

# *New Discoveries Montessori Academy*



## **Student-Parent Handbook**



**2016-2017**

*Enriching Community through Montessori Excellence*

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## STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

The entire staff of New Discoveries Montessori Academy welcomes all students and parents as members of our learning community!

This handbook provides information to you about certain terms and conditions of attending the school. New Discoveries is a public school and is funded by the state of Minnesota on a per-pupil rate. Due to this fact, our school must adhere to several state and federal guidelines, which will ensure safety and fair treatment for all students in attendance.

While NDMA will make every effort to keep your school handbook current, the information and policies described in this handbook may be changed in any way at any time at the sole discretion of the NDMA Administration/Staff. Your family is responsible to comply with current New Discoveries policies at all times. These policies apply to all students at NDMA. Students and parents or guardians should review the information in this handbook together to become familiar with the procedures, policies, and opportunities at New Discoveries.

This Student Handbook belongs to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

### School Directory Information

Student directory data, by law, are available to the general public, unless the district receives written notice from the parent or guardian restricting such student's directory data. This includes student name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and most recent educational agency or institution attended by the student. Parents or guardians who wish to restrict this data from the general public should send a request to the school.

### Change of Address/Telephone Number

Please provide change of address and new phone number information to the New Discoveries office.

### Board of Directors

As a charter school, we are governed by a five to nine member board of directors comprised of parents, teachers, and community members. The board meets monthly at the school on the third Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. The meetings are open to the public.

### DISTRICT #4161 SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER ROSTER 2016-2017

Tony Ashwill	Parent
Shari Colvin	Community Member
Peggy Enerson	Teacher
Tara Oberg	Parent
Jennie Pirnie	Parent
Lisa Rahkola	Community Member
Patrick Selchert	Community Member
Amanda Sundblad	Parent

NDMA Board of Directors meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at 5:30pm.

**NEW DISCOVERIES MONTESSORI ACADEMY**

**STUDENT - PARENT HANDBOOK**

**2016-2017**

1000 5th Ave SE  
Hutchinson, MN 55350

Phone: 320-234-6362  
Fax: 320-234-6300

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**ADMINISTRATION**

**Dave Conrad, Executive Director**  
dave.conrad@newdiscoveries.org

**Kirsten Kinzler, Associate Director**  
kirsten.kinzler@newdiscoveries.org

[www.newdiscoveries.org](http://www.newdiscoveries.org)

## **New Discoveries Montessori Academy - Staff Roster 2016-2017**

### **Teaching Staff**

Patti Cogley – Elementary I Classroom Teacher  
Peggy Enerson – Children’s House Teacher  
Rebecca Ewert – Special Education Teacher  
Kristina Grossinger – Elementary II Classroom Teacher  
Catherine Frisbie – Elementary I Classroom Teacher  
Michele Jozwick – Special Education Teacher  
Christine La Plante – Elementary 2 Teacher  
Tammy Maiers – Speech/Language Teacher  
Ethan Marcus – Elementary 1 Teacher  
Jesse Morgan – Physical Education Teacher  
Andrea Rhoda – Special Education Teacher  
Cyndi Ryan-Lauer – Music Teacher  
Margaret Shimpa – Title 1 Teacher  
Katy Snider – Special Education Teacher  
Britney Soldner – Elementary II Classroom Teacher  
Kim Thomes – Special Education Teacher  
Lois Tritz – Children’s House Teacher

### **Teaching Partners**

Susan Anderson  
Mandy Carrigan – Behavior Specialist  
Britney Clouse  
Marci Collette  
Deanna Daffner  
Wendy Ebert  
Sheri Ellis  
Scott Hanson  
MeiLi Harris  
Samantha Helget  
Andy Johnson  
Michaleen Kalenberg  
Nancy Marcks  
Elisabeth Mumford – Title I Teaching Partner  
Michelle Nadeau – Behavior Specialist  
Sandy Prieve  
Kari Rettig  
Candice Rogers-Siers  
Niccole Schwartz  
Missy Wilson

### **Instructional Support Staff**

Betsy Christian – School Psychologist  
Shari Colvin – Gifted & Talented/Enrichment  
Virginia Roque – MN Reading Corps  
Cheryl Myers – Librarian/Art Instruction

### **Support Staff**

Jan Brown – Food Service  
Karen Buxcel – Food Service Director  
Nicole Grack – School Nurse, Health Office  
Tim Kinzler – Maintenance Director  
Mia Madson – Custodian  
Starla Powers – Food Service  
Linda Reiderer – Food Service

### **Contracted Services**

Joanne Bolland – Public Health Nurse  
Donna Cooper – SpEd - Early Childhood  
Dana Hamilton – Physical Therapy Services  
Sheila Herd – Mental Health Counselor  
Chuck Herdegen – Business Manager  
Danielle King – Occupational Therapy Services  
Leah Knutson – Speech Therapy Services  
Ann Lindberg – SpEd  
Tamera Pulver – Special Education Director  
Debra Schipper – SpEd - ASD

### **Administrative Staff**

Dave Conrad – Executive Director  
Tara Erickson – Administrative Assistant  
Kirsten Kinzler – Associate Director  
Bernadette Scharpe – AP/Payroll

To contact a staff member by email, address your message as follows:  
[firstname.lastname@newdiscoveries.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@newdiscoveries.org)

# *New Discoveries Montessori Academy*

## **Our Core Values:**

### *Dynamic Leadership*

At New Discoveries everyone, from the children to the Board of Directors, will be offered multiple opportunities to grow as leaders through a mentoring, experiencing, sharing, and learning environment. The Academy will uphold the highest standard of integrity and respect that is visible and shared by staff and students at school, at home, and in their community.

### *Intentional Interdependence*

A blend of interdependence will be woven in the fabric of NDMA to represent a mix of school and community working together to achieve the shared vision. Utilizing community volunteers for relevant and meaningful activities will not only be a common occurrence, but an accepted mode of operation. The community will be used as a classroom for students to realize the relevancy of learning.

