 4th and 5th grade students will participate in band. Band participation will be optimal for 6th grade students. Students rotate through a fine arts elective every other week. Each Spring, students head to Wisconsin to stay for five days at the Nature's Classroom Institute where they participate in team building, environmental studies and historical simulations.

Opportunities for parents to learn about Montessori philosophy and curriculum and student progress abound:

- In the fall, each level hosts a Back-to-School Night for parents to get to know each other, during which the teacher distributes important information;
- Presentation and Academic Nights are evenings where the student is the teacher and parents watch students demonstrate what they have learned;
- Formal and informal parent teacher conferences are available throughout the school year;
- Parent education evenings are held to familiarize parents with the curriculum and how it can be supported at home;
- Guest speakers visit to lend outside expertise and focus on topics of specific interest; and
- Performances are part of the Elementary level and are opportunities to see learning in a non-traditional format.

12 to 14 year Old

The NNM Adolescent Program (also known as Junior High or 7th and 8th grade) covers the broad spectrum of traditional subjects designed to foster literacy and cultural understanding in today's world, including reading, science, mathematics, language arts, social studies,

technology, art, Spanish and physical education. Students are also encouraged to go far beyond a traditional education as they continue the daily life lessons they began in the 0-6 classrooms. During an adolescent's career at NNM, a student will take part in several week-long trips out of the city, help operate the Sandwich Shoppe program (a student-run business), explore the City of Chicago on weekly off-campus day trips, help tend to garden plots at the Farmessori and participate in meaningful community exchange programs both on and off campus.

Teachers in the NNM Adolescent Program act in two main capacities. First, they are instructors, working to prepare their students academically for the future and to inspire them to expand and master their studies. Second, and just as importantly, they are guides, striving to channel their students' own curiosity and lending structure and discipline as students take on the exciting tasks of learning and discovery.

More than anything, the Adolescent Program is designed to fulfill the mission that Dr. Maria Montessori set forth over a half-century ago: to act as an "aid to life." Ideally, students leave NNM not only as students able to complete academic tasks and solve practical problems, but as confident young adults prepared for the myriad challenges that life will throw their way.

Opportunities for parents to learn about Montessori philosophy and curriculum and student progress abound:

- In the fall, the Junior High classes hosts Back-to-School Night, a gathering where the Junior High Director and the teachers distribute important information;
- In the fall, the Junior High Director presents a seminar titled "Junior High 101" for parents of 7th graders. The purpose is to provide those parents with all the information they need to help their child be successful in Junior High;
- Independent Study Presentations is an event where the student is the teacher and parents watch students demonstrate what they have learned over the course of several months of independent work;
- Formal and informal parent teacher conferences are available throughout the school year;
- Parent education evenings are held to familiarize parents with the curriculum and how it can be supported at home;
- Guest speakers visit to lend outside expertise and focus on topics of specific interest;
- Students and parents receive six progress reports over the year;
- Every fall, the School hosts "Navigating the High School Admissions Process" and High School Presentations where students and parents are invited to learn about CPS schools, religious schools and independent schools.

For a review of Frequently Asked Questions concerning the transition to Junior High, please see [Appendix A](#) of this Handbook.

Waivers — Academic and Athletic

Due to the multidisciplinary nature of our Montessori curriculum, academic waivers or exemptions typically apply only to co-curricular classes. In such cases, the student may spend additional supervised time in the School library or with a private tutor.

Athletic waivers are given to students at the discretion of the School. These waivers are generally offered in cases when a student needs to use school PE class time to do homework due to an extensive schedule in competitive sports outside of school.

To further discuss or seek approval for academic and athletic waivers, parents and students may meet with the Classroom Teacher and the Elementary Director or Junior High Director, as appropriate for the level.

Homework

At **0-6**, assigned homework is not given to students. After their time at school, we believe it is important to give young students unstructured free-play time. The best work for young students to do at home is to be a part of daily life with their family in a comfortable and inviting manner. Having children help prepare meals, set the table, clean up after themselves and be responsible for keeping their things in their place are just a few ways young children can be a purposeful member of the family.

In **6-9**, homework begins in the 2nd grade and is designed to provide practice for rote skills. It should be work that can be managed independently by the student. Homework should also include chores at home and reading practice.

In **9-12**, homework incorporates both the continued practice of rote skills with independent work stemming from classroom lessons. The aim is for students to build skills in time management and personal goal setting.

In **12-14**, students receive a significant amount of homework. They usually have to juggle short-term and long-term projects at the same time. Students are required to turn in work on the assigned deadline unless they have made other arrangements with their teacher at least 24 hours in advance. Work turned in late may receive a 10% deduction in total score per day. Students may receive a homework notice for late work, which is intended to let parents know of missing or late work.

Assessments

Observation of the student by the teacher is the cornerstone to effective assessment. Teachers make many formal and informal observations of each student throughout the day. These observations allow the teacher insight into the student's work habits, academic progress, interests and social interactions. Primary level teachers informally guide the work of their students based on observations and record-keeping of individual lessons. Elementary level

teachers conference with the student to review work portfolios and discuss progress, completed work and future goals. Elementary students also keep a work journal to record their school day activities.

Montessori lessons are generally given to individual or small groups of students. This practice helps the teacher to ascertain quickly how much the student comprehends the concepts presented. Instruction can be differentiated based on the needs of the small group or individual student. Repetition or increased instruction is implemented as needed.

Progress Reports and the Junior High Grading System

Communication between teacher, parent and student is essential to understanding the unique learning profile of each student. Primary and elementary students do not receive grades or report cards.

Teachers at these levels meet with parents at the regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences and are available to provide updates on a student’s progress during parent classroom observations and other times when requested by the parent.

In the 7th grade, students begin to receive letter grades and progress reports detailing their progress. The School approaches grades as an opportunity for feedback from the teacher with the intention of helping students improve their work. When students’ work improves, their grades naturally improve as well. Students in the 7th and 8th grade receive a total of six progress reports during the academic year. The following scale will be used to calculate students’ letter grades:

A 93 and up	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F 59 and below
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

In June, students will also receive cumulative, final grades that incorporate their report card grades from Trimester 1, 2 and 3. Under special circumstances, students may receive an incomplete and be given the opportunity to complete work within a predetermined amount of time.

Extra Credit (for 12-14)

Extra credit is sometimes an option, at the teacher’s discretion. All regular assignments and work must be completed first, before any extra credit would be considered. Extra credit may only account for a maximum of 5% of the final grade in any given class. Any extra credit offered will have a strict deadline and cannot be accepted after a trimester has ended.

Moving Up Readiness

A child's emotional maturity, skills in independent learning and academic readiness are key factors to be considered when determining if a student is ready to move up to the next level. This is an ongoing conversation between teacher, parents and Academic Director, but the ultimate decision rests with the School, in its sole discretion.

Response to Intervention

Response to Intervention is a systematic team approach to meeting individual students' learning and/or behavioral profile. See more information under Student Support Services.

Standardized Testing

Testing at NNM is used as a diagnostic tool rather than a single evaluative measure of a student's progress. Teachers use data gathered from these tests as one indicator of a student's academic development over time. These tests are only one of the many assessment tools available to our teachers. Although we realize the importance that is sometimes placed on these tests, the tests alone cannot portray an accurate picture of the whole child.

For the purpose of standardized testing, the School recognizes students by traditional grade level. In the spring, students at the kindergarten level are assessed in their reading skills.

Students in the 3rd through the 7th grades take the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) test, a test administered as a diagnostic tool to determine strengths and weaknesses and to provide additional information of student progress. 8th graders do not take any standardized tests at NNM because they have so many entrance exams as they apply to high school. Results of all standardized tests are shared with parents and recorded in the student's school record.

School Trips

Trips during the school year are part of the regular Montessori curriculum at the Elementary and Junior High levels. Parents/guardians are notified of upcoming trips off campus. For the safety of all, students participating in School trips must comply with all applicable School rules, all applicable laws and any additional rules applicable to the particular trip setting.

Trips within the Chicagoland area may involve students riding a bus, using public transit or riding with a parent chaperone driver. Junior High students use the Chicago Transit Authority ("CTA") to explore the city on a regular basis.

A parent who wishes to assist on field trips as a chaperone is expected to review and comply with the Chaperone Guidelines provided in connection with a particular trip. Parents who wish to

chaperone a School trip also must agree to a background check before the trip takes place; checks are to be updated as necessary in the School's discretion, at a minimum every 3 years. For parents or guardians who are requested and wish to assist as a driver for student trips, the background check may also include a driving record search. Additionally, a copy of the parent's current driver's license and insurance card will be kept for the School's records.

Special Overnight Trips

NNM recognizes the value of outdoor education and opportunities for students to learn in "off-campus" settings. As part of the School's mission and philosophy, Elementary students typically go on one four to five -day trip during the school year and Junior High students typically go on two trips during the year. These trips help to build independence, confidence, resilience, character and community.

6-9 Trip: Camp

Students in the 6-9 classes attend either Camp Edwards in East Troy, Wisconsin or Camp MacLean in Burlington, Wisconsin. In general, the trip departs from NNM on the Monday of the last week of school and students return the following Thursday evening. School will be in session on the Friday of camp week. Teachers generally host a camp orientation meeting two weeks before the trip to review schedules, packing lists and permission forms. Parents may join their children on their day trip to camp in October where they can see the benefits of a camp experience and how it closely aligns with Montessori curriculum.

9-12 Trip: Nature's Classroom

Nature's Classroom is an outdoor educational institute in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Students in 9-12 visit Nature's Classroom for one school week in April or May. In general, the students depart from school on a Monday morning and return to NNM the following Friday afternoon. Please consult the calendar for the dates assigned to your child's class. Packing lists and permission forms will be available on the School's website. For specific questions, please contact the student's classroom teacher or Elementary Director.

Junior High Trips

In September, each Junior High House goes on a four-day canoe trip in Wisconsin, Michigan or Indiana. The students set up and care for their tents, plan their menus, do their own shopping and cook in small groups. Camping and canoeing along the river are great ways to build community, develop resilience and practice problem solving skills.

The 7th graders spend four days in June camping and rock climbing at Devil's Lake State Park, Wisconsin.

The 8th graders take a trip in the spring that is a combination of the Montessori Model United Nations conference and a visit to our country's cultural and economic center, New York City.

This trip is educational in content as well as a time for our students to celebrate the end of their journey at NNM together.

The Junior High students have the opportunity to participate in a trip to NPH Honduras. This trip is coordinated through Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH), an organization with which the School has partnered since 2011. NPH provides a home, education and family for children in need in Latin America. The NPH trip is an excellent opportunity for Spanish immersion, cultural exchange and making new friends. The trip is optional and comes with an additional cost. There are usually scholarship funds available to ensure access to all 8th graders who are interested. The timing of the trips varies from year to year, but they usually take place over spring break and the week after graduation.

Graduation

Students at NNM matriculate after their 8th grade year. To graduate from NNM, students generally must successfully complete and receive passing grades in these subjects: Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, Health, Physical Education and Spanish (unless they are excused from Spanish class to attend a reading support class). In addition, students are expected to complete at least 15 hours of Community Exchange in the 7th and 8th grades and pass the Constitution test with a grade of 80% or higher.

Parents generally are made aware of any unfulfilled requirements well in advance to avoid a situation of a student not graduating. Parents are sent three mid-term reports and three final report cards over the course of the school year.

NNM Graduation provides a special occasion for friends, relatives and their extended family to celebrate the unique gifts of the graduating students. Each graduate is typically allowed to invite up to six guests, not including any siblings who currently attend NNM. The ceremony is attended by all students from stay-upper year to the 7th grade. Following the ceremony, all guests are invited to a reception in our courtyard and community room.

Graduation Dress Code

Graduation is a formal, serious occasion. Our students are the guests of honor and each contributes to the total impression of this formal event. Students are asked to wear dress shirts with collars, dress pants, ties and dress shoes. Suits or sports coats are always a nice touch, but not required. Students may also choose a dress or a skirt. When considering the appropriate length of a dress or skirt, students are reminded that they will be seated on a raised platform and the audience will be looking up at them.

Prohibited items and styles include, but are not limited to, gym shoes, sweatpants/track suits, sweat bands, backless dresses and outfits that reveal undergarments.

Graduation Party for 7th and 8th Grade Students

A graduation party is hosted at the School for all currently enrolled NNM 7th and 8th grade students on the evening of graduation. This party is organized and supervised by the 7th and 8th grade parents. NNM administration will initiate the first planning meeting for the Party, but all follow-up meetings, set-up and clean-up are the responsibility of the 7th and 8th grade parent committee.

Secondary School Counseling

The objective of the counseling process is to work effectively in guiding students and families to school choices that best meet individual needs in the years following NNM. Parents and students should familiarize themselves with the steps involved in the secondary school application process and work closely with the Junior High Director.

Junior High parents are invited to attend several presentations and events in the fall that provide them with information needed to navigate the high school application process. Parents of 8th graders are strongly encouraged to remain in close communication with the Junior High Director to plan their child's individual path. This includes parents updating the Junior High Director on acceptance status when notification letters are sent to the home.

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

Attendance and Absences

Regular school attendance is vitally important to a student's academic achievement and the teaching-learning process, so it is important that parents and students be familiar with the NNM attendance policy. Regular attendance helps to develop patterns of behavior essential to professional and personal success in life.

Please notify your child's teacher by email if your child will be absent from school for more than two days. Additionally, a brief explanatory note when a student returns to school after an absence helps the teacher understand each student's health, personal or family issues or needs and encourages communication. Frequent absences impact academic and social progress. NNM expects that students will attend classes daily for the entire regular school term. Please refrain from taking students out of school unnecessarily. Teachers are not responsible for providing work for students when vacations are taken outside of the school calendar or lessons are missed due to extreme tardiness.

The School will notify parents when students have an excessive number of absences and are at risk of not being promoted to the next academic level. In this case, parents will be required to meet with School administrators to discuss the impact of excessive absences on the student's education, as well as appropriate next steps for the student's future at the School.

Tardiness

The school day begins officially by 8:30 am. Students can enter their classroom between 8:25 - 8:40 am. Students who arrive to class after 8:40 am are marked "tardy" in the attendance book. Being tardy on a regular basis has a significant impact on a student's learning and social/work groupings.

It is important for students to have sufficient time to organize their belongings and settle in before the school day begins. Arriving to school late causes a student to miss important morning announcements and group meetings. Students may be excluded from certain lessons planned by the teacher if the student is late for the beginning of that lesson.

Young students often have a difficult time when they enter the classroom late and see that their classmates have already begun their morning work. For older students, joining in lessons and work groups that are underway is often socially awkward and can be academically challenging.

Parents can access their child's attendance and tardiness record via My Backpack. If a student is consistently tardy, a written notice will be sent to parents/guardians to alert families so adjustments can be made to the family's schedule.

Safety and Security

The Safety and Security Coordinator oversees pick-up and drop-off, updates the School's fire drill and emergency evacuation procedures, patrols the School grounds and surrounding neighborhood, attends neighborhood CAPS ("Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy") meetings and works with the police department and officials from neighboring schools on issues that affect the School. Meetings with other schools in the area are conducted to discuss any issues that might impact our community. These meetings include other school's administrative staff and security, community organizations, the Chicago Police Department and local Aldermanic staff.

Student safety is a primary concern at NNM and, to that end, our School is a closed campus.

- All exterior doors of the School building are locked from the inside at all times, but can be used to exit in case of emergencies.
- Entrances are monitored by closed-circuit cameras; visitors must sign in at the front desk before proceeding to their destination within the building and wear a badge or item that identifies them as a guest during the time they are in the building, consistent with the Visitors to Campus policy in this Handbook.
- Students are not allowed to leave school grounds without approved adult supervision. At end-of-school dismissal, Elementary and Junior High students may walk or take public transportation home with advanced written parental permission, see Appendix E for the Student Independent Travel Permission and Release Form. Once students have left the building unsupervised, they may not return to school unless there is an issue or concern.
- Parents are expected to closely follow all carpool pick-up and drop-off procedures and follow the directions of the Safety and Security Coordinator during this time.
- Parking for pick-up, drop-off and evening events is available in the Holy Trinity Church and Bosworth lots. Please do not leave any personal belongings in plain sight in your car when parked in the lot.
- Fire drills are conducted with the Chicago Fire Department on a regular basis. The first fire drill of the year is posted on the school calendar to help prepare new students for the alarm. Emergency evacuation routes are posted in each classroom.
- Chicago Police Department assists NNM faculty and staff to conduct and discuss the School's emergency lockdown procedures.
- Tornado drills are practiced with NNM staff during the year.

In accordance with Montessori philosophy, students earn certain freedoms when they demonstrate an expected level of responsible behavior. This freedom may include the freedom to leave the classroom to check a locker or to visit the gym, library or Main Office. Some students may also choose to work in the hallways and others in classrooms in accordance with the classroom monitoring system (teacher permission, pass boards, necklaces).

Building Procedures

Recycling, Composting, and Landfill

The School recycles all types of paper, cans, bottles, plastic milk containers and cardboard. All containers should be rinsed before being placed in the appropriate recycling bin. Food waste and biodegradable utensils, plates and other material will be composted as much as possible.

The School encourages students, parents and staff to participate in the School's goal to reduce the carbon footprint by recycling and by encouraging the use of reusable material (for example, use a mug instead of paper cups when getting coffee or tea). Look for signage around the School for information on recycling, composting and landfill waste.

Cleaning

Students are expected to help maintain their classrooms, shared spaces and hallways. They are responsible for cleaning shelves, countertops, sinks, tables, chairs and classroom materials. The School inspects lockers occasionally. NNM maintenance staff also disinfect fixtures in classrooms and hallways. Food items left in lunch boxes should be removed before the boxes are returned to lockers or to the Lost and Found area.

Dress Code and Appearance

NNM is a place of learning and work. All clothing choices should be conducive to that idea. A daily school uniform is not required of students enrolled at NNM; however it is expected that all students come to school dressed and groomed in a manner that is conducive to our School learning environment.

PARENT-INFANT, TODDLER, AND 3-6 STUDENT DRESS CODE GUIDELINES:

- Clothing worn might become stained, so please send your child in clothing that can allow for exploration with art materials.
- Clothing should be free of distracting logos, such as cartoon, movie, TV, and superhero characters.
- Clothing should be appropriate for weather conditions.
- Clothing should be easy for students to manage themselves; comfortable and appropriate for work, play and art activities.
- All students in the Toddler and 3-6 levels are required to wear slippers/house shoes when indoors.

ELEMENTARY STUDENT DRESS CODE GUIDELINES:

- Clothing is to be neat and clean.
- Clothing should be appropriate for weather conditions.
- Clothing should be easy for students to manage themselves, comfortable and appropriate for work, play and art activities.
- Students who wear heavy-soled outdoor winter boots, cowboy boots or party shoes to school should keep an extra pair of soft-soled shoes or slippers at school to wear indoors.

Elementary PE classes:

- At the 6-9 level, students may wear comfortable clothing and gym shoes for class; no uniform is necessary at this level.
- 9-12 students attending gym classes and athletic games are expected to wear the NNM gym uniform.

JUNIOR HIGH STUDENT DRESS CODE GUIDELINES:

The School expects that Junior High students are capable of making wise, mature decisions regarding dress without adults having to spell out each and every parameter. We expect that students will:

- give serious consideration to the phrase "appropriate for work";
- understand that different learning environments require different standards of attire;
- acknowledge that they are role models for younger students; and
- responsibly represent the level and the School when interacting with people outside of the Junior High program (e.g., presenting to parents at Coffees) and outside of the School building (e.g., navigating the city during Flex Fridays).

As with everything we do, we are trying to strike a balance of freedom and responsibility. Junior High students at NNM have the freedom to express themselves through their attire and to be comfortable when doing their work while also having the responsibility of being appropriately prepared for work, being role models and representing their school in all aspects of their work.

- All clothing should be appropriate for work, whether it is work done in the School building or off-campus.
- Clothing should be appropriate for weather conditions and outdoor activities (specifically for Flex Fridays and Farmessori work).
- Clothing should be free of inappropriate slogans/advertising (e.g., alcohol ads, drug references, derogatory statements towards a group, etc.).
- Undergarments should not be visible.
- For the sake of those in the community who have allergies and environmental sensitivities, students should refrain from spray colognes and perfumes.

Junior High - PE classes:

- Students attending gym classes are expected to wear the NNM gym uniform shirt and appropriate athletic shoes. Students may wear their own shorts or athletic pants.
- For students in the swim rotation, one-piece swimsuits, tankinis, athletic swim trunks and boardshorts are all acceptable.
- Students who are not following these guidelines may be asked to modify their attire or borrow more appropriate attire from the School's Lost and Found collection.
- Students are expected to change out of their gym uniform when class is over for the day.

Junior High - Special events and cultural trips:

- Out of respect for the performers and performance, students are asked to wear a collared shirt, dress shoes, dress pants or a skirt/dress on days when the class is attending a special performance.
- Casual or athletic clothing is not appropriate for these occasions.

- Students who are not following these guidelines may be asked to modify their attire or remain at school while other students attend the event.

Junior High - Other trips outside of school:

- September's canoe trips and June's rock-climbing trip have special dress codes due to the physical nature of the outdoor activities.
- Trips to the NPH homes and the Montessori Model United Nations have special dress codes based on the trip itineraries.
- A packing list and clothing guidelines are provided well in advance of these trips.

Toys and Personal Belongings

Generally, all toys and personal belongings should be left at home. Students at younger ages have a difficult time sharing toys from home and personal items can become a distraction to the other students. The classrooms provide ample materials for the students to work with and explore. Toys for the After School program are provided by the School. A stuffed animal or item of comfort may be brought to school by students who are napping in the afternoon, and this comfort object should remain on the student's cot and only utilized during nap time. Belongings of educational value can be brought to school and shared with the class at the teacher's discretion. Should a young student have trouble transitioning into the classroom, the parent can discuss use of a transition object with the teacher on an individual basis.

Electronic Communications, Computers and Acceptable Use

The School's Portrait of a Graduate expects that our graduates will be familiar with modern technologies and able to harness their power to problem-solve and pursue knowledge throughout their lives. Technology has created an incredibly powerful learning network that continues to expand every day. In our goal to educate students to reach their inherent potential, we feel it is our duty to explore technology with our students. The goal of this acceptable use policy is to encourage the most productive and pedagogically sound uses of technology while promoting safe habits among our users and ensuring the safety of our connected community.

Students at the 9-12 and 12-14 levels are provided opportunities to use computers, digital devices and the Internet as part of the Montessori curriculum. Computers and other technological resources are tools that can enhance student learning, problem solving, communication and teacher effectiveness.

This policy describes acceptable uses of the computer network and the Internet for student work. Technology users are expected to meet the expectations outlined in this policy and are responsible for reporting any violations to the appropriate administrator and cooperating with them when violations are suspected or confirmed. All students are expected to comply with this acceptable use policy and any applicable policies and procedures as long as they are enrolled at the School, as set forth in this Handbook and as further described below.

The School has explicit guidelines for using computers and other electronic devices, using the School's network, and accessing the Internet. The School may monitor the activity and contents (including email) of computers on campus and/or connected to the School's network, to ensure student safety and that the guidelines are being followed. The School expects students and parents to adhere to the following guidelines. The examples below are just examples and are not an all-inclusive list of requirements and possibilities.

Students may:

- use technology for School work or class projects and assignments, at the teacher's discretion;
- access the Internet with teacher permission to enrich learning related to School work;
- use technology in ways directed by the teacher.

Students should not:

- post personal contact information about themselves or other people;
- access or try to access network resources not intended for them;
- share their passwords or other's passwords with anyone, with the exception of parents/guardians and teachers;
- alter electronic communications to hide their identity or impersonate another person;
- communicate with a stranger or make plans to meet a stranger in-person;
- use inappropriate language or images in email, web pages, videos or social networking sites;
- be disrespectful by talking or posting derogatory material (images, video, etc.) via email, social networking sites, live chat, web page or any other method;
- engage in cyber-bullying, harassment or sexting, in violation of the School's policies and Expectations for Interpersonal Student Relationships as stated in this Handbook;
- access inappropriate information on the Internet such as (but not restricted to) sites that bypass filtering, promote hate or violence, gaming or sites with sexually explicit or graphic, pornographic or obscene material;
- plagiarize printed or electronic information; students must follow all copyright, trademark, patent and other laws governing intellectual property;
- install or download software onto School devices, including, but not limited to, desktops, laptops and tablets from the Internet or by any other means;
- create or use a mobile hotspot on the School campus;
- remove any School-owned computer equipment (including, but not limited to, network cables and keyboards) from the School with the exception of devices checked out from the NNM library or classroom teacher;
- store personal files or access personal accounts on the network, except in their own Google Drive user account—any information that a student leaves on a School-owned device may be deleted at any time, with or without notice;
- carry cell phones or other personal electronic communication devices on their person; all such items must remain turned off and in a designated space in the classroom unless a student has explicit permission by a teacher to use the device;
- disclose confidential or proprietary information related to the School, make public remarks that defame or disparage the School, its employees, its students or its interests or that recklessly disregard or distort the truth of the matters commented on;

- access, change, delete, read or copy any file, program or account that belongs to someone else without permission;
- use the network for illegal or commercial activities;
- vandalize, steal or cause harm to the School's equipment, network, or services (including, but not limited to, uploading or creating viruses, attempting to gain unauthorized access, changing hardware or software settings, or changing online materials without permission);
- deliberately disrupt or attempt to disrupt the software or hardware of the School network; or
- be "friends" with, or otherwise directly connected to, any School employee on any social networking site that is not used primarily for educational purposes. If a student is contacted by a School employee via non-School channels for non-educational purposes, the student should immediately notify his or her parent and/or School administration.

Students should understand that:

- the use of inappropriate language, harassment and disrespectful comments in email, texting or a chat room, or on a website or social networking site as long as a student is enrolled at the School, is prohibited;
- there is no guarantee of privacy associated with their use of the School's technology resources. Students should not expect that email, voicemail or other information created or maintained on the School's network or School-issued devices (even those marked "personal" or "confidential") will be private, confidential or secure. The School has the right to access and monitor both student-owned and School-owned computers and communication devices connected to the School's network. By accessing the School's system, each student has consented to the School's right to view and/or monitor the School's network and all of its associated accounts; and
- Students will be held accountable for not logging off, and for use of their computer or communication device, if such equipment is left unattended and/or used by another individual.

Parents should understand that:

- it is the responsibility of all parents to read this policy and discuss it with the student;
- teachers and administrators will strive to help students understand this policy at a level that is appropriate to their age and maturity; and
- if a student damages the hardware or software of any School-owned technology, the student may be responsible for paying for the repair or replacement of that technology.

The School may:

- access, view, monitor and track any information or communication stored on or transmitted over the School's network, on or over equipment that has been used to access the School's network, or School-issued devices, and under certain circumstances, it may be required by law to allow third parties to do so. In addition, others may inadvertently view messages or data as a result of routine systems maintenance, monitoring or mis-delivery;

- administer a disciplinary response with respect to cyber activity occurring off campus, and on equipment or networks not owned by the School, but does not have the obligation to administer discipline in such circumstances; and
- restrict the material accessed and not permit computers to be used for commercial purposes or for accessing inappropriate sites.

Security

Security on any computer network is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. NNM hosts separate networks for our seven main groups of users: Staff, Finance, IT, Students, Computer Lab, Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), and Guests. These networks are protected from each other and tailored to the needs of the group authorized to use them. Furthermore, each network will only grant access to the devices assigned to that network group. Students with their own devices connect to the Junior High BYOD network, and guests connect to the complimentary WiFi on the Guest network, both of which are isolated, scanned, and heavily filtered for content and application control.

Students will be instructed to create strong, complex passwords and to change their passwords often.

Students must notify a system administrator if they identify a security problem. Students should not demonstrate the problem to other users. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the School's network.

Reporting Violations

If a student suspects a violation of this policy, or if a student feels nervous or uncomfortable about another School community member's use of technology, the student should immediately report his or her suspicions, feelings and observations to the level Academic Director or the Head of School.

Some violations may constitute criminal offenses as defined by local, state and federal laws, and the School may initiate or assist in the prosecution of any such violations to the fullest extent of the law.

Guidelines for Internet Safety for Students

The School recommends that parents consider establishing family rules for safe and responsible computer use at home. Potential Internet dangers to students can include them viewing inappropriate material, losing privacy, and even "meeting" someone online who might pose a threat to them. Learning to make good choices on the Internet can serve students well by helping them to think critically about choices they will face outside of the School setting.

Suggestions to Consider

1. Keep the computer in the family room or other shared space. Use the Internet with your children; learn about the sites they frequent and help them to find information that is relevant to their needs. Teach students to understand the difference between reliable and unreliable sources of information.
2. Students often have difficulty using general search engines such as Google or Yahoo because the search results return so much information and so many irrelevant results. Learn about kid-friendly search engines; help students to formulate search terms that will elicit relevant results.
3. Teach students how to distinguish banner ads, pop-ups and other types of advertising from other information displayed on a web page.
4. Advise students never to reveal personal information about themselves without a parent's permission. This includes their names, email address(es), postal address and neighborhood, parks or specific stores/restaurants frequented when un-chaperoned by parents, phone number, photo, school or age. Ask students to seek parental permission before filling out forms or registering to use web sites. Tell students never to reveal their passwords, even to friends.
5. Ask students to tell a parent if they encounter any material that is offensive, frightening or makes them uncomfortable on the Internet. Make it clear what parents consider obscene or inappropriate for students to be viewing on the web.
6. Advise students not to open email messages from strangers. Consider using filtering software that will prevent students from getting "spam" or junk email, which often includes offensive material.
7. If a student uses applications or programs that have messaging capabilities (such as GChat, Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, Snapchat or other messaging platforms), know who is on their contact list. Encourage students to "friend" and chat only with people they know offline (i.e., in person).
8. If you allow students to use chat rooms, remind them that chat rooms are "public" places and that the people they are chatting with may not be who they say they are. Ensure that they choose screen names that do not reveal any personal information. Advise students to never make plans to meet a stranger they have encountered online via email or in a chat room.
9. If a student has a website or public profile on sites such as Facebook, check the site or profile often to monitor the contents. Warn students about connecting apps to Facebook, which may compromise their security.
10. Limit students' "screen" time and "unplug" before going to bed. Ensure that students are also engaged in other age-appropriate activities, such as sports, music, reading and socializing with friends and family.
11. Encourage students to run all software updates on their devices. Software updates contain many important security features.

Online Resources

The following websites provide more information on this topic:

<https://www.onguardonline.gov/> - OnGuard Online provides practical tips from the federal government and the technology industry to help guard against Internet fraud, secure computers and protect personal information.

<http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/feature-0014-identity-theft> - The Federal Trade Commission's website has information to help deter, detect and defend against identity theft.

<http://getnetwise.org/> - A project of the Internet Education Foundation, the GetNetWise coalition wants Internet users to be just "one click away" from the resources they need to make informed decisions about use of the Internet.

<http://www.cyberbully411.org/> - Cyberbully411, created by Internet Solutions for Kids, is an effort to provide resources for youth who have questions about or have been targeted by online harassment.

<http://www.connectsafely.org/> - ConnectSafely, a project of the Tech Parenting Group out of Palo Alto, CA, is for parents, teens, educators, advocates - everyone engaged in and interested in the impact of the social Web.

<http://www.ikeepSAFE.org/> - a website created by the Internet Keep Safe Coalition, contains educational resources that teach students of all ages in a fun, age-appropriate way, the basic rules of Internet safety, ethics and the healthy use of connected technologies. It seems particularly targeted at Elementary students.

<http://www.netfamilynews.org/> - A nonprofit news service, and sister site of connectsafely.org, NetFamilyNews covers online safety and privacy news and tools, new technologies and web resources for kids, research about kids' use of digital media and the net, legislation affecting students' online experience, school and library net-use policy and how Web-literate kids, parents and teachers are using the Internet.

<http://www.netSMARTZ.org/> - The NetSMARTZ Workshop is an interactive, educational program of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC) that provides age-appropriate resources to help teach children how to be safer on and offline.

<http://staysafeonline.org/> - StaySafeOnline is maintained by the National Cyber Security Alliance whose mission is to educate and therefore empower a digital society to use the Internet safely and securely at home, work and school, protecting the technology individuals' use, the networks they connect to and our shared digital assets.

<https://www.opendns.com/setupguide/#familyshield> provides resources and information for parents to consider filtering home internet thereby disabling graphic content.

Sexting and Sexually Explicit Material

NNM prohibits students from creating, requesting, sending, or possessing any written message, image or video that contains explicit representations or references to sexual conduct, sexual excitement or nudity (commonly known as “sexting”). Illinois law prohibits anyone (regardless of age) from disseminating obscene or pornographic images of minors, and the School may contact law enforcement should any student violate this policy.

Bring Your Own Device (“BYOD”)

The School provides access to School-owned laptops and tablets for student use during the school day, typically at the 9-12 and Junior High level. These devices serve as valuable tools for students, providing structured, monitored and equitable access to resources that students will need to complete assigned work. All devices are expected to be used for academic purposes only.

In the event that some students have a particular learning need not adequately supported by the School’s computer resources, accommodations may be made to allow students to bring their own device to School. Accommodations will be made on a case-by-case basis, and will be informed by assessments of the individual student’s learning needs. Students need permission from their classroom teacher and the Junior High Director. They will be asked to check in with the IT staff to ensure their device does not contain any viruses harmful to the School network.

The School will not be held responsible for computer loss, theft or damage that may occur. Laptops and tablets will be used to support learning needs, and must be stored securely when not in use. BYOD devices will be enrolled in the School’s mobile device management system before being granted access to the school’s network.

Email

Classroom email accounts and web pages are for school work only. Students receive an nnms.org account during the 6th grade, along with guidelines on appropriate usage. Students keep this account through the end of the 8th grade and for the summer after graduation.

- Students using email will be expected to communicate in a responsible, ethical and polite manner, consistent with the School’s Electronic Communications, Computers and Acceptable Use policy.
- Students should not use the NNM computer network to send or receive email with their personal email account unless it is to send themselves schoolwork.

Social Media and Web Page Publishing

Whether or not a student chooses to use Social Media is a decision the student should make in consultation with the student's parents. However, to the extent that students, parents or members of the School community represent the School to each other and to the wider community, participation in such Social Media should be done responsibly with a mind toward how both the forum where one chooses to participate and the content posted reflect on that person individually and on the School. All emails, comments and documents should be written as if it were a public document as it might be forwarded to, or read by, a third party. Users should not transmit any emails, electronic documents or comments with content that they would be ashamed of seeing published in the local paper the next day. Issues concerning respect for the privacy of students, copyrights, trademarks and confidentiality of sensitive information are all important to understand before participating in Social Media.

With the foregoing in mind, the School encourages students and parents to create an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability when accessing Social Media and the School's network. Students are expected to comply with the policies outlined in the School's Electronic Communications, Computers and Acceptable Use policy regardless of whether they are using School-provided equipment or their own personal devices.

Use of School Name

Parents and students agree that they are not authorized to use the School's name (Near North Montessori), any likeness of or reference to the School's name (e.g., "NNM" or "Near North"), or crest or logo in any way, including to describe any event, outing, club, sports team, group, or other activity ("Group") that the student or parents may organize or lead or in which the student or parents may participate, without the express written permission of the Head of School. Unauthorized use of the School's name, crest or logo will result in disciplinary action from the school in accordance with the School's Disciplinary Consequences.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Parents (During Observations and Meetings)

Parents are asked to silence or turn off cell phones during classroom observations, conferences and all school meetings. If an urgent call is expected, the parent is requested to discreetly leave the room and return in a reasonable time frame after the call. We expect that while parents are at School for these purposes, they will be truly available to observe and appreciate the students' work.

Students

Cell phones are not necessary for students to bring to school, as they may use the phone in the Main Office at any time with their teacher's permission. Cell phones and/or electronic

communication devices are not permitted at the primary (0-6) or elementary (6-12) levels at School. Exceptions may be made for students who travel to and from school independently and have written parental permission to carry a phone for these purposes; see Appendix E for the Student Independent Travel Permission and Release Form.

Junior High students may bring a cell phone or other electronic devices to school. In order to help manage the distraction that cell phones, texting and social media present, students are required to turn in their phones to a classroom teacher or other Junior High staff member at the start of each day. The phones will be kept by the faculty member and returned at dismissal.

During the regular school day, Junior High students are only allowed to make calls from the Main Office, with their teacher's permission. If a parent must reach a student because of an emergency, parents may do so through the Main Office. Student cell phones may not be used during the school day.

During After School hours (3:30 pm-5:30 pm), Junior High students may use their cell phones in their respective after-school locations with the explicit permission of the After School supervisor or instructor. Junior High students may be asked to turn in their phones during After School, like they do with their classroom teachers during the day. Also during After School activities (clubs, athletics, etc.), Junior High students may use their phones only to contact parents.

Students are prohibited from using cell phones or other electronic devices for video or voice recording at any time without the express permission of the individuals being recorded, and in the context of school activities or other NNM-sponsored events, the express permission from a supervising NNM employee.

Other Electronic Devices

CD Players, iPods, other personal music systems and electronic games may not be used during regular school hours. If a staff member sees one of these devices being used, the staff member may confiscate the device for up to 24 hours. In the After School rooms, students may not use these devices unless they have the explicit permission of the After School supervisor on special occasions. Music with inappropriate or offensive language is not permitted in the School at any time.

Use of Alcohol, Drugs

A fundamental role of NNM is to foster in our students the intellectual, social, physical and emotional skills necessary to become healthy, productive members of society. Use of harmful substances such as vaping, tobacco, alcohol and illegal drugs is illegal and inconsistent with the needs of healthy, growing children.

The School strictly prohibits student use or possession of any harmful substances such as tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs and related paraphernalia. Any such substances will be

confiscated. This policy applies on or around the School premises and at School-sanctioned activities.

If a student's demeanor, smell, actions or other behavior indicate that the student may be in violation of this policy, a supervising adult is expected to report the incident and student to the Head of School. The Head of School, sometimes in consultation with faculty, will determine if the student is in violation of the above policy and administer appropriate disciplinary consequences.

Medical Cannabis Infused Products

NNM treats the use of medical cannabis infused products by students similarly to the way the School handles the use of other prescription medications: parental consent is required and the student must have a medication authorization on file with the School Nurse covering the use of medical cannabis infused products. In addition, in order to be administered a medical cannabis infused product on school premises, the student and the student's parents/guardians must provide the School with identification cards registered under the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Pilot Program Act.

If, in the School's judgment, a student is impaired due to the influence of medical marijuana while at school or while participating in a School-sponsored or School-affiliated activity, the School may send the student home. The School may refuse to administer, or refuse to permit the parents/guardians to administer at the School, a medical cannabis infused product if NNM determines, in its sole discretion, that doing so would create disruption to the educational environment or would cause exposure of the product to other students.

Inappropriate Items/Weapons

The School prohibits the possession of any firearm, imitation firearm, pellet gun, knife, taser or other dangerous weapon, ammunition or fireworks on campus, on any School-sponsored off-campus trip or excursion or in any School bus. This policy applies to students, applicants, alumni, parents/guardians and anyone else who enters the campus, regardless of whether the individual has a valid permit to carry a firearm. The Head of School or the Head of School's designee may immediately notify local law enforcement offices of firearm incidents at the School and also notify the Illinois State Police of such incidents through the SIRS.

Search and Seizure

The School may conduct a search of a student that is reasonable in scope, and/or a search of the student's belongings, including personal items, such as bags and backpacks, personal electronic devices and other effects if the school suspects a student may be violating the law or violating a School rule or code of conduct. Lockers and classroom cubbies are the property of the School. Students exercise control over their locker and cubbies from other students, but not

from the School and its officials. As a result, the Head of School (or the Head of School's designee), as well as law enforcement officials, have the right to search lockers to ensure School safety and the students' welfare, including, without limitation, to determine if students are harboring stolen property, weapons or illegal or dangerous substances. The School and law enforcement officials may seize such items or other items that jeopardize the safety of the students or the building or constitute health hazards. The School may also conduct random searches of School lockers and cubbies throughout the year.

POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS FOR INTERPERSONAL STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

Commitment To Respectful And Healthy Relationships

The School is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning environment for all members of its community. Such an environment precludes behaviors that are disrespectful of and physically and/or emotionally harmful to others. All members of the school community play important roles in maintaining these standards and intervening, as appropriate, when they witness behavior that conflicts with community standards.

The School expects all members of the school community to treat others with civility, respect and dignity and to interact (whether in person or electronically) politely and appropriately. Before acting, students should give careful consideration to how their communications – whether through words, appearances, actions or otherwise – may negatively impact others. All students are valued members of the School's community, which presents unique opportunities to develop lasting partnerships with peers, faculty and staff. The School strives to help students develop such close connections. However, the School expects these relationships to be appropriate and healthy. The School endeavors to promote this through education and intervention.

With these goals and interests in mind, as well as the legal requirements of the State of Illinois, the School has established policies to help students manage these interpersonal relationships safely and appropriately. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate with the Head of School, Academic Directors, advisors, and/or the Director of Student Wellness with any questions or concerns regarding these policies. The School believes that open communication about these sensitive topics is integral to preventing serious misconduct from occurring and essential to fostering a culture of personal responsibility, mutual accountability and positive peer leadership.

Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination, Hazing, Sexual Assault And Sexual Harassment

The School does not tolerate verbal or physical behavior that constitutes bullying (including cyber-bullying), harassment or discrimination, hazing, sexual assault and sexual harassment (also referred to as "interpersonal misconduct"). The School is committed to promptly addressing any behavior that impedes the learning of any student or interferes with the experience of any other member of the school community.

Bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual harassment and sexual assault are prohibited on the School's campus and the property immediately adjacent to School grounds, on School vehicles and at School-sponsored events, activities, athletic contests and off-campus trips. School-owned technology may not be used to intimidate, harass, threaten or bully another student. In addition, interpersonal misconduct is prohibited at a location, activity, function or

program that is not School-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the School, if such conduct: (a) creates a hostile environment at school for a student, (b) infringes on the rights of a student at the School, or (c) substantially disrupts the educational process or the School's orderly operations.

Definitions

Aggressor: A student or faculty/staff member who engages in bullying (including cyber-bullying), harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, sexual harassment or retaliation towards another person.

Bullying: Bullying is prohibited under the laws of the State of Illinois and is defined as the use of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, by one or more students or members of the faculty/staff directed at a target that: (a) places the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property; (b) causes a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health; (c) substantially interferes with the student's or students' academic performance; or (d) substantially interferes with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by the School.

The School recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Cyber-Bullying: Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic communication, including, but not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to: (a) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, and (b) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation constitutes bullying conduct as defined above. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to, the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person, or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions included in the definition of bullying.

Faculty/Staff: Faculty/staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff and paraprofessionals.

Harassment Or Discrimination: Harassment or discrimination is behavior that is pervasive or severe and has the purpose or effect of: (a) creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive

environment; (b) interfering unreasonably with a student's academic performance; or (c) creating a situation where academic decisions of a student depend on the student submitting to and/or not objecting to the behavior.

Harassment and discrimination can take many forms. Examples include limiting opportunities to participate in certain clubs, teams or activities based on certain characteristics, as well as slurs, jokes, statements, remarks, questions, gestures, pictures, emails, texts or cartoons regarding a legally protected status that are derogatory or demeaning to an individual's or group's characteristics or that promote stereotypes. Harassment also includes sexual harassment (as defined below).

Hate speech: verbal or non-verbal communication that expresses prejudice against a particular group especially on the basis of race, religion, or sexual orientation, including but not limited to racial slurs or gendered derogatory terms

Hazing: Hazing means knowingly requiring the performance of any act by a student or other person in a school for the purpose of induction or admission into any group, organization or society associated with that school if the act is not sanctioned or authorized by the school and, the act results in bodily harm to any person.

Hostile Environment: A hostile environment refers to a situation in which certain misconduct causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation: Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student who reports misconduct (including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault or sexual harassment), provides information during an investigation, or witnesses and/or has reliable information about such misconduct.

Sexual Assault: Sexual assault occurs when a person is forced or coerced into sexual activity without giving consent. Sexual activity includes, but is not limited to, touching or fondling, either directly or through the clothing, of another's intimate areas or any contact, intrusion or penetration of another's sex organs, anus or mouth.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is a type of harassment (as defined above). Sexual harassment includes unwilling and unwanted sexual attention, regardless of gender, from anyone with whom a person may interact in the course of attending the School or being present at school-sponsored activities.

Examples of behavior that may constitute sexual harassment include (regardless of whether the intent or consequence of such behavior is to make the target feel uncomfortable):

- a) offensive body language (staring and/or leering at a person's body or standing/brushing too close);
- b) offensive or unwanted sexual comments, abuse, jokes, insults, delivered orally or in writing, including but not limited to requests for inappropriate or sexual photos;
- c) derogatory or pornographic posters, cartoons or drawings;

- d) pressure for sexual activity (such as hazing or threats as well as repeated requests after rejections);
- e) offering favors or benefits in exchange for sexual acts, or threatening mistreatment if one does not engage in sexual acts; and
- f) offensive or unwelcome physical advances (including kissing, hugging, pinching, grabbing, groping, “playful” slapping, etc.).

Target: Any student against whom bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault or sexual harassment has been perpetrated.

Legal Definitions And School Policies

In accordance with the School’s mission, values and standards of conduct, the School has, at times, supplemented and/or provided broader protections against bullying, discrimination, harassment and other inappropriate conduct than may be required under applicable laws. In essence, the School’s standards may be stricter than the law and the School may impose discipline accordingly. The School’s efforts to enhance its protection of students in no way expand an individual’s rights under the law and other applicable laws may supersede this policy. Further, the School may modify and amplify the standards set forth above and use its discretion in the interpretative enforcement of all ideals and standards of conduct.

Reporting Complaints

A student who is the target of bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault or sexual harassment, or who has witnessed such an incident or any incident of retaliation, or who otherwise has relevant information about conduct prohibited by the School, is strongly encouraged to report the matter promptly (either orally or in writing) to the Head of School, or to any other administrator or faculty member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. If a student is uncomfortable contacting one of these individuals, the student may ask an advisor, another adult or a classmate to help. Oral reports made to a member of the faculty/staff will generally be memorialized in writing.

With respect to reporting sexual assault in particular, students are strongly urged to speak to a trusted adult on campus or at home, to the School Nurse, the School Counselor or to the Director of Student Wellness. When making such outreach, students may share as little or as much information as they would like.

Parents/guardians of a student who is the target of interpersonal misconduct, or of a student who has witnessed or otherwise has relevant information about such misconduct, are urged to immediately notify the Head of School or an Academic Director. Furthermore, any parent/guardian who has witnessed interpersonal misconduct, or has relevant information concerning such an incident or any incident of retaliation, are strongly encouraged to contact one of these administrators immediately.

The School urges students and parents/guardians not to make anonymous reports. Although there are circumstances in which an anonymous report can be better than none at all, it is far

more difficult to determine the facts of what occurred if complaints are made anonymously and disciplinary action will generally not be taken against an individual solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The School cannot promise absolute confidentiality to those reporting bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault or sexual harassment, as there may be a need to share information during an investigation or otherwise; however, the School will disclose such information with discretion, on a need-to-know basis.

False Complaints

All persons involved in a complaint or investigation should understand that false or exaggerated accusations can be extremely damaging to innocent persons; therefore, the School expects and requires the honest and full disclosure of facts, taking into account the ages of the individuals, by all involved. Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, sexual harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action.

Responding To Complaints

The goals of an investigation, and any supportive, disciplinary or other remedial process that is imposed following that investigation, are to correct the situation to the extent reasonably possible and to take steps to prevent repetition of the incident and retaliation. The School strives to make all reasonable efforts to complete an investigation in a prompt manner.

When a complaint is brought to the attention of the Head of School or the Head of School's designee, an assessment is made to determine the initial steps appropriate to protect the well-being of the students involved (including both the alleged targets and aggressors) and to prevent disruption of the learning environment while the investigation is undertaken. The School may use strategies, such as increased supervision, stay-away mandates and personal safety plans, as may be appropriate to prevent further misconduct, witness interference and/or retaliation during the course of and after the investigation.

The Head of School or Head of School's designee will conduct an impartial, fact-finding investigation of the complaint. This investigation may include (but is not necessarily limited to) interviews with the complainant, alleged target(s), alleged aggressor(s) and any other witnesses or parties who have information relevant to the alleged incident. The School may consult with faculty, the School's healthcare providers, the parents/guardians of the alleged target(s) and/or the alleged aggressor(s), or any other person deemed to have knowledge about, or circumstances surrounding, the complaint.

The School neither tolerates nor engages in retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint about interpersonal misconduct or cooperating in an investigation of such a complaint. The School will not take adverse action against a student for making a good faith report of interpersonal misconduct. An individual who is found to have engaged in retaliation against a

student for filing a complaint, or participating in the investigation of a complaint, may be subject to disciplinary action.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Head of School (or the Head of School's designee) will generally make the following determinations:

- Whether and to what extent the allegation of bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault or sexual harassment has been substantiated.
- Whether any disciplinary action and/or other remedial action is appropriate and, if so, how it will be implemented.
- Whether counseling, or a referral to appropriate services, should be offered to targets, aggressors, or family members of the affected students or targets.

The Head of School (or the Head of School's designee) will determine any appropriate disciplinary action for a student who is found to have committed an incident of bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, sexual harassment or retaliation.

Information about consequences or other corrective action may be shared with the School community as deemed appropriate by the Head of School. Such announcement may be made in person, by electronic communication or otherwise. Resources such as counseling or referral to appropriate services are available to all students – including the alleged aggressor(s) and the alleged target(s) – during and after an investigation.

Notification To Parents/Guardians

The School will generally notify the parents/guardians of the alleged target(s) and the alleged aggressor(s) promptly after a complaint has been filed, upon completion of the investigation and to report the results of the investigation. Parents/guardians of the target(s) will generally also be notified of any action to be taken to prevent further acts of bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, sexual harassment or retaliation.

In all situations, the amount of information shared by the School may be limited by confidentiality laws protecting student and employee records, other confidentiality or privacy considerations and/or concerns regarding the integrity of the investigation processes.

Notification To Government Authorities

In appropriate circumstances, such as when a crime may have been committed or a child may have been subjected to abuse or neglect of the type that is reportable under Illinois law to DCFS, law enforcement or other appropriate government agencies may be notified. At any point after receiving a report of misconduct, including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault or sexual harassment, the School may notify local law enforcement or other government agencies. If NNM receives a complaint involving students from another school, the School may notify the appropriate administrator of the other school so that both may take appropriate action.

Sanctuary Policy Applicable To Sexual Assault

Student health and safety are more important than discipline. Therefore, a student should not refrain from seeking help for fear of discipline by the School. If a student is violating a School rule when the student needs to call for help due to a sexual assault, the student will generally be granted sanctuary from discipline for the rule violation (unless, for instance, the student perpetrated the sexual assault). We reiterate that we strongly encourage students to promptly report to a School employee any incident where the health or safety of a student may be at risk.

Child Abuse And Neglect Reporting

The School is committed to the highest standards of care for its students. Under Illinois law, all professionals responsible for the care of children (including, but not limited to, teachers, school administrators, psychologist, etc.) are required to make a report to the Department of Children & Family Services (“DCFS”) when, in their professional capacity, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen (18) is suffering from abuse or neglect.

The DCFS defines “child abuse” as the mistreatment of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caretaker, someone living in their home or someone who works with or around children. The mistreatment must cause injury or put the child at risk of physical injury. Child abuse can be physical (such as burns or broken bones), sexual (such as fondling or incest) or emotional. “Neglect” happens when a parent or responsible caretaker fails to provide adequate supervision, food, clothing, shelter or other basics for a child.

DAILY LIFE AT SCHOOL

Teachers and Assistant Teachers

At **0-3**, in our Parent Infant Program, there are two adults in the classroom. In our Toddler Programs, there are three adults to 16 children. Each of these classrooms will have one trained Montessori lead teacher.

At **3-6**, there is a head teacher and two assistant teachers in the classroom during the morning work period. A lunch assistant joins the classroom for a period of time during the afternoons.

At **6-9 and 9-12 levels**, a head teacher and assistant teacher/intern are in the classroom during the work periods. A separate assistant joins the classroom for a period of time during the afternoons for lunch and recess.

At **12-14**, each House has Advisors who share responsibilities for supervising work periods and lunch. All Advisors share responsibility for covering curricular content. Some Advisors focus on Humanities (Reading, Writing and Social Studies), some focus on Science, Math and Technology and some focus on Practical Life.

School Day Schedule

7:30 am	Early morning care starts
8:00 am	Junior High lobby is open to 12-14 students
8:25 - 8:40 am	Classrooms are open for students' arrival
8:30 am - 12:00 pm	Morning work period
11:30 am - 1:00 pm	Lunch and/or recess for most levels
1:00 - 3:00/3:30 pm	Afternoon work period (and/or gym, music, electives for upper levels)
3:15 - 3:30 pm	3-6 Dismissal
3:30 - 3:45 pm	6-14 Dismissal

Teachers will provide more specific information on classroom schedules. See also, Academic Program, Curriculum.

Early Dismissal Days

The School generally has four early dismissal days throughout the school year, in which students will be dismissed from school in staggered stages between 12 and 12:15 pm. Early Dismissal Days provide NNM faculty needed time for professional growth, lesson planning, collaboration with colleagues and communication with parents.

School Delays/Cancellations

The School will notify parents of school delays/cancellations due to inclement weather or other emergencies as soon as practicable via email, text and voicemail messages.

School closings are at the discretion of the Head of School (or the Head of School's designee) together with the Board President (or the Board President's designee). Such closings, although infrequent, are sometimes necessary due to severe weather and other possible factors, including:

- Unsafe traveling conditions due to snow or ice;
- Weather predictions for the next 12 hours;
- The condition and frequency of public transportation;
- Inadequate heat or water in the School;
- Extremely cold temperatures affecting vehicles;
- Staff exposure to extremely cold temperatures during carpool; or
- Emergencies involving community safety.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

Procedures for morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up can be found by reviewing the "NNM Pick-Up and Drop-Off Procedures" documents available in print, electronically and sent via email at the start of the year. These procedures were developed to help ensure the safe and orderly movement of students in and out of the building and are reviewed and revised regularly. Any questions regarding carpool should be directed to the NNM Safety and Security Coordinator.

Before School Care

NNM offers Early Morning Care throughout the school year for students ages 3-12 from 7:30 am to 8:15 am. Early Morning Care is typically held in the following locations:

- Toddler and 3-6 level students in their classrooms
- 6-9 level and 9-12 level students in the 9-12 After School room, "The Hangout"
- 12-14 level students who arrive early may visit with one another in the fourth floor lobby starting at 8:00 am

Parents may register for Early Morning Drop-In Care online with information provided by the Programs office for each of the three sessions. Parents may also send their child(ren) to Early Morning Care on an as-needed basis without prior registration. Parents' account will be billed for as-needed early arrivals. There is no registration necessary for 12-14 students as care at this level is complimentary.

After School Care

Divided by levels (3-6, 6-9, 9-12 and 12-14), After School Care provides a lightly structured environment where students can interact freely with friends while enjoying games, outdoor play and a variety of activities.

All students enrolled in After School Care (except 12-14) receive a healthy, peanut and tree nut-free snack. While the program is less structured than the student's Montessori day, it follows the same guidelines and expectations.

After School Care, available in hour-long increments from 3:30 pm-5:30 pm, can supplement the schedule of students signed up for After School special activities.

Parents may register for After School online with information provided by the Programs office for each of three sessions. Parents may also send their child(ren) to general After School Care on an as-needed basis by ordering a "Drop-in Slip" either online or by phone. Extra fees apply.

Early Departure for Students

It is expected that students are in attendance at school for the full school day. Occasionally, a student may need to be picked up early. In such circumstances, the teacher should receive advanced notice from the parent via email, voicemail or written note within a reasonable time frame. Students who are elementary-aged or older should be responsible for getting themselves to the Main Office at the agreed upon pick-up time. Younger students will be brought to the Main Office at the agreed upon pick-up time. If a student is not in the Main Office at the agreed upon pick-up time, the office staff will radio the classroom to remind the student to come to the Main Office for pick up.

Classroom Celebrations

Birthdays & Parties

Students' birthdays are celebrated in the classroom. The birthday student (or "half-birthday" for students with June-August birthdays) is welcome to bring a nut-free treat to share with the entire class. Appropriate treats include muffins (blueberry, lemon, etc.), special breads (banana, carrot, zucchini), fruits or fruit popsicles. High-sugar treats like cookies, doughnuts, and frosted cakes/cupcakes are discouraged for students in the 0-6 levels. Please check with the teacher for special birthday traditions associated with individual classes.

Private birthday party invitations must be distributed outside of school. Parents can utilize *the Parent Portal* for addresses to mail or email parents of classmates regarding personal social events or celebrations.

Valentine's Day

Each level or classroom may celebrate this occasion in its own individual way and teachers will inform parents and students of the class's method. Students are encouraged to create their own Valentines to share with each child in the classroom. For easy distribution, Valentines should only have your child's name on them (who it is *from*).

Cultural Celebrations

Students and families are encouraged to share cultural celebrations with their classmates. Teachers welcome such events and are happy to help coordinate these celebrations with parents and students. These celebrations may include such traditions as decorating sugar skulls for Day of the Dead, making Latkes for Hanukkah or stories or dances from family or religious traditions.

School Assemblies and Performances

All-School assemblies, performances and concerts may be held during the school year. Assemblies and performances are generally hosted by faculty and performed by students. Events such as these offer members of the School community the opportunity to watch and support our peers and friends while learning more about NNM and Montessori curriculum and programs. On occasion, we are fortunate to be able to welcome visiting speakers and performers. Attendees are expected to exemplify responsible, supportive and appropriate audience behavior throughout the performance.

Check the School's *This Week* and family calendar for performance and presentation dates and times.

Public Transit for 12-14 Junior High Students

Junior High students aged 12-14 are encouraged to travel to and from school by public transportation. Students at this age have a need for independence appropriate to their age and environment. Students from the same area are encouraged to travel together for added safety as well as the pleasure of companionship.

Students who take public transportation, walk or ride a bicycle to school at any point in the school year must have a parental permission slip on file. Once a student leaves for the day, the student is no longer regarded as being in the care of the School and may not come back into the building.

Junior High classes will use the CTA on a regular basis. Each student will need a CTA card/pass that the student will use throughout the year. The student may purchase a reduced-rate card at the front desk and is responsible for maintaining the card's balance.

Student Lockers and Valuables

All students are assigned their own lockers at the beginning of the school year. These lockers are labeled by the classroom teacher. Students may decorate the inside of their lockers with pictures of their family, so long as the decorations do not become a disruption to the student's or other students' day at school. Older students may be permitted to decorate the outside of their locker in the spirit of good taste and judgment (at the discretion of the School) and need to take it down at the end of the academic year. All lockers are considered the property of the School and are subject to search and inspection, consistent with the School's Search and Seizure policy.

Personal materials are to be stored in lockers. All personal belongings should be properly labeled and are the sole responsibility of the student. A student should never open another student's locker.

Lockers should be kept neat and organized. The area around the locker is the student's responsibility and should be kept clean. Backpacks should fit inside lockers; if a backpack cannot fit inside a locker, it may be stored in a designated area in the classroom. Backpacks may not be stored on top of lockers.