### *Exemplary Montessori Principles*

The profound legacy of Maria Montessori's learning principles will be implemented recognizing individual learning styles of each child to produce optimum individual achievement. Each child will experience a personalized and interactive learning experience that integrates the Montessori beliefs of:

- Independence
- Observation
- Following the child
- Connecting with the child
- Prepared environment
- Absorbent Mind

### *Measurable Accountability*

NDMA will passionately pursue measurable metrics for student and staff improvement. Part of the metric configuration will be continuous improvement of process that innovatively produces staff and student achievement beyond those deemed necessary by state and national requirements. Empowerment will not be just a word used to say, "It's your job, now do it." It will be a process of clear expectations, adequate resources, mentoring/coaching, and transfer of power monitored within the boundaries of vision, policies, and goals. Students and staff will be held accountable to the metrics of competency-based curriculum and given the necessary technical and human resources available to prepare them for tomorrow's challenges.

## CURRICULUM

### CHILDREN'S HOUSE PROGRAM (AGES 3-5)

The Montessori early childhood community is referred to as Children's House. In the Children's House program we serve children ages 3 to 5. Each classroom combines preschool and kindergarten, and is guided by a trained Montessori teacher and a classroom teaching partner. The teacher/guide and teaching partner provide developmentally appropriate, interest-based activities that encourage children to develop a love of learning and trust in their own ability to learn. At this level children begin to develop their physical, social and intellectual independence. Healthy snacks are provided.

Work in the Children's House includes everything from taking care of the classroom environment and learning practical life skills to studies in Math and Reading.

#### CURRICULUM AREAS –

**Grace and Courtesy** (Character Education)

**Practical Life** (Coordination, Control, Independence & Order)

**Sensorial** (Refinement of the Senses, Math, Geometry & Algebra)

**Mathematics** (Numeracy, Addition, Subtraction, Division, & Multiplication)

**Language** (Phonics, Beginning Reading, Sight Words, Reading Fluency, Comprehension, Grammar, & Spelling)

**Geography** (Landforms, Continents, & History)

**Science** (Sorting & Classification, Living & Non-living)

**Music / Art / Physical Education**

<b>3 year olds</b>	Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday MORNINGS -	8:45 a.m. to noon	Tuition: \$150/month
<b>4 year olds</b>	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday MORNINGS	8:45 a.m. to noon	Tuition: \$200/month
<b>4 year olds</b>	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday ALL DAY	8:45am to 3:10pm	Tuition: \$350/month
<b>Kindergarteners</b>	ALL DAY, EVERY DAY	8:45am to 3:10pm	Tuition-free

### ELEMENTARY 1 (AGES 6-9)

The Early Elementary Montessori classroom community is referred to as Elementary I, or E1. In the Elementary I classroom we serve children ages 6 to 9. Each classroom combines first, second and third grades, and is guided by a trained Montessori teacher. The teacher/guide provides opportunities for children to exercise the freedoms of 1) movement, 2) choice, and 3) repetition. There is a strong sense of community built within the classroom.

#### What Makes E1 Unique?

1. Multi-age classrooms
2. Three freedoms: movement, choice and repetition
3. High staff to student ratio
4. Strong sense of community with student to student mentoring, and shared responsibilities

#### E1 Montessori Focus

1. Three Freedoms
2. Montessori Materials – offering concrete to abstract learning
3. Self-regulating – creating independence in students
4. Family nights – Montessori game nights focus on extending learning into the home, and involving families

#### Essential Components of E1

1. Small group lesson presentations
2. Whole life/whole being education (not just academics)
3. Fostering excellence, respect and accountability
4. Students allowed to progress beyond and without limitations

#### Minnesota Academic Standards

1. Aligned Minnesota Academic Standards to Montessori
2. Strong foundational reading and mathematics skill building
3. Rich science and social studies experiences

### ELEMENTARY 2 (AGES 9-12)

The Upper Elementary Montessori classroom community is referred to as Elementary II, or E2. In the Elementary II classroom we serve children ages 9 to 12. Each classroom combines fourth, fifth and sixth grades, and is guided by a trained Montessori teacher. The teacher/guide provides opportunities for children to excel.

#### What Makes E2 Unique?

1. Multi-age classrooms
2. We meet every child where he/she is at
3. Students assist one another with learning
4. Students have choices regarding work

#### Montessori Focus

1. Montessori materials
2. Small group focus
3. Nurturing atmosphere
4. Grace and courtesy
5. Flexible grouping

#### Essential Components of E2

1. Guided Reading based on ability level
2. Audubon Experiential/Environmental learning
3. Mathematics based on ability level
4. All staff have on-going experiential training

#### Minnesota Academic Standards

1. Aligned Minnesota Academic Standards to Montessori
2. Weekly Learning Plans that list the topics and standards
3. Students are aware of MN requirements and why they are learning
4. Curriculum is spiraled (science and social studies)



## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

(Complete Attendance Policy 503 can be found in the Appendix.)

Compulsory Attendance Law: Minnesota State Law provides that children enrolled in school after 1988 shall attend a public school or a private school, for a period of not less than nine months during any school year until age 18 or until they graduate. Both parents and students have responsibility for school attendance. Students need to arrive at school and get to class on time. **Regular school attendance is one of the most important components in achieving a successful education.**



If your child will not be attending school on a given day or will be tardy, please call the office between 8:00 and 9:45 a.m. If we do not hear from you, we will contact you at home or work to verify your child's absence. If you send a note or e-mail the school about your child's absence, please send to the office.

If your child becomes ill or injured during the day, the school will contact you at one of the numbers you have provided on the emergency card. We do require that families provide an additional emergency contact person in the event that the parent cannot be reached.

## DAILY SCHEDULE AND ARRIVAL TIMES

**School Day: 8:45 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.**

Our school day begins at 8:45am and ends at 3:10pm. Students should **NOT** arrive at school before 8:30am due to lack of supervision potentially creating an unsafe environment.

**TARDY:** Any student arriving after 8:45 a.m. must report to the office accompanied by a parent/guardian to sign them in at the front desk. **Do NOT drop your child/ren off at the front of school and leave.**

When your child is tardy, he/she will miss ordering their lunch, which is taken first thing in the morning. On these days, please call the office prior to 8:50 to inform us of the following:

1. Your child will be late
2. What time they can be expected.
3. Whether your child will need a lunch ordered or he/she will bring their own that day.