Food at School

Students are more likely to eat and enjoy their meals if they participate in its planning and preparation. Students should be given a selection of balanced and healthy foods. Although opinions vary greatly about nutrition, it is widely accepted that the saturated fats and sugary foods are less healthy than grains, fruits, vegetables and protein rich food. Many granola bars and fruit wraps have less nutrition and more sugar than the advertising portrays. The School encourages students to try to avoid beverages containing excessive sugar, corn syrup, sucrose, dextrose or chemical-based sugar substitutes. Water and milk are available for lunch. Milk can be purchased online through *My BackPack*.

In general, all classrooms within the 0-9 levels are peanut and tree-nut free. After-school programs providing snacks to students are nut free as well. For more information on food allergies and the School's "Allergic Food Free Zones," please reference the section on Student Health Services, Food Allergies of this Handbook.

Sandwich Shoppe Options

To reinforce the School's Montessori's educational tenet that economic independence is a vital area of development at the adolescent level, the School has designed a curriculum that teaches Microeconomics through the Sandwich Shoppe.

The Sandwich Shoppe program is a multifaceted operation; it provides a unique educational experience while fulfilling a very real need within the School community (namely, the need for school lunch). Junior High staff take great efforts to make this experience as meaningful and

educational as possible, and including the School and parent community is paramount.

Under the overall supervision of the Sandwich Shoppe Teacher (licensed Food Manager for Chicago and Illinois), each of the three Junior High Houses take a turn managing and operating Sandwich Shoppe during the academic year.

The NNM Sandwich Shoppe program allows students opportunities to practice leadership, communication, presentations, problem-solving and teamwork. It offers healthy lunch alternatives at reasonable prices, and is generally available Tuesday through Thursday to NNM students (please check the School calendar for the specific schedule).

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Accreditation

NNM holds accreditations from or is recognized by the DCFS, the Illinois State Board of Education and the Independent Schools of the Central States. In addition, NNM holds a professional membership in: the Association of Illinois Montessori Schools, the Association Montessori Internationale, the American Montessori Society, the Lake Michigan Association of Independent Schools, the National Association of Independent Schools, the National Business Officers Association and the North American Montessori Teachers Association.

Governance

The NNM Board of Directors (the “Board”) consists of between 13 and 18 voting members and the Head of School as an ex-officio non-voting member. For a list of the School’s current Board, please visit the School’s website.

The Board provides guidance and direction for the School, oversees budgeting to ensure the School’s financial stability and ensures that the School maintains its focus on its educational mission. Individuals on the Board possess a wide range of experience and talents and also serve on Board Committees.

Members of the NNM community are welcome to attend open Board meetings. Meetings are held at least four times a year, typically on Monday evenings and notification of such meetings are listed in the *This Week* and in the NNM family calendar.

Notice to apply to serve on the Board is posted in the *This Week* during the month of January with interviews typically starting in February. You may also contact the Board President or Head of School to express your interest in serving on a committee or the School Board.

Parent-School Communication

Communication between parents and the School is vital. Parents may contact a teacher via email or by calling the School’s main phone number and leaving a message for a particular faculty member.

The School uses these methods to communicate with NNM families:

- Weekly e-news, the *This Week*, regarding school activities;
- Teacher/parent conferences and shared notes post-conference;
- Parent observation, followed by a brief conference;
- Teacher Class Page and/or e-communications from teachers to parents;
- Back-to-School Nights, class presentations and other parent workshops; and

- Urgent Alert System for emergencies such as school cancellations or delays

Student Media Information

In order to portray its program accurately and vibrantly, the School makes a concerted effort to highlight the accomplishments of our students and faculty, as well as to publicize the strength of the entire program offered by the School, in a variety of media formats. Student Media Information—including student names, photographic images (for example, portrait, picture, video, or other reproductions), audio recordings of students' voices, video recordings of students and/or reproductions of students' work and likenesses—may be used for educational and/or promotional purposes in print and electronic media. Outlets for publication of Student Media Information may include, but not be limited to, the School magazine, marketing materials, the School website, press releases, social media outlets (including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), newsletters and local newspapers. The School adheres to the following general guidelines when using Student Media Information:

- Photographs or references to Student Media Information in traditional, print publications, such as our yearbook and School publications, may include the first and/or last names of students and community members.
- Photographs or references to Student Media Information on the public portion of our website will not include last names, without written consent from the family.
- The School will not post student names on social media websites, without written consent from the family.
- While the School strives to abide by parent/guardian wishes, we do not guarantee incidental use of a student's name or image will never occur. Parents are asked to contact the School if they would like to opt out of the use of Student Media Information.

Classroom Observations

Parents have the unique opportunity to observe their child's classroom during a weekday observation. After observing a student's classroom experience, typically a short meeting with the teacher follows. Being present to see the work period unfold is a wonderful way to gain a better understanding of Montessori philosophy, a student's experience, and to see the multi-age classroom community in action. Parents can schedule a classroom observation through the School's website or by contacting our receptionists. Observations usually take place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, between the months of late October through the end of April.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parents new to a classroom will have a scheduled October conference with their child's teacher. Scheduled parent-teacher conferences are also held mid-year - late January/early February - for parents across all levels, with the exception for 7th graders who have a spring conference in March. Parents of students moving up from the Toddler Community and 3-6 will have an end of

year parent-teacher conference in May. Following these mid-year conferences, parents will receive a summary of conference discussions (except for Junior High students who receive mid-term grades instead). School is not in session during October and mid-year conferences, but students, who are independent and able, are free to visit the library while parents meet with the teacher. At the Junior High level, students participate in and lead the conference by presenting a self-evaluation to their parents and teachers.

Parents may request a conference at any other time by contacting the classroom teacher or academic director.

Religious and Cultural Observances

Various holidays are recognized and discussed with activities that convey the cultural significance of the holiday. The School recognizes, but does not celebrate, holidays from a religious perspective. If a particular holiday or its traditions are important to a student's heritage, and the student would like to share information with other students at the School, the student is invited to contact the teacher to make arrangements for a presentation about the holiday and its traditions.

Background Checks

In accordance with Illinois law, the School conducts fingerprint-based criminal history checks and statewide sex offender background checks on all applicants for employment, current employees and contractors who have direct, daily contact with students. In addition, the School conducts similar background checks on any parent volunteers who will be spending time with students without the supervision of School personnel. The School also checks the driving records of any parent volunteers who will be driving students (other than the parents' own children) for School-sponsored activities.

Current Family Contact Information

Parents are expected to keep the School informed of name, address and telephone changes both at home and at work as well as contact changes for emergency situations. This information can be changed by the parent themselves via *My Backpack* (My Profile/Biography). If a parent is going to be away from home for an extended length of time, please leave a forwarding address and telephone number where you can be reached, as well as information regarding who will be responsible for the student and how they may be reached in case of illness or other emergency.

Multiple Households

In order for the School to most effectively communicate with parents and support each student, it is important for teachers and administrators to be aware of students who spend time in multiple households. Please be sure to communicate to the School about primary caregivers in the event of an emergency, and whether special co-parenting arrangements exist. If there are court-ordered guidelines regarding visitations, picking up a student from School, parent involvement in field trips or other issues, please include the School in your communication loop. These situations can be stressful for parents and confusing for students, and your help in minimizing the School's phone calls to you for clarification is very important. Unless otherwise specified, each parent for whom the Main Office has current contact information will receive information regarding the student as well as other informational mailings, fundraising solicitations and electronic communications during the year.

Communication with Teacher

The School will assume both parents/guardians will be in attendance at parent-teacher conferences; however, parents are welcome to request separate conferences with adequate notice for scheduling purposes. Parents must make it clear to teachers whether the primary parent, both parents or the parent in whose care the child will be that day, is to be contacted regarding incidents in school that day.

Financial Obligations and Multiple Households

When parents are divorced or separated, or when more than one party is responsible for paying for tuition, fees and other auxiliary expenses, each party is jointly and severally liable for all charges incurred due to the student's enrollment in NNM. The School will generally provide separate invoices and receive separate payments and payment instructions based on the information provided in a written form signed by the parties responsible for the payments. The School will not negotiate the agreement as to who pays what; that must be determined by either a court decree or by private agreement between the parties. If one party does not make the required payment, both parties are considered responsible.

Policy Regarding the Release of Information

NNM may release information regarding tuition payments and other payments made on behalf of a student(s) attending NNM only to the parent/guardian who makes those payments, unless NNM receives a signed Release Form (provided by the School) from the paying parent granting NNM permission to release the requested information to the non-paying parent/guardian. The signed form needs to be received by the Business Office before any information will be released.

Financial Aid Policy for Divorced Families

NNM requires both parents to complete an application for financial aid. Our financial aid software allows each parent to complete one application with a "Family 1" and a "Family 2"

component. The information in each family application is confidential and is not seen by the other parent. The determination of aid for the student(s) will be based on a review of the combined total resources available from Family 1 and Family 2 applications. The award, if any, will be presented as a grant per student, reducing the tuition that will be charged for that student. The determination of who pays what portion of the net tuition is to be determined by the parents without involvement from the School (see Financial Obligations and Multiple Households, above).

Pledges and Multiple Households

Long-term pledges that originated when the family was a single household continue to be an obligation of both parties in the case of divorce or separation. The determination of who pays what portion of the pledge is to be determined by the parents without involvement from the School.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Students

The School strives to provide a safe and supportive environment that will help students succeed academically and socially. To that end, the School promotes respect for all people, and will not tolerate harassment or bullying based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. This is the case whether the bullying or harassment takes place on or off campus, including cyber-bullying through the use of electronic technology (on or off the School's campus, and on or off the School's network). Particularly with respect to transgender and gender nonconforming students, the School will work closely with students and their families to strive to honor their wishes with respect to use of School facilities, participation in athletics, accuracy of student records, use of name and pronouns and privacy, in accordance with applicable law, and to the extent that the School's campus facilities reasonably permit.

A guide for Accommodating & Supporting Transgender and Gender-Expansive Students is found at Appendix F of this Handbook.

Visitors to Campus

For the safety of our students, our Visitor policy includes alumni and visitors from outside of the School community who can enter through the main entrance on Division St. Upon arrival, all visitors should check in with the receptionists to obtain a Visitor's Pass and sign in. Visitors for special events for an entire class event or all School meetings need not sign in but may be asked to carry a visitor pass.

Pets on Campus

Family pets need to be left at home at all times for health and safety reasons. They should not be in attendance during the School day or at special occasions. No matter how gentle and beloved, we do not want a dog, cat, ferret, bird or any other pet introduced into a classroom,

hallway or play area where a student may have severe allergies or fears that can be triggered by the presence of animals. Any type of service animal must be approved, in advance, by the Head of School and Academic Director.

Student Records and Transcripts

Students' records are kept on file at the School. A student's file contains a transcript with grades (Junior High), test scores, results from speech and language screenings, summaries of parent-teacher conferences, formal academic recommendations, medical and health forms and letters involving any major discipline infractions. NNM maintains certified copies of birth certificates for each student enrolled and notifies parents or guardians that such documentation must be submitted within 30 days of enrolling the student. Upon the failure of a person enrolling a child to present a birth certificate, the School shall immediately notify the local law enforcement agency of such failure, and shall notify the person enrolling the child in writing that s/he has 10 additional days to comply.

A student's permanent file contains current IDH Medical Forms, any test scores and grades if the student completed the Junior High program. If a student applies to transfer to another school, NNM will typically send unofficial student records to a transfer school within 10 days of a request once we have received a release form signed by a parent. The School will flag records for any current or former student reported as a missing person by the Illinois State Police ("ISP") and report any requests made for records of a missing child to the ISP.

School Directory

The School has a directory of class lists and contact information for families, faculty and staff, and other members of the community. The Directory is updated each September and made available to families in print and online. The Directory may only be used for School-purposes, and not for personal or commercial purposes. Failure to properly use the Directory may result in restricted use.

Lost and Found

All lost-and-found items will be placed on clothing racks outside the little gym. At the end of each trimester, unclaimed items are given to local charity organizations.

School Supplies and Books

Students are provided writing and math notebooks, paper, pocket folders, presentation boards and more. Students are encouraged to be responsible and conservative with school supplies. If school supplies are needed beyond what the School provides, parents will be notified.

Gift Giving

The holidays are a popular time for parents and students to show their appreciation for a teacher, assistant or other School staff member. However, the spirit of the holidays can easily be overshadowed by materialism and stress. We recommend expressions of appreciation in the form of a thoughtful note, homemade gift or small personal gift.

The collection of money for individual classroom teachers as a holiday or end of year gift is not permitted. Collections for a staff member or teacher are permitted for such occasions as a wedding celebration or the birth of a child. Parents should check with the Head of School, academic director or the Advancement Director before starting a cash collection for a faculty or staff member. Usually the Main Office can help facilitate such a collection approved by the administration.

Each spring, parents are invited to show their appreciation for all staff by contributing to the Teacher/Staff Appreciation Fund. Donations to this fund are distributed to NNM teachers and staff in July.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act Notice

This notification is required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA, 40 CFR Part 763 of Title II of the Toxic Substances Control Act). Asbestos Management Plans have been developed for the School. These plans are available and accessible to the public at the School's Operations & Facilities Office.

This notification is required by law and should not be construed to indicate the existence of any hazardous conditions in our school buildings.

LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community Exchange/Service

The School looks for opportunities to build relationships with the wider community, outside of the School. The School believes it is important to enter into Community Exchange or Community Service relationships as equal partners, with both parties getting something important out of the project and receiving something in return. Many projects spring organically from the classroom and students' work.

At the Junior High level, we require each student to volunteer at least 15 hours per school year. Sometimes, the student can accumulate hours by volunteering with their classmates in an activity that's been arranged by their teachers, but often students need to make their

volunteering arrangements on their own and/or with their families. The Junior High Director will communicate volunteering opportunities as they arise.

Student Activities and Organizations

After School activities expand a student's experience, develop skills and build character. Students gain the confidence to take on and master new challenges. The activities currently offered at NNM include: all band instruments, ceramics, chess, computers, cooking, dance, Taekwondo, guitar, robotics, movement games, painting, piano, science, violin, voice and writing/graphics for media.

In addition, there are student organizations available for students to join and become involved in, including student-organized diversity groups such as Blotch. Any student interested in starting a student organization must present their ideas and get approval from an Academic Director.

Student Fundraising

Students may choose to raise money to support a specific cause or organization. Students interested in doing so must submit a proposal to their teacher and the Academic Director or Head of School explaining the scope and resources needed to conduct an independent fundraiser. These fundraisers are to be entirely student led and organized.

Student Publications

Any student-written School publications (newspapers, magazines, anthologies, etc.), whether in hard copy or digital, must adhere to School rules and appropriateness. They must be approved by the Head of School or an academic director prior to publication. A School yearbook is available for sale each year to all students and is generally delivered in the spring.

LIBRARY

The School has a comfortable library, available to students, parents and staff. Materials include an extensive selection of books, a parent/professional library, an online ebook and audio collection, and a variety of magazines, audiobooks, video tapes and CDs. Computers are also available for student research.

- Toddler Community and 3-6 Students: Parents may check out books and other materials from the library for themselves or their children for as long as one month.
- Five-Year-Old Students: Students may visit the library independently and at the teacher's discretion. They may borrow a book to bring to the classroom reading corner when they are able to write their first name. Books are due the next day.
- 6-9 Students: Books and other materials may be used in the classroom or brought home. Items may be checked out for one week and renewed as needed.
- 9-12 Students: Books and other materials may be checked out for two weeks and renewed as needed. Computers may be checked out for one hour during the day and/or overnight.
- 12-14 Students: Books and other materials may be checked out for three weeks and renewed as needed. Computers may be checked out for one hour during the day and/or overnight.

The library is available as a supervised study hall for 9-14 students on a daily basis, except one when closed for faculty meetings, typically 1-2 Wednesdays per month. Please note that this study hall does not serve in place of After School Care.

Damaged/Lost Materials

When an item is overdue from the library, the student is reminded by the librarian and asked to look for it at school and at home. If the item is lost or damaged, parents may be contacted asking for help in finding it or helping the student earn the replacement cost from allowance or special jobs. Students may also arrange to work in the library to earn the replacement cost. The emphasis is on personal responsibility.

Parent/Professional Library

Parents may check out books and other materials from the library and the parent/professional library. Materials may be checked out for one month and renewed if desired. Please do not remove books from the cases outside the library without first checking them out with the library staff.

Student Assigned Books and Textbooks

Students are responsible for any books or textbooks assigned to them in class. These may include group reading copies and Junior Great Books. If a book is lost or badly damaged, the student will be responsible, per the Damaged/Lost Materials section above.

Chicago Public Library Use

Each Junior High student is expected to have and use a Chicago Public Library Card to assist in research outside of the School. Students who live outside the city limits may discuss alternatives with their classroom teacher. Students are responsible for obtaining their own Chicago Public Library Card before the school year starts. They are also responsible for paying any late fees and ensuring that the card is available for use.

ATHLETICS & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Extra-Curricular Team Sports

The athletic program at NNM is designed to challenge student athletes to achieve their highest potential, while providing them opportunities for the lifetime development of physical, mental and social skills. It is our vision for every student to become confident in physical activities that bring them pleasure and help them develop character, self-esteem, teamwork, leadership and strength.

Eligibility

Students are required to be physically fit to participate in physical education classes and athletics, or must have a valid medical exemption from participation pursuant to the Medical and Other Exemption policy in this Handbook. Students must be in school for the majority of the school day to be eligible for participation in athletics and all extracurricular activities.

Our no-cut sports policy ensures that all students have the opportunity to join a team and learn strategy, leadership, teamwork and responsibility. NNM students in the 5th-8th grades participate in seasonal sports with other independent schools in the area. Such sports include: cross country, flag football, volleyball, basketball, softball, soccer and track. Students may also participate in swim team and water polo.

Parents may sign children up for these activities through the Programs or Athletics Offices.

Sportsmanship

Athletics enhance the overall educational experience and build well-rounded students and leaders. Integrity, fairness and respect are the principles of good sportsmanship. With them, the spirit of competition thrives, fueled by honest rivalry, courteous relations and graceful acceptance of the results. Sportsmanship goals include:

- Developing a sense of dignity under all circumstances;
- Respecting the rules of the game, the officials who administer the rules and their decisions;
- Respecting opponents as fellow students and acknowledging them for striving to do their best while you seek to do your best at the same time;
- Looking at athletic participation as a potentially beneficial learning experience, whether you win or lose;
- Educating other students and fans to understand the rules of the game and the value of sportsmanship; and
- Accepting the personal responsibility that comes with your actions on the court/field.

The School also encourages parents to act in a sportsmanlike manner. As such, the School encourages parents to:

- Realize that athletics are part of the educational experience, and that the benefits of involvement goes beyond the final score of a game;
- Encourage students to perform their best, just as we would urge them on with their class-work, knowing that others will always turn in better or lesser performances;
- Participate in **POSITIVE** cheers and encourage our athletes, and discourage any cheer that would redirect that focus;
- Learn, understand and respect the rules of the game, the officials who administer them and their decisions;
- Respect the task our coaches face as teachers, and support them as they strive to educate our youth;
- Respect our opponents as students, and acknowledge them for striving to do their best; and
- Remember that we would all like to be victorious in every situation we face in life, but just like in athletic competition, sometimes we fall short.

Parent-Coach Communications

As with parent-teacher and parent-advisor relations, athletics promotes the establishment of good communication between parents and coaches. It is assumed that parents and coaches will understand their respective roles in order to best support our student athletes. In an effort to promote effective communication, the following guidelines should be followed:

Parents may expect to learn from coaches information about:

- The coach's and program's philosophy;
- Individual and team expectations;
- Location and times of all practices and games;
- Team requirements (*i.e.*, practices, equipment, off-season conditioning);
- Procedures regarding injuries during practices/games; and
- Discipline that may result in the denial of participation.

Parents are expected to:

- Express concerns directly to the coach;
- Notify coaches well in advance of any schedule conflicts;
- Support the program; and
- Encourage students to strive for excellence.

Appropriate concerns for parents to discuss with coaches include, but are not limited to:

- Students' psychological or physical treatment;
- Ways to help students develop and improve;
- Questions about the coach's philosophy; and
- Concerns regarding students' behavior during athletics.

Inappropriate concerns for parents to discuss with coaches include, but are not limited to:

- The amount of playing time for students;
- Team strategies or play calls; and
- Other student-athletes.

If a parent has a concern to discuss with a coach, the parent should:

- Call to set up an appointment with the coach;
- If the coach cannot be reached, call the Athletic Director who will help to set up a meeting with the coach;
- Not confront a coach before, after or during a practice or game; and
- If, after meeting with a coach, a parent still has concerns, the parent should call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.

Medical and Other Exemption

Any student who is to be excused from physical education or athletics must bring in a medical exemption signed by a doctor and present it to the School Nurse. For the first day of an excused absence from physical education, a parent note is acceptable. For excused absences from physical education for more than one day, a doctor's note is necessary.

Concussion Awareness Protocol

Parents are required to sign the NNM Concussion Information Sheet at the start of the school year, which will be distributed by email or made available online. Students are not permitted to partake in any sports-related activity unless the signed form has been submitted to the Athletics/PE Director. The Information Sheet informs parents how to recognize the signs and symptoms of a concussion and what to do if you suspect your child has suffered a concussion.

The academic and extracurricular impact on a student diagnosed with a concussion will vary and be unique to the situation. The focus of our policy is on communication and education concerning concussions, the understanding of NNM's role for managing a student's education when diagnosed with a concussion, and the responsibilities of the parent/guardian of the student diagnosed with a concussion.

Concussions are both a medical and educational concern. Assessing problems with learning and school performance, and then making appropriate and necessary changes to a student's learning plan is a collaborative effort between the family, the student's health care provider and the School.

A concussion is a brain injury that temporarily changes the way the brain works. Concussions are a common problem in sports and have the potential for serious complications if not managed correctly. They can be caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head.

Signs & Symptoms of a Concussion

Concussions can appear in many different ways. Concussions cannot be seen, and most occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. Listed below are some of the signs and symptoms frequently associated with concussions. Most signs, symptoms and abnormalities after a concussion fall into the four categories listed below. A coach, parent or other person who knows the student well can often detect these problems by observing the student and/or by asking a few relevant questions of the student, official or a teammate who was on the field or court at the time of the concussion.

Below are some suggested observations and questions a non-medical individual can use to help determine whether a student has suffered a concussion and how urgently he or she should be sent for appropriate medical care.

1. Problems in Brain Function
 - Confused State – dazed look, vacant stare or confusion about what happened or is happening.
 - Memory Problems – can't remember assignment on play, opponent, score of game, or period of the game; can't remember how or with whom the student traveled to the game, what the student was wearing, what the student ate for breakfast, etc.
 - Symptoms Reported by Athlete – headache, nausea or vomiting; blurred or double vision; oversensitivity to sound, light or touch; ringing in ears; feeling foggy or groggy; or dizziness.
 - Lack of Sustained Attention – difficulty sustaining focus adequately to complete a task, a coherent thought or a conversation.
2. Speed of Brain Function – Slow response to questions, slow slurred speech, incoherent speech, slow body movements and slow reaction time.
3. Unusual Behaviors – Behaving in a combative, aggressive or nonsensical manner; atypical behavior for the individual; repeatedly asking the same question; restless and irritable behavior with constant motion and attempts to return to play; reactions that seem out of proportion and inappropriate; and having trouble resting or “finding a comfortable position.”
4. Problems with Balance & Coordination - Dizziness, slow, clumsy movements, inability to walk in a straight line or balance on one foot with eyes closed.

If no medical personnel are on hand and an injured athlete has any of the above symptoms, the student should be sent for appropriate medical care.

Checking for a Concussion

If a student sustains a sports-related head injury, including a suspected concussion, the athletic trainer or School Nurse must be notified immediately so that concussion assessment can be administered. In addition to observation and direct questioning for symptoms, medical

professionals and athletic trainers have a number of other instruments to evaluate attention, processing speed, memory, balance, reaction time, and ability to think and analyze information (called executive brain function). These are the brain functions that are most likely to be adversely affected by a concussion and most likely to persist during the post concussion period.

If a student seems “clear,” the student should exercise enough to increase the heart rate and then be evaluated to determine whether any symptoms appear.

If a student sustains a concussion, the Athletic/PE Director, School Nurse, or Coach are expected to notify parents and appropriate school staff and follow the protocol established for concussion management.

Sideline Management of a Suspected Concussion

1. Coaches will use their best judgment based on how the injury occurred, observation, the student’s history and any unusual behavior or reactions of the athlete. Coaches will likely assume a concussion has occurred if the head was hit and even the mildest of symptoms occur.
2. If confusion, unusual behavior or responsiveness, deteriorating condition, loss of consciousness, or concern about neck and spine injury exists, the student should be referred at once for emergency care.
3. If a medical professional, or athletic trainer is available, they should monitor the student every 5-10 minutes. The student’s mental status, attention, balance, behavior, speech and memory should be examined until stable over a few hours. If appropriate medical care is not available, a student even with mild symptoms should be sent for medical evaluation.
4. No student suspected of having a concussion should return to the same practice or contest, even if symptoms clear in 15 minutes.

Concussion Oversight Team (COT)

The COT’s primary function is to develop return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols for students believed to have experienced a concussion. The protocols are based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence consistent with guidelines from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

The COT may include some combination of the following:

- Head of School;
- PE/Athletic Director;
- School Nurse; and
- Academic Director (i.e., Primary, Elementary and Junior High Directors).

Management of Concussions

Every concussion is different, and treatment and recovery from a concussion is an individualized process. A student with signs or symptoms of a concussion should be evaluated by a healthcare professional. Maximizing a student’s recovery potential following a concussion depends on timely implementation of cognitive and physical rest.

Increasing evidence is suggesting that initial signs and symptoms, including loss of consciousness and amnesia, may not be very predictive of the true severity of the injury and the prognosis or outcome. More importance is being assigned to the duration of such symptoms and this, along with data showing symptoms may worsen some time after the head injury, has shifted focus to continued monitoring of the student. This is one reason why these guidelines no longer include an option to return a student to play even if clear in 15 minutes and why there is no discussion about the “Grade” of the concussion.

Any student who is removed from play because of a concussion should have medical clearance from an appropriate health care professional before being allowed to return to play or practice. The Second International Conference on Concussion held in Prague recommends an athlete should not return to practice or competition in sport until the athlete is asymptomatic including after exercise.

Recent information suggests that mental exertion, as well as physical exertion, should be avoided until concussion symptoms have cleared. Premature mental or physical exertion may lead to more severe and more prolonged post concussion period. Therefore, the student should not study, play video games, do computer work or phone texting until the student’s symptoms are resolving. Once symptoms are clear, the student should try reading for short periods of time. When 1-2 hours of studying can be done without symptoms developing, the athlete may return to school for short periods gradually increasing until a full day of school is tolerated without return of symptoms.

Once the student is able to complete a full day of school work, without PE or other exertion, the student can begin the gradual return to play protocol. Each step increases the intensity and duration of the physical exertion until all skills required by the specific sport can be accomplished without symptoms. These recommendations have been based on the awareness of the increased vulnerability of the brain to concussions occurring close together and of the cumulative effects of multiple concussions on long-term brain function.

Return-To-Play Protocol

1. No student should return to play (RTP) on the same day as a suspected concussion.
2. Any student removed from play because of a concussion must have medical clearance from a medical doctor or athletic trainer, submitted to NNM’s Concussion Oversight Team. The team will review the clearance and notify the coach or coaches when the student is eligible to return to play or practice.
3. After medical clearance, RTP will follow the steps and guidelines provided by the medical note for each individual student.

Return to Learn Protocol

Because concussions and their subsequent recovery affect learning, NNM is committed to safely and gradually having students return to full participation in the classroom. Concussions and plans for recovery vary among individual students. Students that have completed the Return To Play protocol are not necessarily ready to return to the classroom. Likewise, students who have completed the Return To Learn (RTL) protocol may not necessarily be ready to return to their respective sports practices or games.

NNM students who are suspected of having suffered a concussion, or have a medically documented concussion, must adhere to the following RTL protocol.

1. No School – Complete physical and cognitive rest until medical clearance.
2. Return to school with academic accommodations. The student may return to school subject to reasonable accommodations, as determined in collaboration between the COT and the student's doctor.
3. Return to school full time with no accommodations.

Communication

Please refer to the Athletic Calendar on the School's website which is updated regularly, or call the Main Office for last minute changes due to weather and daily events.

Physical Education

Physical education is an integral part of the School's curriculum and is designed to provide optimum growth and development for each student. The Physical Education program at NNM begins in 3-6 with developmental gym and continues all the way through 12-14. In 3-6, students can visit the developmental gym in the mornings and work on their fine motor skills, coordination, flexibility, strength, balance and comprehension of basic sports skills. The third year student in 3-6 also have a group class once a week where they focus on larger cooperative games and activities. In 6-9, the students also have the option of developmental gym in the mornings in addition to having organized PE classes twice a week. The 9-12 students have PE twice a week and every other Friday. In 12-14, students have PE four times a week. Students in 6-9, 9-12, and 12-14 will participate in the following PE sessions throughout the school year: swim, dance, yoga, team sports, team building games, and fitness. A schedule will be provided to all classroom teachers and will be shared with the parents.

Athletic Wear & Uniforms

Students are expected to wear proper attire for sports practices, competitive events and on days they have PE. This includes:

- Proper gym/athletic shoes;
- Loose, comfortable clothing, such as a t-shirt, sweat pants and sweat tops;
- PE uniform starting in 9-12; and
- Swimsuit, goggles, towel and a swim cap if hair is past earlobes

Items that should not be worn for sports practices, competitive events or in PE:

- Metal cleats;
- Boots, heeled shoes, dress shoes, slip ons, crocs;
- Jewelry;
- Hats;
- Bulky clothing; and

- Jeans or tight fitting pants.

At the beginning of a sports season, all players will be issued a team uniform, which they will be responsible for maintaining. Uniforms will be worn only on game days and will be collected at the end of the season. Any athlete who has not returned the athlete's uniform, or has returned it in poor condition, at the conclusion of a season will be billed.

Personal Progress Tracking

Students will track their own development and growth throughout their time in PE with the help of the PE staff. PE assessment forms will be given to classroom teachers before parent teacher conferences. Progress tracking will include:

Personal physical growth tracking, specifically:

- Situps;
- Pushups;
- 40 yard dash;
- Mile run;
- Pacer test (endurance run);
- Agility course; and
- Swim strokes.

Other areas of progress tracking:

- Sport comprehension;
- Water safety;
- Sportsmanship;
- Effort;
- Cooperation;
- Inclusion;
- Knowledge of the skeletal and muscular system; and
- Problem solving.

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

Student Health

Parents are encouraged to carefully assess student health each morning and determine if the student is well enough to attend school. Regular school attendance is important for students to make adequate progress in their learning. However, a parent should keep a student home from school if the student has an aggressive cold, fever, diarrhea or is vomiting. Students who develop a fever of 100.0 degrees F or greater, vomiting or diarrhea will be asked to go home. Students must be symptom-free for 24 hours without the assistance of medication or have written approval from their healthcare provider before returning to school.

It is not uncommon for students first entering school to be susceptible to contracting many different illnesses. Eventually they seem to build up immunity and be less vulnerable to contagious illnesses. If your child develops a contagious disease such as, but not limited to, chicken pox, strep throat, scarlet fever, pinworms or fifth disease, please contact the Main Office so that exposure notices can be sent out at once. A student should return to school only when well or at the recommendation of the student's physician.

Head lice are common among school age students. Please see the Head Lice section below for more information.

School Nurse

There is a full-time School Nurse on campus. The School Nurse evaluates students who become ill during the school day and contacts their parents as appropriate. The School Nurse is typically available in her office five days per week during the school day. In addition, the School Nurse is responsible for ensuring that all student medical forms are current and on file.

Health, Medical and Dental Information

A completed medical form is required for all new students before entering the School, and all continuing students who are entering the Toddler Program, 3-6 program, five-year-olds (kindergarten equivalent) and all 6th grade students. The State of Illinois Certificate of Child Health Information Form will be emailed for completion. Please be sure the form is dated clearly (month/day/year) with full immunization dates, and signed by parents, as well as the student's physician.

A physical exam must be conducted within six months of starting school for students in the Toddler program. A physical exam must be conducted within one year of starting school for all other levels.

Students enrolled in their third year of 3-6 (kindergarten equivalent), 2nd graders and 6th graders must have a Proof of School Dental Examination Form as required by the State of Illinois Department of Public Health. Forms are emailed to parents and are also available on the School's website.

An Eye Examination Report is required for students in their third year of 3-6 (kindergarten equivalent), and any new Elementary students. Forms are emailed to parents and are also available on the School's website.

In addition to the above, a Medical Authorization, Release and Medication Administration Form needs to be completed for each child. This form is distributed to all parents prior to the start of school and is due by September 1st.

Parents are asked to provide the School with information about the student's physical and emotional health in order to keep the School well-informed of the health of all students. Students' behavior is often impacted when there are changes at home. These changes may be due to the birth of a new sibling, a parent away from the home for a period of time, a new sitter, divorce, moving house, death in the family, etc. It is important to communicate these changes to the student's teacher so the teacher can support and understand any possible changes to the student's behavior during this time. The School is sensitive to the privacy of this information and is committed to protecting the confidentiality of students and their families by restricting the use of and access to this information for necessary medical management only, in accordance with applicable law.

Immunizations

In accordance with Illinois law, the School requires all students to provide proof of up-to-date immunizations or a certificate of exemption before attending school. Proof of immunization should be recorded on a Certificate of Immunization Form and signed by a medical professional. A student with a qualified religious exemption must provide the School with a Certificate of Religious Exemption, pursuant to state law. A student seeking a religious exemption must also provide to the School a statement of support for immunization exemption signed and notarized by the student's religious leader, in addition to a Certificate of Exemption from the Illinois Department of Public Health. Students who do not provide proof of up-to-date immunizations or qualify for an exemption will not be permitted to attend the School or participate in any School activities. In addition to an appropriate Certificate of Exemption, all students seeking an exemption from this immunization requirement must also submit an Immunization Waiver. An Immunization Waiver is found at Appendix C of this Handbook.

If there is a risk of a vaccine-preventable disease impacting campus or the School community, the School may, in its sole discretion, exclude non-immunized students, including those with valid religious or medical exemptions, from School and all School activities. Excluded students will not be permitted to return until (1) the danger of the outbreak has passed; (2) the student becomes ill with the disease and completely recovers; or (3) the student is immunized. In

determining whether there is a risk of a vaccine-preventable disease, the School may consult with appropriate medical professionals and/or the Illinois Department of Public Health.

Communicable Illnesses

The School may exclude any student who has a communicable illness or has been exposed to an infected person if the School determines, in its sole discretion, that such exclusion is appropriate for the welfare of the student or the School community. In reaching the decision to exclude a student from the School, the School may consult with appropriate medical professionals and/or the Illinois Department of Public Health. Each case of a communicable disease will be handled on an individual basis. For purposes of this policy, communicable diseases are diseases designated as communicable by the Illinois Department of Public Health in its Rules and Regulations for the Control of Communicable Diseases (IDPH Rules). Communicable diseases include, but are not limited to: measles, chicken pox, hepatitis, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and mumps. Although lice are not included in the IDPH designation, they are considered a disease for purposes of this policy.

If and when appropriate, the School will disseminate information to students and families regarding campus health and safety issues through regular internal communication channels. For example, the School may provide families with information about the nature and spread of communicable illnesses, including symptoms and signs to watch for, as well as required steps to be taken in the event of an epidemic or outbreak. Of course, we encourage all parents and guardians to contact medical professionals with any questions or concerns about communicable illnesses or immunization issues.

Medications at School

For the protection of all students, we prefer that no medication be sent to school with any student. Please discuss this rule with the student's physician when medications are being prescribed. If the student is well enough to come to school and go outside with the student's class but needs to finish prescribed medication, please ask the pharmacist to divide the prescription into two appropriately labeled containers, one for home and one for school.

Parents are required to complete a consent form, with a physician's signature, in order for the School to administer any medication—prescription or non-prescription—to a student. This form is often distributed via email and is available online, printed copies may be available upon request. The teacher will be notified so the student may come to the School Nurse's office to receive the medication. Please do not send medication of any kind (including Motrin and Tylenol) in a student's lunchbox.

A student may carry and self-administer their medication during school hours as follows:

- Asthma inhalers when authorized in writing by the student's health care provider and the parent/guardian;

- Epinephrine Auto-Injector (“Epi-Pen”) to treat life-threatening allergies when authorized in writing by the student’s health care provider and the parent/guardian; and
- Diabetes testing devices and insulin when authorized in writing by the student’s health care provider and their parent/guardian.

If a student has a condition that requires medication to be administered during the school day, the following guidelines must be followed:

- Written authorization to obtain detailed information about the student’s condition from the physician;
- Written consent to share the diagnosis and other information with necessary School personnel;
- Written physician diagnosis and care instructions, emergency action plan and any attendant request for the provision of medication during school hours;
- Physician requests for the provision of medication during school hours shall include the following:
 - Name of medication, dosage, route of administration;
 - Frequency and time of administrations;
 - Special circumstances in which medication is to be administered;
 - Side effects and/or intended effects which might be observed and reported to a nurse, teachers and parents;
 - Name, signature, address, office phone, fax and emergency numbers of physician and/or medical provider;
 - Other medication child may be receiving at home; and
 - Regimen of medical follow-up.
- Any medications necessary to treat the student’s condition in their original container with prescription and dosage information;
- A description of the student’s past chronic or acute reactions; including triggers and warning signs;
- Current parent/guardian emergency contact information and prompt notice of any updates; and
- A description of the student’s emotional response to the condition and the need for intervention.

Medical Leave

A medical leave from school may be appropriate in case of serious illness, bodily injury, or mental health condition, as determined in accordance with this policy. Decisions about granting or requiring a medical leave, or reinstating a student who has been on leave, rest with the senior administrators and the Director of Student Wellness. They will be guided by the principal goal of a medical leave to give the student the opportunity to regain health and thereby function consistently, productively and safely at school. In the absence of a treatment plan that, in the School’s opinion, meets these needs, the School may decline to grant a medical leave request, and instead require the student to withdraw.

A student's family may request medical leave. The School requires that any request for medical leave be accompanied by sufficient supporting documentation (as determined by the School in its sole discretion) to allow the School to evaluate the leave request, including, but not limited to, at least the following information:

- A. a recommendation from the student's treating medical professionals that the student would benefit from taking a medical leave;
- B. a description of how the student's medical condition limits the student's ability to participate in required academic or extracurricular activities;
- C. the plan for treatment of the student's medical condition; and
- D. an anticipated date for the student's return.

Additionally, if in the School's judgment, a student is exhibiting symptoms or behavior that make the student unable to participate appropriately in academic or extracurricular activities without imposing an undue burden on the School's resources, the School may recommend that the student be evaluated and subsequently placed on a medical leave. The School may initiate a discussion of a leave of absence in circumstances including, but not limited to:

- When mental health or physical symptoms are or may be impeding a student from functioning appropriately academically;
- When a physical or mental health condition interferes with a student's attendance at school;
- When a student behaves in ways that may be self-destructive or dangerous to others;
- When a student is not engaged in treatment that the School has made a condition of attendance, after the student has been evaluated by medical and/or mental health professionals, who have deemed such treatment appropriate; or
- When a student exhibits symptoms or behavior that is of concern to the School.

This initial discussion may include, in the School's sole discretion, the student's teacher(s), senior administrators, the Director of Student Wellness, the parents, or the student, as deemed appropriate. The purpose of this initial discussion is to establish the steps that the family is taking to ensure that the student is well enough to participate fully in life at school; and the further steps that the School may require if the situation does not improve.