Please do not email or call the teachers with this information. We ask that you ***call the office***, prior to 8:50, provide the above information, and then we can transfer your call to the classroom, if you would like to speak with the teacher. Neglecting to call in each time your child will be late could mean that you are called later, and asked to deliver a lunch to your child, if necessary.

## ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Teachers record each student's absence and tardiness. All student absences are verified by administration. If a student is going to be absent from school, the parent/guardian should call the office at 320.234.6362 as soon as possible on the day of the absence and leave a voicemail. If a phone call is not made, the parent/guardian should send a note with the student on the day he/she returns. The student should bring the note to the office. When an absence is known ahead of time, please notify the office by writing a note indicating the anticipated days of absence.

**EXCUSED ABSENCES** are: School-Sponsored Activities, Illness of the student, which causes him/her to remain home or go to the doctor, Medical/Dental appointments, Death of a family member or near relative, Religious holiday (Please inform the office ahead of time), Family vacations on a limited basis, Absences requested by parent, Out-of-school suspension.

### CONSEQUENCES OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

\*8 days of excused absences per semester - a letter will be sent to the parent, on a case by case basis. A copy of the letter will be given to the classroom teacher.

\*24 days or more per school year may warrant an Educational Neglect/Truancy Report to McLeod County (or the county you reside in). This will be determined on a case by case basis.

**UNEXCUSED ABSENCES** are: Leaving school without permission, Parents who do not call the attendance line to report their child's absence or send a note about the absence when the child returns, Overslept, Missed the bus, etc.



## CONSEQUENCES of UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

- 1 day - contact by phone informing parent of policy
- 3 days - note to parent and a copy is given to the classroom teacher
- 5 days - letter to parent requesting a doctor's note for any further absence
- 6 days - conference request with parent, director and classroom teacher
- 7 days - Educational Neglect/Tuancy Report filed with McLeod County (or the county you reside in) and a letter to parent informing them about report filed

## TARDINESS

Students are considered tardy if they are not in the classroom and prepared when school begins.

## CONSEQUENCES FOR EXCESSIVE TARDINESS

- 5 tardies - phone call/e-mail to parent about our concerns
- 8 tardies - letter to parent

More than 8 tardies per school year may warrant an Educational Neglect/Tuancy Report to McLeod County (or the county you reside in). This will be determined on a case by case basis.

## PROCEDURES/SCHEDULE FOR DISMISSAL

Dismissal time is at 3:10 p.m. We ask that you not make a practice of picking up your child/ren early before the end of the school day unless absolutely necessary.

## STUDENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP:

Families who pick up their children can park in the parking lot and come into the foyer to meet their child/ren or wait in their vehicle in the student drop-off/pick-up zone. If you are leaving your car, please park in the lot or on the north side of the driveway. If you bring your child to school, and you walk into the building with him/her, please walk with your child as far as the lobby. At that point, your child will proceed to the classroom by themselves.

We will only release students with parents/guardians and those included on the Permission to Pick Up forms. We will check ID's for people we do not recognize. If anyone other than someone approved on the Permission to Pick Up form will be picking up your child, parents/guardians will need to send a note to school.

Please remember to keep us informed about any/all changes to the list of names, phone numbers, etc. It is your responsibility to inform the office of all changes, in a timely manner. At any time you need to add someone to your pick up list, please do so in person. We can't make changes to your list by your making a phone call to the office. If you have a court order denying someone contact with your child, please give the office a copy of the orders.

**Parents/Guardians: If you are here to meet with a staff member, please stop at the front desk to sign in and pick up a visitor/guest badge. You must wear the badge while you are visiting, and return it to the front desk when you sign out to leave.**

## 2 HOUR LATE STARTS



Throughout the school year, NDMA Staff participate in a series of two-hour late starts for staff development purposes. The first Wednesday of the month has been designated as "late starts" for the school year (except September this year, which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday). School will start at 10:45am on these late start dates:

**September 14, November 2, December 7, February 1, April 5, and May 4**

Please keep these dates in mind and do not drop your child off earlier than one-half hour **before school starts**. Our staff uses that time for staff development and staff meetings. If you drop your child off, you will be called to come pick them up.

**NOTE: There is no 2-hour late start in October, December, and May.**

Please refer to the NDMA school calendar in the appendix section of this handbook and on the NDMA website.

## EARLY PICKUP OR LEAVING THE SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Any student needing to leave before the end of the school day is asked to bring a note to their classroom teacher at the start of the day. Parents arriving to pick up students early are asked to enter the building to sign the checkout at the office before departure. Only students who have their parent or legal guardian sign them out are permitted to leave the building during the school day. Leaving without signing out will result in an unexcused absence and discipline consequences for the student. Parents may sign out only their own child unless a documented arrangement is made in advance of the pick-up.



## AFTER-SCHOOL PLANS

If a student wishes to go home with another student, plans must be made in advance and both students must bring notes from home. **We do not allow students to make phone calls during the day to arrange after school plans.** We ask that these arrangements be made in advance with parents to avoid any mid-day confusion and miscommunication. In the event that your child will be picked up by an adult other than a parent, please send a note with specific information.

**PLEASE NOTE: An e-mail or voicemail on the day of request is not acceptable. You need to speak with school personnel directly to avoid any miscommunication.** Our building security plan is focused on the safety of the children in our care and requires extra time for planning and communication. Thank you for your support.

## VISITOR SIGN-IN

NDMA welcomes visitors at any time during the school day! When arriving at the school, we require that you check in at the office before entering the rest of the building. This will allow our office personnel to be aware of your visit. **You will be asked to sign in and wear a “visitor’s badge.”** (Yes, even our regular volunteers and parents in the school.) This is for the safety and protection of everyone in the school.

## CONTACTING TEACHERS

The staff list is included on page 5 of this handbook. Should you need to contact your student’s teacher you are encouraged to call the school before 8:45 a.m. or within 30 minutes after school is dismissed. Parents are urged to make use of this opportunity if consultation with the teacher is necessary. Please check with your student’s teacher to find the best method of communication. Please contact the office if you need to get a message to your student’s teacher during school hours. Parents may also communicate with teachers via email as follows:

[firstname.lastname@newdiscoveries.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@newdiscoveries.org)

If communicating via email, please keep in mind that emails are not routinely read during the course of the school day. So if a more immediate response is warranted, please call the school office at 320.234.6362.