The School may require the family (parents and student) to enter into a Medical Leave Agreement detailing the parameters of any leave. The Medical Leave Agreement may include conditions and requirements for the student's return to school. While a student on leave is excused from attending class, the student must make arrangements to make up missed work either while on leave (if possible) or upon return. To return to school from a medical leave, a student must provide a thorough, written professional evaluation of the student's current mental health and/or medical condition from the physician, psychiatrist, or other professional who treated the student during the medical leave. The School may require additional evaluation by a physician or mental health consultant of its choosing. The guiding principle of re-admission from a medical leave is the School's confidence that the student can return safely; and that the student's return will not compromise the student's continued recovery, interfere with the School's ability to serve other students' needs, or place an undue burden on the School. The decision regarding any student's return to the School from a medical leave remains in the sole

discretion of the School. As a corollary to this principle, a student whom the School determines can safely participate in the regular school day may nevertheless be restricted from participation in overnight field trips or other residential-style school activities.

Food Allergies

NNM strives to provide our students and staff with a safe, clean and toxic-free environment. Our classrooms contain mostly all natural materials with many live plants to help “purify” the air. Non-toxic cleaning products are used when students are present and non-chemical pest control measures are taken by keeping food stored in airtight containers, daily cleaning of all floors and rugs and frequent changes of animal bedding in classrooms. When necessary, more toxic chemical cleaners and sprays are used by trained personnel when students will not be present in school for 48 hours.

Many students suffer from food allergies that may cause severe discomfort or even be life threatening. NNM will make diligent efforts to minimize students’ risk of exposure to food allergens; however, it takes the trio of all parents, the School and the student to work together to help provide a safe environment. The School cannot guarantee that a student will not be exposed to allergens. Parents and students are requested to assume the following responsibilities.

Parent/Caregiver Responsibilities

- Notify the School of the student’s allergies and symptoms of exposure.
- Provide the School with a written plan of action should the student be exposed to allergens during school. This plan should include information about medications, as directed by a physician. It is helpful to include a photo of the student with this information.
- Provide the School with properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or upon expiration.
- Educate students in the self-management of the food allergy including:
 1. safe and unsafe foods;
 2. strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods;
 3. symptoms of allergic reactions;
 4. how and when to tell an adult that the student may be having an allergy related problem; and
 5. how to read food labels (when age appropriate).
- Provide the School with emergency contact information and remember to update as necessary.
- Review all policies and procedures with the School staff, student’s physician and the student after a reaction has occurred.

Student Responsibilities

- Do not trade food with others.
- Do not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen.

- Be proactive in the care and management of food allergies and reactions based on the student's developmental level.
- Notify an adult immediately if a student eats something that a student believes may contain the ingredient to which the student is allergic.

Allergic-Food Free Zones

Allergic-food free zones may be established in some classrooms when a student with a life threatening allergy is present. The decision to move to an allergic-food free zone will be discussed by the allergic student's "core team." The "core team" is defined as the teacher, School Nurse, Academic Director and parents. In general, all classrooms within the 0-9 levels are nut- free. Parents and students in the classroom will be notified of an "allergic-food free zone" policy. Parents and students in the classroom are expected to respect this policy and cooperate with any necessary restrictions. After School programs providing snacks to students will aim to respect the needs of food -allergic students. The School cannot guarantee that shared spaces (i.e., playground, Community Room) will be allergen-free.

Asthma Management

Parents of students with asthma should contact the School Nurse prior to the start of school to discuss an asthma management plan.

Special Medical Circumstances

Parents of students with more specific medical needs should contact the School Nurse, teacher and appropriate Academic Director to determine appropriate management plans as needed.

Head Lice

It is the position of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Harvard School of Public Policy, and the National Association of School Nurses that the management of head lice should not disrupt the educational process. Lice are not a major health problem since they do not transmit diseases or cause permanent problems. Nonetheless, the School understands the unpleasantness of the condition and the desirability of limiting its spread across the School community. The School therefore has a "no nit" policy.

Students with any nits will be sent home. A parent will be contacted by phone and written information will be sent home with grade level students.

It will be at the discretion of the School Nurse whether to check other students or the whole classroom.

In all cases where nits have been found, the student must be treated before returning to school the following day. The School Nurse must evaluate the student before the student returns to the

classroom. All nits must be removed by the seventh (7th) day following treatment if the student is to remain in School.

On occasion, exceptions from this guideline will occur, and the professional judgment of the School Nurse will be followed.

Toilet Training

Children who are not yet toilet trained when entering the Toddler program will be able to work on this during their time in the program. Students at this age are encouraged to wear cloth undergarments so they can feel when they are wet. Teachers will speak to parents more extensively on this topic and give guidance when the student shows they are ready to begin this process.

All students in the 3-6 program should be fully toilet-trained and able to use the toilet with little assistance when beginning in the program. However, accidents happen and students should bring extra changes of clothing in case it is needed. Teachers will speak to parents more extensively on this topic and give guidance to parents in situations where a child does not appear to be fully toilet-trained.

Health Emergencies

The School Nurse will attempt to contact parents regarding illness or injury, minor or serious, but in circumstances that warrant immediate attention when the School is unable to reach the parents/guardians, designated emergency contacts, or the student's physician, the School will determine appropriate management. In the event of a serious emergency, an ambulance will be called, the student will be taken to a nearby hospital emergency room and at least one parent will be notified immediately. Emergency situations arising on campus will generally be referred to St. Mary's Hospital or Lurie Children's Hospital, which are both just a few miles from the School. The School will not diagnose or treat injuries that occur on non-school time, but does offer temporary first aid for problems that arise during school. If a student complains of a persistent earache, sore throat, rashes or joint pain, such complaints warrant a call from the parent to the student's pediatrician.

Parents are expected to keep Emergency Information up-to-date via the online parent portal. Please remember, it is most important that the School have current home, work and cell phone numbers for parents/guardians, daycare providers or others (relatives, friends or neighbors) who routinely assume temporary care of the student if the student's parent(s) cannot be reached.

Parents will be notified of an illness or injury that may require follow-up medical care. A "Medical Authorization and Release Form" must be on file for every student, allowing the School to obtain necessary medical assistance.

The School carries a supplemental student accident insurance plan (described in the Financial Information section below) that may provide insurance in cases of injury requiring a doctor or

hospital care. Please contact the Finance Office to be directed to the staff person in charge of insurance claims.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Learning Support and Response to Intervention

NNM strives to integrate students with learning and/or behavioral differences within the classroom and provide them with support and resources that are aligned with Montessori philosophy. For students who need additional support or curricular adjustments, NNM follows a Response to Intervention (RTI) model.

The RTI model is comprised of three tiers of intervention, with multiple steps in each tier. RTI is designed to meet the individual learning profiles of students by differentiated instruction, monitoring growth and progress at six to eight-week intervals with learning support team members (learning support team is defined as head teacher, parents, Academic Director, psychologist and/or other specialists working closely with the student).

Tier 1: Teacher Intervention - implemented within the classroom environment.

Step 1 - The head teacher and Academic Director assess the student's learning profile, progress and more.

Step 2 - Teacher contacts parents to notify parents of any concerns.

Step 3 - Classroom observations by members of our student support team and/or Academic Director may be scheduled.

Step 4 - The classroom teacher, with input from the student support team and/or Academic Director, will implement agreed upon classroom interventions.

Step 5 - After approximately six to eight weeks the team will meet to assess if the accommodations and interventions have been effective.

Step 6 - If progress is observed and demonstrated by the student, the student will continue Tier 1 interventions. If progress is not observed and demonstrated by the student, the student will progress to Tier 2 intervention.

Tier 2: Small Group Instruction - utilize support and resources within the School but outside the classroom environment.

Step 1 - Determine the nature of the intervention. Examples of such interventions may consist of the following:

- Small group instruction provided by an NNM Learning Resource Teacher;
- Social skills groups provided by NNM's student support services team members (these groups may also include students who do not receive RTI services);
- Targeted gross motor skills developed with support of NNM's Developmental Gym program.

Step 2 - The Team (now including any of the above support persons) will meet to review individual cases at six to eight-week intervals.

Step 3 - If progress is observed and demonstrated by the student, the student will continue Tier 2 interventions. If progress is not observed and demonstrated, then the student progresses to Tier 3 intervention.

Tier 3: Intensive Intervention - intensive implementation of support that may require the assessment and intervention of a specialist(s) and/or may require working with supports outside of the School.

Step 1 - If a student is not demonstrating progress indicated by benchmark screenings or individual observations, the intensity of the intervention needs to be increased and/or another form of intervention needs to be implemented. The Team will gather to discuss the next level of intervention. The School may recommend some of the following Tier 3 interventions:

- One-on-one instruction by a School recommended Learning Specialist. A Learning Specialist is contracted privately, outside of NNM regular instruction. NNM has Learning Specialists who work as consultants and meet with students in-house during school hours. Our faculty works closely with the Learning Specialist in order to best target interventions to meet current classroom expectations.
- Parents may also seek one-on-one instructional support for their child outside of the School (due to space limitations, generally NNM does not have the capacity to provide space for outside professionals to work with students in the School). Taking a student out of School during the regular school day to work with a specialist is disruptive to classroom schedules and routines and is therefore discouraged. Tutoring after school hours or on weekends is the least disruptive to the child.
- Further assessment, evaluations and/or services may need to be provided by an additional outside specialist, in areas such as behavioral therapy, occupational therapy and neuropsychology. The School will generally provide references of qualified individuals or organizations with which NNM has had prior experience and assist parents in making a choice that might be a good fit for the child and the family.

Step 2 - The School recommends that on-going communication of the student's progress be maintained by the Learning Specialist and the School.

Step 3 - If progress is observed and demonstrated by the student, the student will continue Tier 3 interventions.

After all three tiers of intervention have been implemented, the student's parents may be notified that the accommodations may not suffice to ensure the student's success at the School if (1) the student is still struggling to fulfill the student's academic requirements satisfactorily; (2) the student's behaviors are continuously disruptive to the learning process of the student and/or other students; or (3) the required accommodations and interventions are no longer consistent with the Montessori curriculum. The School may have a meeting with the student's parents to discuss the next best course of action. This may include moving the student to a more suitable learning environment. If there is a disagreement on the course of action, the School may decide, in the School's sole discretion, whether to issue a re-enrollment contract to the student.

Accommodations

The School does not discriminate against qualified applicants or students on the basis of disabilities that may be reasonably accommodated. The School will discuss with families of applicants with known disabilities whether the School will be able to offer their children the appropriate accommodations to help them be successful at the School.

The School is committed to ensuring that students with disabilities are provided equal access to the School's programs and services, in accordance with applicable laws. For students who seek additional support or curricular adjustments, the School requires documentation indicating that the student's disability substantially limits a major life activity. Students who present the School with appropriate documentation of disability will be granted those requested academic accommodations that are supported by the documentation and considered reasonable in this educational setting. Any adjustments to the academic program would be made through an interactive process between the student's family and the Head of School and Academic Director and Student's teacher(s). No waivers of academic graduation requirements will be granted.

Even after supportive services and accommodations have been put in place, a student may still not be able to fulfill the student's academic requirements satisfactorily. In such instances, the student's head teacher, Academic Director, or the Head of School, or other support personnel may decide that the accommodations put into place may not suffice to ensure the student's success at the School. At that time, the Head of School and/or Academic Director will decide whether it is appropriate for the student to continue at the School.

Mental Health and Other Counseling

The School's Student Wellness team includes the Director of Student Wellness, School Counselor and School Nurse. This team may offer individual or group-based support, as needed, to students and families at the School. The team may also share information with other School personnel, as needed for student support purposes. The Counselor will not serve as a substitute for an individual therapist or Tier 3 level social-emotional intervention for any NNM students, but may provide referrals, as appropriate, to providers outside of the School.

The School maintains a list of referrals for educational, intellectual, psychological, occupational and speech and language evaluations should parents/guardians wish to consult with the School regarding such an evaluation. Parents who need guidance in this area are encouraged to consult the Director of Student Wellness or the appropriate Academic Director. The results of such evaluations shall be shared with School personnel so that appropriate recommendations can be implemented.

Confidentiality

Members of the School community commit themselves to maintaining appropriate professional tact and discretion with regard to confidential information they receive. However, confidential

information may be disclosed to the Head of School, appropriate administrators, outside professionals, law enforcement officers, parents/guardians or others when there is a compelling reason for doing so, including, without limitation, in cases of health and safety emergencies (when students or others are in imminent danger of harm); when there is concern about an individual's ability to function academically, emotionally, physically and/or mentally within the School environment; or when legal requirements demand that confidential information be revealed.

ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Enrollment Contracts

Parents are notified via email when Re-Enrollment Contracts for the next school year are available online. This generally occurs around the first week of February. Contracts must be submitted in accordance with the requirements outlined in the contract and by the indicated due date in order to guarantee a student's space in the School for the following year. Enrollment Contracts will be sent to returning students only if all financial obligations are current and the School is generally satisfied with the student's academic performance and/or behavior.

Once an Enrollment Contract has been signed and accepted by the School, parents are responsible for the full tuition for the academic year, regardless of the reason for withdrawal, unless the contract is canceled by the Cancellation Date specified in the Contract. A nonrefundable deposit is due along with the Enrollment Contract; your child's spot is only held when the deposit is received.

Re-Enrollment Policy

Re-enrollment at NNM is not automatic. A student is promoted to the next grade when the student has satisfactorily met the expectations of the student's current grade, when NNM feels it can continue to meet the student's needs, and when the behavior and comportment of the student and family are consistent with the School's policies.

Re-enrollment decisions are usually made each January by the Head of School. A decision to re-enroll a student and to subsequently forward a Re-Enrollment Contract to the parents is based upon a student's academic record, effort, attitude and behavior throughout the prior year, and upon the willingness of the parents to accept and exemplify their responsibility in the partnership of education, as further described in the Parental Comportment section below.

In some cases, it may be determined that it is not in a student's best interests to continue at the School. This difficult conclusion is only reached after extremely careful consideration. While parents are obviously involved in this process, the School will make the ultimate decision in its sole discretion, and will assist, if possible, in the process of locating an appropriate alternative school.

Families should understand that the School may not offer a Re-Enrollment Contract for a student if the parents have been uncooperative or if their actions have in any way undermined the effectiveness of our teachers, or if re-enrollment is not in the School's best interests.

Sibling and Priority Enrollment

Siblings of currently enrolled students, children of NNM alumni and children of NNM staff are given priority for enrollment when applying to NNM once a child's suitability for the program has been established. Applications are required for all new students.

All currently enrolled students are given priority to re-enroll for the following year. However, withdrawing one child from NNM prior to graduation may result in the cancellation of enrollment for any other children in the same family. In some limited circumstances, such as a diagnosed learning difference or proven financial hardship, a student may leave NNM without affecting the enrollment status of remaining sibling(s). This is at the sole discretion of the School.

Children enrolled in the Parent/Infant and Toddler programs are given priority placement when moving up to the next level provided that they and their parents are active participants at their current level.

Financial Aid

Consistent with our core values, NNM provides financial aid to nurture a socioeconomically diverse learning environment that mirrors the richness of our broader community. By sustainably ensuring access and affordability for existing and newly admitted families, financial aid strengthens our community and fosters intellectual growth. If we are to prepare our graduates to lead with integrity and ethics in an ever-changing world, it is necessary that our students continue to engage with, and learn from, children of all economic backgrounds.

We believe that economic diversity contributes to a strong and healthy school community, and therefore NNM has committed to providing eligible families with financial assistance. Financial aid applications are reviewed confidentially by the Financial Aid Review Group and are considered separately from admissions decisions.

Financial assistance of up to 70% of tuition is available to current families of children in the 3-6 level and older. Financial assistance may also be granted to families new to NNM if funds are available after meeting the needs of current families. Financial aid awards are based on need and take into account a family's total financial picture, including income, assets, and debt. Families must reapply for financial aid each school year with updated financial and family information. Aid cannot be granted unless all outstanding financial obligations for the current school year have been paid in full.

Financial aid is awarded to provide monetary assistance in meeting tuition payments; however, in special circumstances, the Financial Aid Review Group may also consider granting partial assistance for in-school remedial tutoring for students with a diagnosed learning disability or when deemed critical to the academic performance of the student by an NNM administrator. Additionally, all financial aid families are granted a \$100 credit/discount per child per session for general Before or After School Care, or for other After School activities. The credit may be used for team sports as well; the credit is not available for private music lessons or drop-in After School Care.

Financial aid funding comes primarily from School fundraising activities, generous gifts from parents and other community supporters, as well as the School's operating budget. While financial aid grants are gifts to students and families that do not need to be repaid, we hope that, when possible, a portion of these grants will be replenished by the recipient family at some later date in order to provide opportunities for future students applying for aid at NNM. All families, including those granted financial assistance, are expected to fulfill volunteer obligations.

For information about the financial aid policy for divorced families, see the section entitled Multiple Households.

Tuition Billing Schedule

Tuition is due in full by **August 1**, or may be paid in either one, two, four or ten installments as follows:

- One-Pay: Amount due on the 1st of August;
- Two Pay: Amount due on the 1st of August and December;
- Four Pay*: Amount due on the 1st of August, October, January and March; and
- Ten Pay*: Amount due on the 1st of each month beginning in August and ending in May.

**A finance charge of \$26 per month per family applies for the Four and Ten Pay Installments.*

The amount due is determined by calculating the tuition less the deposit less any discounts (such as financial aid) plus any other charges (such as a finance charge) and dividing that amount by the number of payments (either 1, 2, 4 or 10). If the 1st of the month is not a business day, payment is due on the following business day. NNM accepts paper checks for the one and two-pay plans only; electronic fund transfers and credit cards are accepted for all pay/installment options. The Finance Office will collect Payment Plan Forms from families to indicate how they will pay tuition each school year.

Please note the following:

- When payments are made by electronic funds transfer, most banks restrict payers' access to their funds on or just prior to the 1st even if the funds do not actually get deducted from the account until the next business day.
- A one-time Family Entrance Fee is due on May 15 for all new families entering NNM at the Toddler level and older.

Students may not attend classes, take examinations or graduate unless all financial obligations to the School are paid in a timely manner consistent with the Enrollment Contract.

Credit Card Policy

NNM accepts the following credit cards as a method of payment for tuition and related fees: MasterCard, Visa, American Express and Discover cards. A 2.75% charge will be assessed for

tuition payments made by credit card. Additionally, the following information will be required in order to process credit card payments:

- Name on the account;
- Statement of authorization to charge the amount due on the scheduled payment date.
Note that the person authorizing the charge must be the named cardholder;
 - If the credit card is in the name of someone other than the student's parent, NNM requires written authorization from the cardholder to charge the account on the date(s) and in the amount(s) in question.
- Credit Card Number, expiration date and security code; and
- Address of the account holder.

If paying by credit card, the cardholder will provide the School with updated account information whenever changes occur, such as a new expiration date. Chargebacks for previously authorized charges will incur a \$50 chargeback fee. Any questions should be directed to the Finance Office.

Billing

No student will be permitted to begin school in September unless the tuition has been paid in full or a family is participating in one of the payment plans and is current with payment. The School does recognize that families may experience extenuating financial circumstances. While the School is willing to work with families in these instances, all accommodating payment plans must be approved in writing by the Controller and payments must be received on a regular basis.

If an account is overdue, it will be brought to the attention of the Finance and Operations Director and the Head of School who will review the case, make appropriate arrangements regarding collection and may decide the student will not be permitted to return to School until the account is current. No student is permitted to re-enroll if there is an outstanding account balance from the previous school year.

For information regarding billing and financial obligations for divorced families, see the section entitled Multiple Households.

Tuition Loan

Parents who need further assistance to meet tuition obligations may consider applying for a loan from Your Tuition Solution (www.yourtutionsolution.com). Your Tuition Solution is a third-party loan provider for tuition to eligible K-12 schools, such as NNM. Payment plans may be extended as long as seven years, which can further lower monthly payments.

As with all lending institutions, Your Tuition Solution charges interest on the loan, so even if a monthly payment is lowered, the total payment over time may be greater. Also, extending

beyond one year will increase the financial burden in future years as tuition for the following years is added on.

Student Accident Insurance

Student accident insurance is provided for students who are enrolled and attending NNM and participating in a School-sponsored and supervised activity as follows.