## SCHOOL DRIVEWAY - PARKING LOT SAFETY INFORMATION

At New Discoveries we are making every effort to create a learning environment that is safe for every child, family member, staff member and guest. However, we need your help to make New Discoveries as safe a place as possible.

If you drop your child off at school, or pick him/her up after school and use the drop-off zone, please pull up as close to the curb as possible in the areas to the west of the main entrance canopy. We need to leave plenty of room for the buses and auto traffic to pass in the main driveway. The student drop-off area is clearly marked for student drop-off. The area along the curb to the east of the canopy is for buses only and is clearly marked. By order of the Fire Marshall, there is **NO** parking on the drive-way adjacent to the sidewalk. This area is for drop-off and pick-up only. **Do NOT** exit your car in the drop-off zone.

Reduce your speed when driving through a school parking lot. Small children can dart out of unexpected places and you may not have much warning to stop. Our students are our priority, and their safety is every one’s responsibility. Please slow down whenever you are near a school. Please ask that your children not open the doors of your vehicle before you have come to a complete stop. Please arrange your passengers so they exit on the sidewalk side of the vehicle, rather than into the traffic lane. This is crucial.

If you choose to walk into the building with your child, or to pick him/her up, please park in one of the designated, marked parking spots. Please walk your child into the building using the marked crosswalk in front of the canopy at the main entrance.

Please drive slowly and watch for auto, bus and pedestrian traffic.

**Please note that parking spaces facing 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue are reserved parking. Please do not park there.**



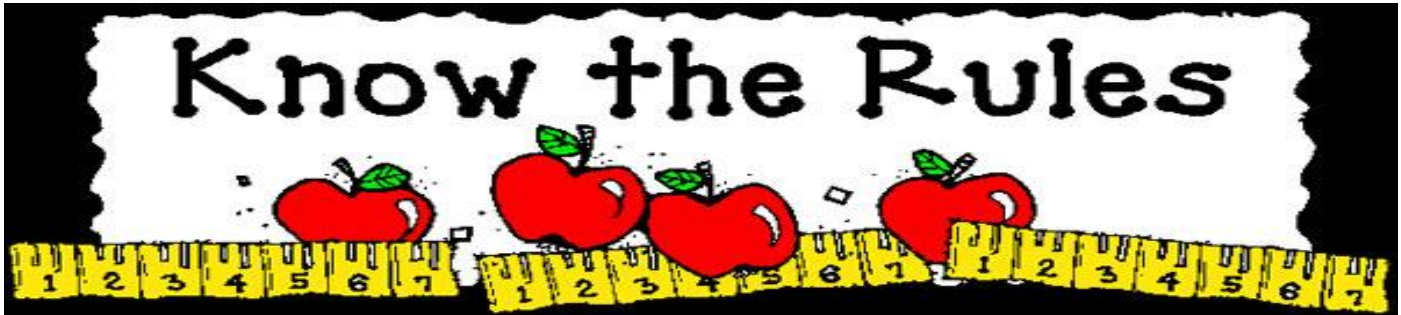
## STUDENT CONDUCT

It is our expectation that students at New Discoveries Montessori Academy consistently behave in a manner that is safe and respectful. We acknowledge that each child is responsible for his/her own behavior. We will make an effort to help each child assume responsibility for his/her own behavior by establishing expectations that are clear and consistent. To that end, we have established a simple set of principles that everyone will be accountable for.

*New Discoveries Montessori Academy Values*

EXCELLENCE  
RESPECT  
ACCOUNTABILITY

If a student is not abiding by our values or following proper rules, a staff member will help to facilitate a plan to help the child assume his/her responsibility for the right behavior. The parent/guardian will be contacted after the second infraction, unless a child's safety is concerned. In that case, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted immediately.



In addition to the rules, New Discoveries Montessori Academy staff has had training in the *Responsive Classroom* approach that will enhance the overall climate of the school and give teachers/staff techniques to help students solve behavior problems (school-wide plan). Responsive Classroom is a way of teaching that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. This approach consists of practical strategies for helping children build academic and social emotional competencies day in and day out. Using these strategies increase student engagement and academic progress, along with fewer discipline problems. Staff will present specific procedures for students to learn and practice until the procedures become routine. It is our belief that by articulating and rehearsing expected procedures, students will know the freedoms and the limitations that are appropriate. The pairing of the Responsive Classroom Approach in the Montessori classrooms is a perfect fit!

## *Responsive Classroom® Approach*

The *Responsive Classroom* (RC) is an approach to teaching and learning that fosters safe, challenging, and joyful classrooms and schools, kindergarten through eighth grade. Developed by classroom teachers, it consists of practical strategies for bringing together social and academic learning throughout the school day. Since 1981, thousands of classroom teachers and hundreds of schools have used the *Responsive Classroom* approach to help create learning environments where children thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. In urban, rural, and suburban settings nationwide, educators using these strategies report increases in student investment, responsibility, and learning, and decreases in problem behaviors.

## Guiding Principles

There are seven basic principles underlying this approach:

- **The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.**

There must be a balanced approach to all learning. Social research shows that learning is imbedded in a matrix of social interaction. The emotional state of a learner has a lot to do with successful learning.

- **How children learn is as important as *what* they learn.**

In order for children to grasp learning, they must have a chance to be active, to try out and to discover for themselves. Scientific research in learning tells us children learn best when they construct their own learning through trial and error and reworking. Think about how you learn, even as an adult. When you care about what you are learning, when you have some choice about what you're learning, when you have the opportunity to practice again and again in a safe environment, making mistakes and correcting them yourself or going after the answers on your own, that's when you learn best. These are ingredients for successful learning.

- **The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.**

This principle comes from the work of Lev Vygotsky and a study done by Barbara Rogoff reported in *Apprenticeship in Thinking* (Oxford University Press, 1992). Their work shows that while children learn from doing work independently, reading and exploring on their own, the greatest cognitive learning comes when they interact with others about what they have experienced. It is in the sharing of the thinking that children make their greatest learning gains.

- There is a specific set of social skills that children need in order to be successful academically and socially.

C – Cooperation: Children must have the opportunity to practice working together in many and varied ways all through the day. We can better accept differences when we work together and feel a sense of community and belonging together.

A – Assertion: the ability to stand up for one's own ideas without hurting others and without negating others. Children must be coached and taught to do this. Children must be given the chance to practice in a "safe" environment where dialogue about one's ideas and feelings is encouraged. Without many opportunities to practice, children will have difficulty thinking for themselves in the face of peer pressure.

R – Responsibility: The only way to learn to be responsible is to have many opportunities to practice being responsible. Children need to begin with small amounts of responsibility and then gradually be given more as they meet with success. As adults, our most powerful teaching tool is trust and belief in children's ability to come through in responsible ways. This we show in our words and in our actions.

E – Empathy: Our world is growing more and more diverse and complex. The best response is to learn how to accept and respect differences. Parents and educators want children to be capable of carrying out conflict resolution. Children must have empathy in order to do conflict resolution. Adults must have empathy in order to teach children and their parents. Empathy gives us the capacity to care. Empathy comes from "knowing" others – Empathy grows from the practice of building relationships.

S – Self Control: The ultimate goal of discipline is that children will be in control of their own behavior and behave in an ethical manner. This skill comes like that of responsibility. In order to be in control of yourself, you must have many opportunities to truly practice the skills that are involved. The opportunities need to come in small increments that are manageable and will lead to success. In being proactive, teachers make sure children understand what's expected and give many opportunities to practice before they're expected to do so on their own. The reward for ethical behavior is intrinsic—the good, proud feeling inside that comes from having done the "right thing". Like responsibility, self-control comes when adults trust and believe in the children they work with.



- Knowing the children we teach individually, culturally, and developmentally is as important as knowing the content we teach.

To teach successfully we must begin by learning who our children are – what strengths, interests, experiences, culture, learning styles and development they bring to our learning environment. In any teaching situation we always begin with "what do the children know?" and "who are our children?" We make no assumptions.

- Knowing the parents of the children we teach is important to knowing the children.

In *Responsive Classroom* teaching, we begin from a belief in the parent's best intentions. Some parents may not know what might be best, but we operate from a belief that all parents want what is best for their children and that parent involvement is essential to children's education.

- How the adults at school work together to accomplish their mission is as important as individual competence.

Teachers and administrators must live the *Responsive Classroom* approaches in order to be able to teach them to children. Children model what they see and hear their teachers doing. The principles of the *Responsive Classroom* must be practiced and lived by the educators in their interactions with each other, with the children, and with the parents.

## Teaching Practices

### Classroom Practices

At the heart of the *Responsive Classroom* approach are ten classroom practices:

- **Morning Meeting** – gathering as a whole class each morning to greet one another, share news, and warm up for the day ahead
- **Rule Creation** – helping students create classroom rules to ensure an environment that allows all class members to meet their learning goals
- **Interactive Modeling** – teaching children to notice and internalize expected behaviors through a unique modeling technique
- **Positive Teacher Language** – using words and tone as a tool to promote children's active learning, sense of community, and self-discipline
- **Logical Consequences** – responding to misbehavior in ways that allow children to fix and learn from their mistakes while preserving their dignity



- **Guided Discovery** – introducing classroom materials using a format that encourages independence, creativity, and responsibility
- **Academic Choice** – increasing student motivation by differentiating instruction and regularly allowing students teacher-structured choices in their work
- **Classroom Organization** – setting up the room in ways that encourage students' independence, cooperation, and productivity
- **Working with Families** – creating avenues for hearing parents' insights and helping them understand the school's teaching approaches
- **Collaborative Problem Solving** – using conferencing, role playing, and other strategies to resolve problems with students



Social and academic learning are inextricably connected. Building a strong foundation in positive social skills sets the stage for academic learning. Teachers and students must work together to establish routines, rules, and guidelines for behavior that make their classrooms great environments for academic learning and social growth.

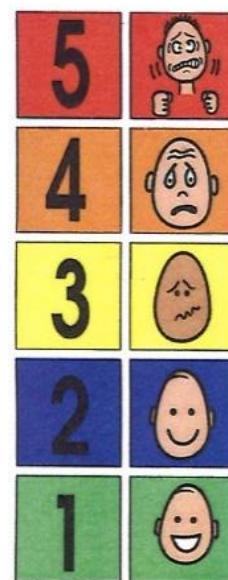
## School-wide Practices

Schools implementing the *Responsive Classroom* approach school-wide typically adopt the following practices:

- **Aligning policies and procedures with *Responsive Classroom* philosophy**—making sure everything, from the lunch routine to the discipline policy, enhances the self-management skills that children are learning through the *Responsive Classroom* approach
- **Allocating resources to support *Responsive Classroom* implementation**—using time, money, space, and personnel to support staff in learning and using the *Responsive Classroom* approach
- **Planning all-school activities to build a sense of community**—giving all of the school's children and staff opportunities to learn about and from each other through activities such as all-school meetings, cross-age recess or lunch, buddy classrooms, cross-age book clubs, and more
- **Welcoming families and the community as partners**—involving family and community members in children's education by maintaining two-way communication, inviting them to visit and volunteer, and offering family activities
- **Organizing the physical environment to set a tone of learning**—making sure, for example, that school-wide rules are posted prominently, displays emphasize student work, and all school spaces are welcoming, clean, and orderly

## THE FIVE POINT SCALE

As we look to a new school year at NDMA, we want to share one of our tools that has been used in the classroom and may certainly be used at home also. To assist a child with expressing how he/she feels or their level of frustration with an activity or task, the child points to a scale of 1 to 5, each a different color and with facial pictures to match how he/she feels: 1 is very happy; 2 is still happy, OK; 3 is questioning, beginning to be concerned, confused, or nervous; 4 is a look of "I don't get it!"; and 5 is "This is too much!" This universal tool speaks to all students. Recognizing the child's level of concern, the concept can be better explained or the child assisted with calming.