Scope of Coverage	Max Benefit Amount	Deductible	Insured %	Additional Coverage
All Sports Accident Coverage (Excluding football) (all players, all sports)	\$25,000	\$0	100%	Accidental death: \$1,000;
Student Accident Coverage (all students enrolled at the School; excludes activities covered by All Sports Accident Coverage)				Dismemberment: per schedule, max of \$5,000
Other Accident Coverage (all students enrolled while participating in summer camps and off-season conditioning)				Benefit Period - 52 weeks

*This coverage is excess over the primary health insurance maintained by parents or guardians.

A list of covered charges and exclusions is available upon request. Parents should note that in the event of any dispute with respect to the School's student accident insurance policy, the terms of the student accident insurance policy will govern.

PARENTAL BEHAVIOR AND SUPPORT

At NNM, we believe that a positive relationship between the School and a student's parents or guardians is essential to the fulfillment of the School's mission. We recognize that effective relationships are characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect and a common vision of the goals to be achieved.

The School understands and appreciates that parents and guardians may employ different means to meet the expectations and responsibilities expressed in this policy. Nevertheless, NNM, at all times, may dismiss a student whose parent(s), guardian(s), family member(s), or other adult(s) involved with the student, in the sole judgment of the School, fails to comply with this or any other policy or procedure of the School, engages in conduct either on or off the School's property that could undermine the authority of the School's administration, and/or otherwise behaves in a manner that is unbecoming of a member of the School community. The School may refuse re-enrollment of a student if the School, in its sole discretion, believes the actions of a parent or guardian on or off the School's property make a positive, constructive relationship impossible, or otherwise may interfere with the School's accomplishment of its mission and/or educational goals.

To assist in creating the most effective relationship, the School expects that parents will observe the following guidelines:

1. Share in the School's vision.

- Support the mission, vision and values of the School.
- Understand and support the School's philosophy, policies and procedures.
- Support the School's disciplinary process, and understand that the School's authority in such matters is final.
- Be supportive of the School's commitment to a diverse and inclusive community.
- Acknowledge that the payment of tuition is an investment in the education of the student, not an investment of ownership in the School.
- Support the School's emphasis on sustainable practices.

2. Provide a home environment that supports the intellectual, physical and emotional growth of the student.

- Create a schedule and structure that supports a student's study and completion of homework requirements.
- Be aware of the student's online activities and use of computers, television, social media and video games.
- Encourage integrity and civility in the student.
- Be a role model, especially when it comes to behavior at School and at athletic events.
- Encourage the student's participation in events that promote high standards; actively discourage participation in events that can lead to illegal or unwise behavior.

3. Participate in the establishment of a home/School and School community relationship built on communication, collaboration and mutual respect.

- Provide a home environment that supports positive attitudes toward the School.
- Treat each member of the community with respect, grace and courtesy, assume good will and maintain a collaborative approach when conflicts and challenges arise.
- Help build and maintain a positive School environment by not participating in or tolerating gossip.
- Maintain tact and discretion with regard to confidential information. In cases when students or others are in imminent danger of harm, when there is a compelling reason for doing so, or when legal requirements demand that confidential information must be revealed, information may be disclosed to the Head of School, administrators, outside professionals, or law enforcement officers.
- Respect the School's responsibility to do what is best for the entire community, while recognizing the needs of an individual student.
- Seek to resolve problems and secure information through appropriate channels (i.e., teacher/advisor/counselor, Head of School, in that order).
- Acknowledge the value of the educational experience at the School by making regular and timely School attendance a priority and scheduling non-emergency appointments outside the classroom day.
- Support the School through volunteerism and attendance at School events.
- Financially support the School to the best of one's ability.
- Share with the School any religious, cultural, medical, or personal information that the School may need to best serve students and the School community.
- Understand and support the School's technology policies.

Parent Involvement in Disciplinary Matters

Disciplinary matters and student issues are handled directly by teachers, administrators and appropriate staff. If a student is having an issue with another student, parents should not attempt to deal with the other student directly about that matter. Doing so may put a student in an intimidating situation and is best resolved, when appropriate, through a teacher or School administrator. Please speak to the appropriate teacher or School administrator for guidance with respect to any questions about contacting another student or parent about a School-related matter.

Parents: Informed, Involved and Invested

Throughout our rich history spanning more than 50 years, the dedicated and enthusiastic parents of NNM have served as the foundation for the School's tradition of excellence. Their gifts of time, talent and treasure touch every facet of the School and make a significant impact at NNM. Their generosity creates a partnership that guarantees success for all of the students attending NNM now and in the future.

Be Informed: Keep parents connected with the School and deepen their understanding of Montessori philosophy and their child's development. NNM parents have chosen this exceptional educational path for their children and it is important that they are informed and intentional about their role as NNM parents.

Be Involved: Volunteerism is a vital element the School. NNM encourages and invites parents to share their interests, talents and time with the School while providing a service to the School community and allowing our faculty and staff to better serve our students.

Be Invested: Since its founding in 1963, NNM has always tried to keep tuition affordable and simultaneously maintain the high standard of excellence of our programs, as tuition alone does not cover the cost of educating each student. Annual fundraising contributions provide direct funding for the enhanced and unique educational initiatives that tuition alone does not cover and will help to create a foundation for stability and growth, vital for the School.

Throughout the year, a broad range of requests for financial support are made of NNM families. Success of these efforts is not measured in dollars alone. A high level of parent participation is equally important, as it clearly shows School leadership and the community that parents are willing to invest in their child's future and support the School's mission.

Contributions made to all of the initiatives listed below are tax-deductible and can be made online (by direct debit/ACH, echeck, or credit card), stock transfer, cash or check. All donations will be acknowledged within five business days of receipt. Please notify the Development Office if a donation is made and not acknowledged. *Any nonstandard contributions may require review and approval by the School's Administration or governing Board.*

Annual Giving Campaign

Contributions to The Near North Montessori Annual Giving Campaign are the most direct way to support the School. The Annual Giving Campaign secures vital unrestricted funds that go directly into the operating budget to enhance our unique programs, meet highest priority needs and provide seed money for important new initiatives. Tuition does not cover the full cost of NNM's operating budget; consequently, the Annual Giving Campaign helps make up the difference between the cost of tuition and the actual cost of educating each student.

Big Night Supporting Scholarship

Every March, Big Night, the School's largest fundraising event, is held and celebrates our wonderful community while raising critical dollars for NNM's Scholarship Fund. The Scholarship Fund provides crucial tuition assistance to families in need and fulfills the School's commitment to creating an economically diverse community.

Halloween Party

NNM welcomes in the school year and fall with an annual Halloween Party, proceeds from which support the Annual Fund. The fun-filled evening includes games for all ages, arts & crafts, and provides both old and new families the opportunity to meet and socialize.

Teacher/Staff Appreciation Drive

NNM shows its collective appreciation to our committed and talented teachers and staff for their hard work and dedication each year by giving annual bonuses in July funded by the Teacher/Staff Appreciation Drive.

Capital Campaign

Capital gifts allow the School to remodel its facilities and augment programs. Such gifts are transformational in nature, as they enable NNM to improve immeasurably. We are currently in the midst of a multi-year capital campaign which will transform our campus and is anticipated to run throughout the 2019-2020 school year.

Board-Designated Endowment Fund

The Board-Designated Endowment Fund provides ongoing financial support to the School for its educational objectives to insure the long-term welfare of the School. The Fund is funded by donations and from the transfer of monies from time to time as recommended by the Finance Committee and approved by majority vote of the Board. Disbursements out of this Fund also need to be approved by the Board.

Matching Gifts

Many employers match gifts made by their current, as well as retired, employees. This is a simple way to double a parent gift to NNM. Parents are encouraged to contact their employer or human resource office for the form needed to match their gift and to let us know the matching gift will be coming.

Honor/Memorial

Gifts made in honor or in memory of a loved one are designated for the Annual Giving Campaign unless otherwise specified. This is a wonderful way to recognize a student, a loved one or a special event in someone's life and benefit the School at the same time. The School will send a note to the individual or family you have honored or the family of the person you memorialize; the amount will not be disclosed.

Gifts In Kind

We appreciate gifts of goods or services to NNM. Please be sure to complete an In Kind Gift Form in the Development Office with a description of the item and the fair market value ("FMV"). FMV is the price that property would sell for on the open market. It is the price that would be agreed on between a willing buyer and a willing seller, with neither being required to act, and

both having reasonable knowledge of the relevant facts. If you put a restriction on the use of property you donate, the FMV must reflect that restriction.

Effortless Fundraising

This initiative offers a simple way to support activities and programs at NNM without any out-of-pocket expense. Parents can make a difference with these easy fundraising opportunities simply by purchasing groceries or shampoo! Please check our website under “Effortless Fundraising” for the programs featured.

Promoting External Events, Invitations and Businesses

Many avenues exist for parents to help them personally promote an event, organization, business etc. to the NNM community. They include:

- NNM Parents’ Facebook page;
- NNM Community Board at School; and
- Personal Outreach (social media, etc.).

NNM has a policy of not promoting external events through School-wide emails, *This Week* or on the School’s website or social media sites. The School cannot be seen to promote one event over another and will only endorse fundraising activities and events that directly support the School, as opposed to other charitable organizations.

NNM wants to support its communities’ endeavors and therefore, following an event, review or newsworthy undertaking, NNM will sometimes mention these in social media posts in a congratulatory manner.

Parent Association

The Parent Association is a resource open to all members of our community. Its main objectives are to:

1. Support the School by helping parents build relationships with other parents and the School in an effort to help families gain a better understanding of the School and develop a long-term commitment to the School;
2. Promote a sense of community by providing and supporting social and educational events and activities and welcoming new families into the School; and
3. Provide a volunteer base to support school activities.

The Parent Association provides information on events and resources through the School’s regular communication channels.

APPENDIX A: Junior High FAQ

The following are frequently asked questions by parents and the teachers' responses.

1. What are the biggest differences between the Montessori Elementary Program and the Junior High Program?

The biggest differences between the elementary program and the Junior High program are a greater workload, firm deadlines and grades. Students should expect more work that needs to be completed during the school day, as well as at home. Many of the assignments will be longer and require more writing and more analytical thinking. Because many assignments are long-term, the use of a planner and learning to break down assignments into manageable steps are important skills.

Receiving grades is a part of the Junior High program that is new to the 7th graders. Although grades play an important part in high school admissions, these grades are not a reflection of the student as a whole. Rather, they offer a glimpse into that student's capabilities at a particular moment in time. We strive to treat the grades as part of the process, without placing so much emphasis on the grades that they become the sole focus. We see grades as a form of teacher feedback that has the intention of ultimately helping a student improve their work and abilities.

2. How difficult is the transition from the Montessori Elementary Program to the Junior High Program?

In general, most students spend the first several weeks of the first semester adjusting to the program. It generally takes time for students to adjust to the greater workload, grades and more intense requirements in terms of time management and organization. For some students, this adjustment may take only days; for others, several months. If you feel a student is struggling to make the adjustment, we encourage you to contact your child's Advisor to set up a conference.

3. Approximately how much homework should I expect a student to have each night?

Although it will vary each night, teachers strive to assign an average of 1 to 1.5 hours per night. The amount of work brought home is often a reflection of how well the student is using the work period during class. With correct priorities and time management, students will complete a significant amount of work during the day, and homework will consist of work that needs to be finished. Certain times of the year tend to be busier than others. In particular, the week before long vacation breaks and the week leading up to presentations (e.g., for Independent Study Presentations) tend to have heavier workloads.

4. What should I do if a student receives a homework notice?

If a student does not turn in a piece of homework, the teacher might issue a homework notice. This is the teacher's communication route through the student to parents. It should be seen as a learning experience for students and not as a failure. Homework notices may be given out or

emailed home when a student does not turn in an assignment on time. The missing assignment is due the next morning and ten percent of the grade value may be taken off for each day late. When students miss an assignment, it often has to do with time management or organization. A homework notice is an opportunity to review time management skills with the student. Each student has a calendar/planner in which to keep track of assignments. Helping students plan ahead and break down large assignments into smaller steps is often beneficial, as doing so reinforces the planning lessons given by the teachers.

The first or second homework notice that a student receives is no cause for alarm. However, if there is a recurring problem and a pattern emerging, a call to the Advisor is appropriate.

5. How can I help a student with time management?

Junior High students have a calendar or planner in which they enter their assignments' due dates. Classroom teachers post assignments, due dates and other relevant information on Google Classroom. Two important skills that are necessary in Junior High are breaking down large assignments into smaller steps and learning to plan ahead.

You can help by checking students' calendars and Google Classroom on a weekly basis and noting the assignments that are coming up. Some assignments require only a short amount of work time, while others require several days of working at school, as well as several nights at home. Many 7th graders struggle with the idea that not all homework can be completed the night before it is due. Often, assignments must be started several days ahead and worked on little by little. Setting smaller goals and prioritizing each night can be helpful. The students need to learn to look at the planner week-by-week, not just day-by-day.

6. Is it reasonable to expect a student to concentrate solely on the student's studies and forego all extracurricular activities?

Students in Junior High can be successful in the academic setting and still have a social life. It does not need to be "either-or." It is simply a matter of setting priorities, planning ahead and practicing time management. A general rule of "completing the school work first, and then socializing" seems to work best. 7th graders sometimes find it helpful to cut back on activities for the first few weeks of school, until they have had a chance to adjust to their new class and homework load.

7. How will I know how a student is doing?

Progress Reports are sent home approximately halfway through each trimester and at the end of each trimester, for a total of six reports. Conferences are scheduled on the school calendar. The 7th graders have two conferences during the year (in October and March); 8th graders have one conference (in January).

8. How are students graded on their assignments?

Grades are seen as a snapshot of how a student is doing at the moment and as feedback with the purpose of improving in the future. Most assignments are typically given with specific, written instructions on how to successfully complete the assignment, as well as a grading rubric (which gives details on how the assignment will be graded). The requirements that are given on the assignment sheet are the ones that are used to evaluate the work. Along with a teacher's evaluation, many assignments require a student self-evaluation or reflection.

9. What should a student do if the student is absent and needs to make up work?

Students who are absent are responsible for obtaining the work they missed. They should schedule a time with the classroom teacher to review any missed work and/or assignments. At this time, the teacher can also give the student a new deadline for the work. Classmates may be able to answer some questions about missed work, but the classroom teacher is the best and most reliable resource.

10. How often can a student interact with friends in a different Junior High class?

Because of the flexibility of the Junior High schedule, students from all three Houses are intermixed on a regular basis. Almost all academic classes contain a mixture of students from all three Junior High Houses. Students will have plenty of opportunity to participate in a community within the student's own House, while at the same time be part of a larger community within the entire Junior High Program.

11. Which grades really "count" for high school applications?

All the grades count, though not every grade is submitted on the Chicago Public School high school application form. CPS high schools eventually receive student transcripts and have access to all grades. CPS requires cumulative grades that take into account the entire school year's academic work. These final, cumulative grades are calculated in June and sent home with the Trimester 3 report card. Private schools always ask for all grades and transcripts as part of their decision-making process.

12. How are students placed into math classes at the Junior High level?

Entering into the 7th grade, students are placed into a math class based on several factors, including:

- the content they covered in 9-12;
- recommendations from the 9-12 teachers and the Elementary Director;
- recommendations from Learning Specialists and Resource Teachers, who cover a lot of the math curriculum for 6th graders;
- individual learning styles;
- end-of-6th grade placement test; and
- Kahn Academy work and progress over the summer

Because we have fine-tuned our process, we have an excellent track record of placing students in the most appropriate class. Sometimes, however, a student or teacher feels that a student

might be able to move up to the next class. In that case, the teacher of the student's class would give them an abbreviated "final exam" covering all of the material the students in the current class will learn that year. If the student scores well enough (usually 85% or higher), to prove they have mastered the material of the class, we will consider moving them into the next class.

7th grade math classes cover preparation for algebra and Junior High algebra.

8th grade math classes cover Junior High algebra, advanced Junior High algebra and geometry. Students looking for additional challenges can utilize Khan Academy.

APPENDIX B: Character and Code of Conduct Acknowledgement For Junior High Students

This policy is copied from above and provided to Junior High students to read and sign.

NNM promotes a safe, healthy and inviting learning environment for all. Students are encouraged to practice self-discipline and consider how their personal choices can impact themselves, as well as their community. Self-control and situational awareness are valued characteristics that contribute to a harmonious learning environment. This Code of Conduct is designed to provide students, parents and School personnel clear guidelines for expectations of behavior.

Expected student conduct is based upon NNM's fundamental, valued characteristics (see also, Portrait of a Graduate). This Code of Conduct is in effect at school, as well as, but not limited to, School-sponsored trips or off-campus and School-sanctioned activities.

- Lifelong learning: problem solving abilities; an ability to find appropriate resources; an open mind, the pursuit of knowledge;
- Integrity: honesty; perseverance; personal responsibility for one's actions and choices; care of one's self;
- Community: an awareness that one is part of a larger whole and that one's choices and actions have an impact on others; situational awareness and a consciousness of what is happening around oneself; patience for others and one's self; responsibility for others; a contribution to a positive and peaceful school environment;
- Concern for Others: an awareness of the needs of others; empathy; appreciation for diversity in all of its forms;
- Civility: respect toward others, self, materials and the environment; self-control that prevents one from rudeness or insensitivity toward others; an ability to disagree without being disagreeable; and
- Leadership: modeling of good behavior for other students; proactive problem solving; making choices that benefit the larger community.

Disciplinary Guidelines

These guidelines and the School's Code of Conduct are based on the School's philosophy and principles regarding good character, and reflect the School's commitment to providing a safe and healthy environment for students. The School strives to promote effective and caring communication among faculty, students and parents that supports students in their personal growth and provides room for a young person to make mistakes and learn from them. These guidelines apply to all conduct by students, whether on or off campus, as long as they are enrolled in the School.

As students progress through the School, a great deal of time is spent striving to teach them to honor their own and others' unique qualities and characteristics. Teachers seek to build each class to be a community of learners, and the classroom itself strives to be a safe environment where mistakes become the vehicle for learning acceptable behavior.

As a School, we want to work with our students and their families in changing behaviors in students that interfere with the learning climate of a classroom or pose problems of safety. Occasionally, students need to be reminded about expectations and consequences of behavior. Both expectations and consequences are age and developmentally appropriate, and consistent with the degree of misconduct. The School may, in its sole discretion, involve parents in all such matters.

Consequences of misconduct (and/or attempting misconduct) applicable to all students are detailed below. These examples are intended to provide students and their families with a general understanding of the School's disciplinary approach; however, the School will respond to each situation with a response that the School determines, in its sole discretion, is appropriate. Such disciplinary consequences are intended to heighten a student's sense of responsible citizenship and allow the faculty to deal quickly with disciplinary issues in an objective fashion.

Disciplinary Consequences

If the School determines, in its sole discretion, that a student has violated any of the School's rules, policies, or expectations, the School may issue a disciplinary consequence. The Head of School, in consultation with her designees, but at her sole discretion, may discipline the student in her sole discretion. Such consequences may include, but are not limited to, any *one or more of the following actions (not necessarily in this order)*:

- Conference between the student and teacher(s)
- Participation in a Restorative Circle.
- Conference with the student, student's parents/guardians, teacher(s)
- Conference with the student, student's parents/guardians, teacher(s), and appropriate Academic Director and/or Head of School.
- Require the student to re-do school work or assign a failing grade for the assignment or class
- Confiscate an offending electronic device(s) until the end of the school day or for 24 hours.
- Require the student to amend the student's behavior and apologize, if appropriate, for such behavior.
- Require the student to replace/repair any physical damage and/or pay for the necessary repairs.
- Place the student on an in-school suspension of a period of time determined by the appropriate Academic Director, Head of School or other designated administrator, in consultation with the student's teacher(s). Teachers will not offer extra help or makeup work for lessons missed.