**Student Discipline (Policy 506)** The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students are aware of and comply with the New Discoveries Montessori Academy's expectations for student conduct. Such compliance will enhance the school's ability to maintain discipline and ensure that there is no interference with the educational process. NDMA will take appropriate disciplinary action when students fail to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct established by this policy.

## Bullying

Bullying is harmful, and not an acceptable childhood experience. It is not "a rite of passage," "character building," or a "stage" kids go through. If you see it happen or know of it, you should take action to stop it by telling an adult.

Bullying is repeated actions that include a range of behaviors. Examples include:

Emotional - exclusion, stalking

Physical - punching, shoving, hitting

Sexual - remarks about sexual preference, body, activities, spreading rumors, or hitting, grabbing, pulling at clothing.

Words - racial or sexual slurs, remarks about body, mind, name, family, language, religion, socioeconomic status, etc.

## NDMA's rules against bullying:

- We do not bully other students.
- We help students who are bullied.
- We include students who are left out.
- We tell an adult at school and an adult at home when someone is being bullied.

**Bullying Prohibition (Policy 514A)** A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to educate students in a safe environment. The school district cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of New Discoveries Montessori Academy and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of the school district in its normal operation, New Discoveries Montessori Academy's intent to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. The purpose of this policy is to assist New Discoveries Montessori Academy in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior.



**Hazing Prohibition (Policy 526)** The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe learning environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the school district and are prohibited at all times.

**School Weapons (Policy 501)** The purpose of this policy is to assure a safe school environment for students, staff and the public. No student or nonstudent, including adults and visitors, shall possess, use or distribute a weapon when in a school location except as provided in this policy. New Discoveries Montessori Academy will act to enforce this policy and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, school employee, volunteer, or member of the public who violates this policy.

*\*A complete copy of these policies are available for your review on the school website.*

### **STUDENT PROGRESS: GOALS, CONFERENCES, PROGRESS REPORTS**

Parents, the student, and teacher work together to develop each student's goals. Students are involved not only in the development of the plan, but also in the evaluation of progress made toward the goals identified. The NDMA calendar identifies Fall and Spring conference dates.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION/INCLUSION**

New Discoveries practices "Inclusion" with all of its learners. It is our intent to serve special needs students on official IEP's (Individual Learning Plans) primarily in the regular classroom. Teachers work collaboratively to devise teaching and learning strategies that meet the needs of these and all students within the regular classrooms.

### **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

(Policy 605) The purpose of this policy is to minimize distraction and focus students' attention on their work at New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA) rather than their attire, and to project a unified school image, which is proper and neat in appearance, reflecting the important work of the school. The Dress Code is a means to help all members of NDMA attend to the mission and vision of the school.



The school relies on your good judgment in dressing your child properly for school and weather conditions. Students should dress appropriately and respectfully, and their clothing should portray modesty (**NO** spaghetti straps or bare midriff). Students wearing clothing with offensive slogans on them will be asked to either wear the garment inside out or return home to put on a different article of clothing. If a student's clothing is inappropriate, we will contact the parent/guardian. Please consider the weather in helping your child dress for school. Weather conditions can change during the day, and often quite quickly, so students must be prepared. If your child does not have the proper attire for bad weather, a staff member may call you and ask that you bring what is needed.

**\*\*Please wear flip-flops at your discretion.**

### **RECESS/OUTDOOR EDUCATION**

All children should be dressed properly for the weather conditions of the day. Students at New Discoveries go outside everyday as part of our mission in keeping our kids active and healthy. Please help your child have the appropriate attire at school. Winter clothing includes boots, jackets, mittens and snow pants. If your child arrives at school without proper clothing, you will be contacted to bring proper clothing to school. Please mark your child's outerwear with their name for identification purposes. If a student is to be excused from recess, he or she will need a note from the doctor.

### **SLEDDING**

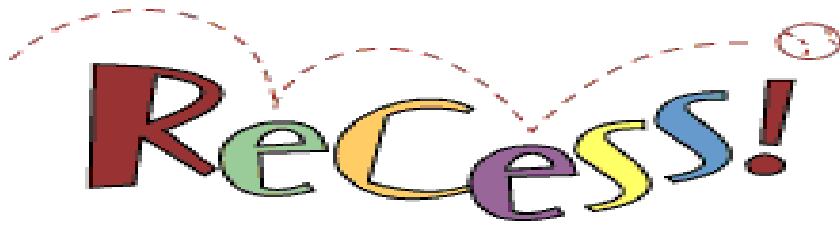
When there's a nice snow cover on our grounds, we are able to use the big hill for sledding. Students will be allowed to sled during recess based on the following criteria:

1. They must have a signed permission slip on file at New Discoveries Montessori Academy (see below).
2. They must be dressed properly: snowpants, boots, hat, mittens/gloves.
3. They must adhere to the following rules:

Sledding rules:

- Students must use sleds provided by the school, no sleds from home.
- Use only designated areas to go down the hill, and to return to the top of the hill.
- Students must not rough-house, behave aggressively or throw snowballs.
- 1 person on a sled at a time.
- Sledding is a privilege, not a right.

**Please check the box on the last page for Permission to Sled.**



## RECESS & PLAYGROUND RULES

We believe the playground is an extension of the Montessori classroom; students are given the opportunity to experience each piece of equipment in its intended purpose.

- All children will observe the “hands off” policy. This means that there should be no touches unless you are playing a game supervised by an adult.
- Students will not fight or play in an excessively rough manner nor will they pick up and throw rocks, wood chips, sticks, snow, ice, mud, etc.
- Students will use appropriate language.
- Students will reenter the school during recess only with permission from a playground supervisor.
- Students will respect and obey all playground supervisors.
- No bullying is allowed.
- Students will be in control of their bodies. Hands and feet to themselves.
- Playground equipment is to be used in the way it was designed to be used.
- Take turns on the equipment.
- Always go down the slide feet first, do not climb up it.
- Always use parallel bars for balancing, do not stand on them.
- Running, chasing and tag games are not to be played on the equipment.