- Depending upon the seriousness of the behavior, mandate formal intervention and/or counseling that may involve the student, teachers, advisors, parents and anyone else the School deems appropriate.
- Suspend the student from particular privileges, including, but not limited to, computer usage, School activities or School trips.
- Place the student on at-home suspension for a period of time determined by the appropriate Academic Director, Head of School or other designated administrator, in consultation with the student's teacher(s). Teachers will not offer extra help or makeup work for lessons missed.
- Certain policy violations occurring on School property may be required to be reported to the Illinois State Police pursuant to applicable laws. In such instances, the Head of School or the Head of School's designee will submit any violations through the School Incident Reporting System ("SIRS").
- Dismissal from the School.

The School's Junior High program uses Restorative Circles to address most disciplinary issues, as well as interpersonal conflicts. Restorative Circles are meetings that address the interpersonal conflict and any damage to a relationship because of the conflict. Restorative Circles are facilitated by the Junior High Director and include students and adults/teachers involved, plus the student's Advisor and a neutral adult/teacher not directly involved in the conflict. Restorative Circles allow all parties to answer the same set of questions with the purpose of each party understanding the perspective of the other parties and reaching an agreed-upon resolution. The main purpose is to repair the harm to the relationship between parties. After the Circle, the School will determine if additional consequences (including those listed above) and/or communication with parents is necessary.

This Form acknowledges that I understand that as a Near North Montessori School student, I am asked to support the School and its mission and to acquaint myself with and abide by the School's policies and procedures. My signature below indicates that I have reviewed and familiarized myself with the contents of the 2019-2020 Code of Conduct from the Parent Handbook and agree to abide by the School's policies and procedures, as outlined.

Student Signature

Date

Student Name - printed

APPENDIX C: Immunization Waiver

NEAR NORTH MONTESSORI SCHOOL

According to the NNM pre-enrollment immunization policy, all students are required to provide documentation of primary vaccine series for the vaccine-preventable diseases required under Illinois law.

NNM believes that the entire School community is best-served when every student is immunized. Please refer to the information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention online at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines>.

NNM will, however, consider an exemption which allows a non-immunized student to attend NNM. **Parents of the student must read and complete our immunization waiver form at the start of each academic year.** Non-immunized students not updating this form each year will have a hold placed on their registration.

Reason for Non-Immunization

My/Our child has not been immunized pursuant to Illinois law for the following reason:

____ Medical disability (Attach a letter from a certified health care provider detailing the specific medical disability which precludes the student from receiving immunizations.)

____ Religious doctrine, tenet or law (Attach a letter from your religious leader detailing the mandated religious tenet, doctrine or law which precludes the student from receiving immunizations.)

NNM Restrictions

1. **General:** I/We further recognize that my/our child is at risk of contracting the disease(s) he/she is not immunized against and that should he/she contract any of these diseases he/she will be excluded from participating in activities at NNM until he/she is no longer contagious.
2. **Outbreak of disease:**
 - a. Non-immunized students may be required to leave the School property should a case of a vaccine-preventable disease occur on the NNM property.
 - b. The student may return to school when the county public health officer and/or NNM administration deem it to be safe for the NNM student community.

Acknowledgment

By signing below I acknowledge and agree that:

1. I/We object to the following required immunizations for my NNM student (check all that apply):
 Diphtheria Measles Hepatitis B
 Tetanus Pertussis Mumps Meningococcal
 Rubella Varicella Polio
2. I/We have read and fully understand all of the restrictions that apply by this waiver.
3. I/We have been provided and read, [the information sheet from the CDC regarding "What Would Happen If We Stopped Vaccinations"](#)
4. I/We have kept a copy of this form for my future reference.
5. I/We understand that I/we must review and sign a new waiver each academic year if I/we choose for my/our NNM student to remain non-immunized.
6. I/We may rescind this waiver at any point in time by having my/our NNM student undergo the required immunizations.

Waiver

I/We recognize that while many other students at NNM are immunized, this does not mean that the bacteria/viruses that cause these diseases are not present on the NNM property. In fact, it is likely that the bacteria/viruses are present as a natural part of life and may present a risk of infection to my/our child. Understanding the risks of non-immunization, I/we hereby request this exemption as a free and voluntary act, without coercion of any kind. I/We further hereby assume each and every risk of non-immunization of my/our child, and release from liability, and agree to never assert a claim against, Near North Montessori School and all of its officers, directors, employees, and agents resulting from or in any way related to my decision not to have my/our child immunized.

Name of Child (print): _____ Date of Birth: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX D: Toddler Community Late Pick Up Policy

4 Day Toddler Community: If you arrive for pick-up **after 11:50 am**, please pick up your child from the classroom, **not** the Main Office.

5 Day Toddler Community: If you arrive for pick-up **after 5:45 pm**, please pick up your child from the Main Office.

For BOTH Toddler Community programs, if a parent/guardian/caretaker has not contacted the office to notify the school of tardiness/late pick up, NNM staff will try to contact the primary caregivers, then emergency contacts.

In the event that the School has not been able to contact anyone on the child's behalf, we are required to contact local authorities by the end of the day at 6:00 pm. However, with signed permission from a child's parent/legal guardian, the child can go home with one of the Directors of the program until we have been able to contact a parent or emergency contact.

Please complete the form below to state your preference and return to your child's teacher.

In the event that my/our child's primary caregivers and emergency contacts cannot be reached by the end of the school day (6:00 pm) I/We give consent for Near North Montessori School to: (circle one)

1. Call the local authorities and allow them to come pick up my child.
2. Give permission for one of the NNM Directors to take my/our child home until someone can be reached to care for my/our child.

Parent 1 Signature: _____

Parent 1 Name (print): _____

Parent 2 Signature: _____

Parent 2 Name (print): _____

Names of child/ren at NNM (print) _____

APPENDIX E: Student Independent Travel – Permission and Release Form

Name of Student: _____ Grade: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Near North Montessori School (the “School”) understands that many families may want their children to independently travel by foot, bicycle, or public transportation to and/or from school. The School therefore allows Junior High students, and in some cases Elementary students, to travel to and leave school independently, without a supervisory adult present, provided this Student Independent Travel Permission and Release Form is signed and initialed, where indicated, by the parents and/or legal guardians. All students must sign out with the Receptionist, Security personnel or other adult at the front desk before leaving campus. Please understand that once dismissed from the School, students are not permitted to linger on or near the School’s campus/buildings. Furthermore, while traveling to and from school, students are expected to follow all School rules and policies, and to uphold the School’s standards.

I hereby give my full permission for the above-named student (the “Student”) to *(please select all that apply)*:

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
Take public transportation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walk to/from the School, unsupervised by an adult.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bike to/from the School unsupervised by an adult.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have a cell phone for independent travel to/from school <i>Note: cell phones will be held by the classroom teacher during the school day</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I further acknowledge the following ***(please initial each line)***:

_____ I am familiar with the mental and physical health of the Student and that the Student is fully capable, having both maturity and self-confidence, to use the method(s) of transportation listed above.

_____ I will instruct the Student on appropriate safety precautions for the chosen method(s) of transportation.

_____ I will instruct the Student on general safety precautions for traveling independently, including interactions with strangers, use of cell phone, headphones, protection of valuables, and traveling after dark.

_____ I will instruct the Student on appropriate behavior while traveling.

In consideration of the Student being permitted to leave campus in the manner designated by me above, I acknowledge, understand, and agree to the following:

A. RELEASE. I agree, on my own behalf and that of the Student, and our heirs, executors, administrators, personal representatives, and/or assigns (“Releasers”), to forever waive, release, acquit, discharge, and covenant to hold harmless and not sue the School, its trustees, employees, volunteers, representatives, and agents (the “School Releasees”), from any and all claims, suits, liabilities, actions, or losses which Releasers may have, now or in the future, which arise directly or indirectly out of the Student’s travel in the manner designated by me above.

B. ASSUMPTION OF RISK. I understand and appreciate the risks and dangers associated with the Student’s travel. I also understand that while the Student is off campus, the Student will often not be supervised by the School or any School personnel. By signing this form, I knowingly and freely assume, on behalf of myself and the Student, all risks, both known and unknown, associated with the Student’s travel in the manner designated by me above.

C. INDEMNIFICATION. I hereby agree, on behalf of myself and the Student, to indemnify the School Releasees from and against any and all demands, claims, suits, actions, causes of action, or liabilities, including attorneys’ fees, brought by any person or entity, arising directly or indirectly from the Student’s travel, including, but not limited to, any injury of any person caused by the Student or damage to or destruction of any property caused by the Student.

These provisions are not intended to, and do not, govern any claims that cannot be released by private agreement. The above provisions are intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the State of Illinois. Should any portion of these provisions be held unenforceable or invalid, the remainder shall continue in full legal force and effect. Any dispute arising out of this form between me and the School must be heard exclusively in the state or federal courts located in Illinois.

I have read this form in its entirety and I understand what it means. By signing this form, I affirm that I have legal custody of the Student, am authorized to sign on the Student’s behalf, and have decided to allow the Student to travel independently to/from school with full knowledge that the School Releasees will not be liable for any personal injury or property damage the Student may suffer or cause another to suffer while off campus. I also agree to provide the cell phone number for the Student, if any, in case the School needs to contact the Student after the Student leaves school, though I understand, that cell phones may not be used during the school day.

Signature of Parent/Guardian #1: _____ Date: _____

Print Full Name of Parent/Guardian #1: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian #2: _____ Date: _____

Print Full Name of Parent/Guardian #2: _____

Student’s Cell Phone Number: _____

STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I understand the seriousness of the risks associated with my independent travel to and from school and that there may be additional risks of which neither I nor my parents or legal guardians may be aware. I agree to fully comply with all School rules and policies while off campus, and I understand that my conduct while off campus may lead to disciplinary action. By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have read and understand what I am signing, and I am in agreement with all of the provisions to which my parents/legal guardians have agreed above.

Signature of Student: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX F: Accommodating & Supporting Transgender and Gender-Expansive Students

This Appendix sets forth NNM's goals of addressing the needs and concerns of transgender and gender-expansive students to ensure a safe, affirming, and healthy school environment where every child can learn. In coordination with the policies in the Parent Handbook, it is intended to ensure that all NNM students are welcomed, valued, included, and respected; to help ensure safe learning environments free of discrimination, harassment, and bullying; and to promote the educational and social integration of transgender and gender-expansive students.

The goal of any accommodations listed in NNM policies is to allow a transgender or gender expansive student to equally participate in educational and extracurricular opportunities. The right of transgender students to accommodations is generally found in legislation but has not been fully interpreted by the courts. Determining appropriate accommodations must be made on a case-by-case basis depending upon the needs expressed by the student.

The Student Wellness Director, the Diversity Director, the classroom teacher and the applicable Academic Director will work with each transgender or gender expansive student and, as appropriate, with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), to manage a student's supports on a case-by-case basis.

Relevant NNM Policies for the Protection of and Supports for Transgender or Gender Expansive Students, include but are not limited to the following

- *Diversity and Inclusion Statement*
- *Non-Discrimination*
- *Character and Code of Conduct*
- *Disciplinary Guidelines & Consequences*
- *Curriculum*
- *Dress Code and Appearance*
- *Commitment to Respectful and Healthy Relationships*
- *Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination, Hazing, Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment*
- *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Students*
- *Student Records and Transcripts*
- *Health, Medical and Dental Information*
- *Student Activities and Organizations*
- *Athletics & Physical Education - Eligibility*
- *Mental Health and Other Counseling*
- *Confidentiality*
- *Parental Behavior and Support*

Working Definitions

Understanding the terminology associated with gender identity and expression is important to providing a safe and supportive school environment for students. The School uses the following terms and definitions when discussing accommodations for a transgender student or gender

expansive student. Note: definitions are not intended to label students, but rather to assist with understanding.

Gender-based discrimination is a form of sex discrimination, and refers to differential treatment or harassment of a student based on the student's sex, including gender identity, gender expression, and non-conformity with gender stereotypes, that results in the denial or limitation of education services, benefits, or opportunities. Conduct may constitute gender-based discrimination regardless of the actual or perceived sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation of the persons experiencing or engaging in the conduct.

Sex assigned at birth and assigned sex refers to the gender designation listed on one's original birth certificate.

Gender expression refers to external cues that one uses to represent or communicate one's gender to others, such as behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, mannerisms, or body characteristics.

Gender identity refers to one's internal sense of gender, which may be different from one's assigned sex, and which is consistently and uniformly asserted, or for which there is other evidence that the gender identity is sincerely held as part of the student's core identity.

Transgender describes an individual whose gender identity is different from the individual's assigned sex.

Transgender boy and *transgender male* refer to an individual assigned the female sex at birth who has a male gender identity. *Transgender girl* and *transgender female* refer to an individual assigned the male sex at birth who has a female gender identity. An individual can express or assert a transgender gender identity in a variety of ways, which may but do not always include specific medical treatments or procedures. Medical treatments or procedures are not considered a prerequisite for one's recognition as transgender. For purposes of this procedure, a *transgender student* is a student who consistently and uniformly asserts a gender identity different from the student's assigned sex, or for whom there is documented legal or medical evidence that the gender identity is sincerely held as part of the student's core identity.

Gender transition refers to the experience by which a transgender person goes from living and identifying as one's assigned sex to living and identifying as the sex consistent with one's gender identity. A gender transition often includes a *social transition*, during which an individual begins to live and identify as the sex consistent with the individual's gender identity, with or without certain medical treatments or procedures.

Gender stereotypes refers to stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity, including expectations of how boys or girls represent or communicate one's gender to others, such as behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, mannerisms, or body characteristics.

Gender non-conformity refers to one's gender expression, gender characteristics, or gender identity that does not conform to gender stereotypes.

Facilities refers to facilities and accommodations used by students at school or during school-sponsored activities and trips, and include, but are not limited to, restrooms, locker rooms, and overnight facilities.

Names, Pronouns, Gender Markers

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may request that the School use the student's name, pronouns, and/or gender marker on day-to-day records by submitting a written request to the teacher, Academic Director, the Diversity Director, or the Student Wellness Director. Upon receipt of the written request, the School will change and use the student's name, pronouns and identified gender marker.

Also, upon receipt of a written request from parent(s)/guardian(s), the School will change the student's name and identified gender marker in the School's electronic database, except the School will keep and use the student's legal name and sex assigned at birth where required by law or by U.S. Department of Education or Illinois State Board of Education rules and/or reporting requirements. The School will keep the student's official school record under his/her legal name and sex assigned at birth unless provided with a record of a court-ordered name change.

Gendered Facilities & School-Sponsored Programs

Transgender and gender-expansive students shall have access to gendered facilities and school-sponsored programs that are consistent with the student's gender identity. This includes, but is not limited to, access to multi-stalled gendered restrooms, locker rooms, fine and performing arts programs, trips, and athletic programs (participation in School athletic programs is resolved pursuant to CAMS League policy).

1. **Restrooms and Locker Rooms** - All students shall have access to restrooms and locker rooms that correspond to their gender identity and in the same manner that other students are provided with such access, regardless of the student's sex assigned at birth. No student shall be required to use a single-stall restroom or a separate area within a restroom or locker room because he/she is transgender or gender-expansive. Regardless of gender identity, any student who expresses a need or desire for increased privacy will be provided with access to a reasonable alternative, such as a separate partition or curtain in the restroom or locker room, or a separate use or changing schedule.

Nothing in this section prohibits the School from restricting or modifying a student's access to restrooms or locker rooms in relation to student discipline or pursuant to a student's learning/behavioral accommodations.

2. **Physical Education, Extra-Curricular Team Sports, and Competitive Sports** - Transgender and gender-expansive students shall be given the option to participate in physical education classes, and extra-curricular team sports in a manner that corresponds with their gender identity. Procedures for participation in athletic activities

are as set forth in the Athletics section of the Parent Handbook and the CAMS League Policies.

Physical education and health education classes will not divide students based on sex assigned at birth or gender identity whenever possible. When such separation is unavoidable, all students will self-select the groups where they feel most comfortable and will be given the option of choosing based on their gender identity.

3. **School Trips** - In planning school trips, the needs of students who are transgender and gender-expansive will be assessed by the school in advance of the trip on a case-by-case basis. NNM faculty will consider the following factors in planning and communicating with the field trip's facilities: (1) ensuring the transgender or gender-expansive student's safety; (2) the transgender or gender-expansive student's social integration and equal opportunity to participate in the school trip; and (3) any potential stigmatization of the transgender or gender-expansive student.

Regardless of gender identity, any student who expresses a need or desire for increased privacy during a school trip will be provided with a reasonable alternative, such as a separate restroom, a separate partition or curtain in a restroom or sleeping room, a separate use or changing schedule, or a private room.

Gender-Based Activities, Rules, Policies and Practices

Teachers and staff are discouraged from using practices that divide students on the basis of gender. Examples of such gendered practices include but are not limited to lining students up by gender to exit class; dividing a class into teams of boys and girls. If students are separated by gender in school activities or are subject to a gender-specific practice, rule, or policy, transgender and gender-expansive students will be permitted to participate in such activities or conform to such practice, rule, or policy consistent with their gender identity.

Staff Training and Compliance

When professional development is provided with respect to sex discrimination, harassment, and/or bullying, as determined by the Head of School or his/her designee, the School will provide staff with information about gender identity and expression; the development of gender identity in children and adolescents; developmentally appropriate strategies for communicating with students and parents/guardians about issues related to gender identity; gender-affirming approaches in the educational setting; developmentally appropriate strategies for preventing and intervening in bullying incidents; and/or School policies and procedures regarding equal educational opportunity, discrimination, and bullying and/or harassment.

Supports for Transgender and Gender-Expansive Students

A student and parents/guardians are not required to provide medical/mental health diagnosis or treatment in order to meet the definition of a transgender or gender-expansive student and receive supports from the School. The determination of whether a transgender or gender-expansive student needs support in the school setting will be determined by school officials on a case-by-case basis. School officials will request input from the student and his or her parents/guardians (when appropriate).

1. **Student Wellness Director as Point Person** - The Student Wellness Director or designee will coordinate support for transgender and gender-expansive students. The Student Wellness Director will serve as an initial point of contact for the parent(s)/guardian(s), student(s), and staff.
2. **Coordination of Support** - The School, in its sole discretion, may create a gender support team to coordinate support for a transgender or gender-expansive student. The Student Wellness Director and/or gender support team will seek input from the student and the parents/guardians (unless notifying the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student's gender identity may present an emotional or physical safety risk to the student, as determined by the School's Administration) and determine any needed supports for the student in the school setting. Common issues of transgender and gender-expansive students in the school setting include, but are not limited to: confidentiality and disclosure of the student's gender transition or gender identity; a timeline and steps for a student's transition at school to create conditions that support a safe and accepting environment; access to restrooms and other gender-segregated facilities; and a method for affirming the student's name and gender identity. The school staff may initiate discussions with transgender and gender-expansive students regarding the School's provision of support to the student.

See the "Student Records and Transcripts" and "Health Medical and Dental Information" sections concerning the disclosure of student records and information.

3. **Gender Transition Plan and Gender Support Plan** - The School, in its sole discretion, may develop an individual gender transition plan and/or a gender support plan for a transgender or gender-expansive student. The purpose of a gender transition plan is to identify supports that the School will provide to a student who is making a transition from his/her sex assigned at birth to his/her gender identity at school. The purpose of a gender support plan is to identify supports that the School will provide to a transgender or gender-expansive student in school and school-related activities.

The Student Wellness Director and/or gender support team will obtain input from the student and, where appropriate, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) when developing a gender transition plan or gender support plan. The content of a gender support plan or gender transition plan will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Common issues and supports addressed in a gender support plan or gender transition plan include but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- Access to restrooms and other gender-segregated facilities,
- Participation in school-related activities,
- Disclosure of the student's gender identity to school personnel,
- Timeline for a student's transition in the school setting,
 - Process for informing the student's peers about the student's gender identity, name and pronouns and a method for affirming same,
- Identification of peer allies,

- Identification of specific school personnel that the student may seek out during the school day,
- School social work or counseling services,
- Confidentiality of student record information, and
- Staff training specific to the student.

Additional resources on supporting and accommodating Transgender and Gender-Expansive Students consistent with NNM's practices and policies are available from the School's Diversity Director and Student Wellness Director.