Chasing, running or tag games on playground equipment will result in the Student no longer be allowed to play on the equipment for that recess.

- No jump ropes, balls, etc. allowed on the equipment.
- One person at a time on a swing. No standing.
- No throwing balls at students on swings.
- No jumping off the swing.
- Students are allowed to jump rope outside the fenced area on the sidewalk, staying away from basketball hoop and parking lot.
- Students are given the *privilege* to play soccer or football (touch or flag only) outside the fenced area.
- Students are also given the *privilege* to play four square.
- Students are also given the *privilege* to use the basketball hoop for hoop shooting activities.
- Students are to stay off of parking lot. One student to retrieve ball if needed from parking lot.
- Rules for games are to be followed.
- No shoving, punching, tackling or inappropriate language or games.
- Return to fenced area promptly when the whistle is blown signaling the end of your class recess time.
- Proper gear will be worn on the playground, especially during cold days: hats, mittens, coats, snow pants and boots.

Students who do not have boots and/or snow pants will stay on sidewalk in playground area for recess time.

These are the steps if rules are not followed by student(s) in activities outside the fence:

- 1) *Student(s) who do not follow rules should be sent inside fence for remainder of recess. If recess is nearly over, student(s) will be expected to be inside fence during the next recess period.*
- 2) *If a student has a second occurrence, he/she loses the privilege for 3 recess periods.*
- 3) *If a student has a third occurrence he/she would lose the privilege for 2 weeks.*

**Playground staff will resolve issues with students on the playground first. If unresolved, then go to teachers. If yet unresolved go to Administration.**

**Please check the box on the last page regarding compliance with the Recess & Playground Rules.**



**Outdoor Recess Attire:** Boots, scarves, jackets, mittens, snow pants, and other appropriate seasonal clothing is required. Please mark your child's outerwear with their name for identification purposes. All children are expected to go outside with the exception of specific medical situations.

### Physical Education

Physical Education is part of our curriculum and all should participate unless there is a health requirement that they not take part. In that case a note would be required from the parent. Proper footwear is required.

### TRANSPORTATION / BUS RULES

Students shall be aware that all school rules, policies, and regulations apply to behavior on busses to and from school or while on any school-related activity. Rules and regulations have been established to maintain a safe and positive climate for all riders and drivers on each school bus. NDMA provides on-the-bus safety training and emergency evacuation procedures annually for all students.

Remember, RIDING THE BUS IS A PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT!

Expectations for all bus riders:

Be courteous at the bus stop.

Enter the bus in an orderly fashion, sit down, and remain seated for the entire trip.

Do not move from seat to seat, put your feet on the seats, or engage in any horseplay.

Be respectful of other students and the driver. Do not use foul language. Do not take things that belong to others.

Do not harass anyone verbally or physically.

Do not eat or drink on the bus unless the driver gives you permission to do so.

Cooperate respectfully with the driver. Comply with the requests from the driver without arguing.

Transporting any potentially dangerous objects, including weapons, is prohibited.

Keep all body parts inside the bus. Do not throw objects out the bus window.

Do not vandalize the bus in any way.

Do not stand or walk in a bus while it is in motion.

Do not distract the driver in any way. Your safety and the safety of others is in the hands of the driver.



A bus driver's primary concern is safety. If students on a particular bus consistently misbehave, the driver or transportation director may request a seating chart for the entire bus. In addition, drivers can assign a particular student an assigned seat if they feel it is necessary.

### Consequences for Breaking Ridership Rules

Students who demonstrate inappropriate behavior on the bus or at a bus stop will be referred to school administrators. Administrators will handle each case on an individual basis and may assign the following consequences: verbal warning, assigned bus seat, discussion with parent, and loss of bus service.

**Please check the box on the last page regarding Transportation / Bus Rules compliance.**

### CUSTODIAL TASKS – Taking Care of Our Environment

Everyone is responsible for the cleanliness of their own area on a daily basis as per Montessori philosophy, including restrooms.

- Classroom neatness is the responsibility of teachers, teaching partners and students. It is expected that the classroom will be kept neat and orderly. Trash should not be allowed to collect in any area, but removed promptly. The area just outside the classroom will be considered part of the classroom and should be treated in the same way. Boots and shoes should be neatly stored in cubbies. Projects should be cleared as soon as possible. Please empty and clean up the mess around the sharpener, also.
- Fans and lights should be turned off in restrooms when they are not in use.
- If you empty a box, it is to be flattened and placed near a waste container. Do not store them near a heat source. Ideally, please put empty boxes in the multipurpose room under the counter space.
- If there is a spill, it should be cleaned up right away. If it is a larger, special type of mess that requires special cleaning, please call the office to have maintenance paged. If there is a plumbing problem, do what you can to mitigate damage. Every effort should be made to take care of the concern before paging maintenance. If every effort has been made to take care of it, then and only then should maintenance be paged.

Let's all – including our students – contribute to excellent stewardship of our learning & working environment.

## HEALTH SERVICES

The health service is staffed during school hours by a Licensed Practical Nurse who is responsible for assisting students who are ill or injured.

### Medication

Parents should bring all medication to the health office where it will be dispensed from during the day - both prescription and nonprescription. Medications (**prescription and nonprescription**) must be sent to school in the original container labeled with the student's name, prescription number, directions for administering, and the doctor's name. They must be accompanied by a **Medication Permission** form as well. Students are not allowed to bring aspirin or any other kind of medication to administer themselves. Allergy medications/inhalers may be carried if information is on file at the health office and the physician has given written permission for the child to self-carry.

#### Prescription

##### *Medication Permission Form*

- Permission form must be completed by the parent.
- Form must be signed by the physician. This form must be renewed annually.
- Container must be labeled by the pharmacy with the medication name, dose, and doctor's name.
- Medication should be brought to the health services office by a parent.

#### Nonprescription

##### *Nonprescription Medication Form*

- Need signed note by parent stating the name of the medication, dosage requirements, and student's name. Original, unopened container is required
- Sample-sized OK.
- Plastic bag or mixed medication will be returned.
- Given according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Inappropriate age or dose will not be given without a doctor's order.
- School does not provide any medication.

## IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

### **It's the Law in Minnesota...No Shots, No School!**

Immunizations are required by state law for all students attending school. A copy of the immunization record is kept in each student's health file. If students do not have proper documentation, they will be excluded from school until it is complete. Families that object to immunizations for medical or religious reasons can return a notarized objection statement from each time new immunizations are needed. Contact the nurse for questions about immunizations.

### Immunization Record

Requirements are as follows:

Age/Grade	DTAP/DTP/TD	Polio	MMR	Hepatitis. B	Varicella
3-5 years	4	3	1		1 or disease
Kindergarten	5	4	2	3	2 or disease
7 years – 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	3	3	1	3	1 until 7 <sup>th</sup> grade
Grade 7	3 and booster	3	2	3	2 or disease

### Health Census Forms

Please complete the Health Census Form which provides us with important health and emergency information for your child/ren. Please notify Health Service of any special health conditions, changes in health status or immunization updates during the school year.

### Health Conditions

Many students in our school have health conditions including asthma, allergies, diabetes and seizures. Individualized Health Plans (IHPs) are a way for us to learn about students' health conditions, triggers, symptoms, medications, what to do in case of an emergency, and what our plan of action will be to ensure student's safety and well-being at school. Your Confidential List will identify those students that have IHPs. Health plans are renewed annually and are updated prior to the start of the school year. Please notify our nurse of any health concerns and keep us updated with contact numbers, as well as any changes in health conditions or treatment of your students.

## Student Illness

If it should be necessary to keep a child home, due to an illness, **we require that you call the office to inform us of your child's absence**. Failure to do so would result in an **"unexcused absence"**. We ask that you call us **every day** your child will be absent. **Do not call or email the teacher**, or send a note with another child, as the information may not get to those that require this information. We realize if you have more than one child, it is tempting to have sibling tell the teacher about another's sibling's absence, but they often forget. We need this information in a timely manner from the parents or guardian.

### Sick Day Guidelines "Is my child too sick for school?"

Here are some common, symptom-based guidelines:

**Fever:** If your child's temperature is 100.4 degrees or higher, keep them at home. While at home encourage them to drink plenty of liquids. Your child should be fever-free for 24 hours, without medicine, before returning to school.

**Mild Cough/Runny Nose:** If there's no fever, and the child feels fairly good, school is fine.

**Bad Cough/Cold Symptoms:** Children with bad coughs need to stay home, and possibly see a doctor. It could be a severe cold or possibly bronchitis, flu, or pneumonia. As soon as the cough improves and the child is feeling better, send them back to school.

**Diarrhea or vomiting:** Keep your child home until the illness is over and for 24 hours after the last episode (without medicine).

**Sore Throat:** A minor sore throat is usually not a problem, but a severe sore throat even without a fever, could be strep, especially if it's accompanied by a headache and upset stomach. Keep your child home and consult a doctor. They can return to school 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins.

**Earache:** Your child needs to see a doctor.

**Pink Eye:** Keep the child home until a doctor says it's OK to go back to school.

**Rash:** Children with a skin rash should see a doctor, as this could be one of several contagious, infectious diseases.



Remember that during school, children are in close contact with each other. If they are kept home when the first signs of illness appear, it not only helps prevent the spreading of illness to other children, but it helps your child to recover more quickly.

### Infectious Diseases

Infectious diseases occur nearly every day in our school district. For basic information on diseases, information on when you and your students should stay at home, or when it is safe to return to school, check out the links below:

Hennepin County Infections Diseases in Childcare Settings and Schools Manual at <http://www.co.hennepin.mn.us>

Should My Child be in School? Along with these general guidelines, see below for flu symptoms.

H1N1 novel Influenza Information:

[www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

[www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/parents](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/parents)

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/dsdd>

Minnesota Health Care Link (if you need help with medical insurance coverage): Minnesota Care Link <http://www.bridgetobenefits.org>



## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES



Each family is required to submit to the office at the beginning of the year a “Student Emergency Information” form, giving school personnel instructions regarding the family’s emergency plan. These forms are **absolutely necessary** as we do not, under these emergency circumstances, have time to phone each parent. If we do not have such a form on file, students will return home as they normally would.

In the event of an emergency or illness, the procedure will be:

- To contact a parent or guardian at home or at work.
- To contact a relative, neighbor or other responsible adult whose name appears on the emergency referral form provided by the family.
- To contact the family doctor or dentist, if appropriate.
- To call 911 in instances where medical attention is needed without delay. The parent/guardian will be notified after emergency personnel have been called. The child's family will be financially responsible for medical and transportation fees if deemed necessary by emergency personnel.

In the event of an accidental ingestion, the procedure will be to call 911 and to consult with the Poison Control Center. If you do not wish to have the above procedure followed, an alternative plan must be submitted to the school principal and nurse in writing.

## FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are conducted five times per year at unspecified times. It is important that students become familiar with the correct procedure to follow in each of their classrooms. Students should walk quickly and quietly from the building using the exit that is designated for each area of the building. They are to return inside the building only after signaled.

## SEVERE WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

A severe weather drill is conducted in the spring. In case of Emergency Weather Closings, phone calls will be made to the students’ homes and emails will be sent. Please make sure all telephone numbers and email information is current.

## LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Lockdown drills are held five times each year. Lockdowns are designed to help students keep safe in the unlikely event of school violence. All students and staff participate in the drills.

## LATE STARTS – WEATHER RELATED

Should it ever be necessary to start late or cancel school due to bad weather, please listen to KARP/KDUZ, or WCCO, or watch the news for updates. NDMA will start late or close any time HUTCHINSON SCHOOL DISTRICT is late or closes. We will not know about an early school closing until we get the official call from the Hutchinson School District office, informing us of the closing.

Stay tuned to WCCO, KDUZ and KARP for further weather announcements as they become available, in case the late start turns to a closure. **Please keep in mind that you will need to watch/listen for closings or delays for the “Hutchinson School District”, (423), not NDMA.**



## MESSAGES TO STUDENTS

Emergency messages will be delivered directly to the student.

## Non-Emergency Messages

We understand there may be times that it will be necessary for you to call the school office to leave a message for your child. Please try to inform your child about after school instructions prior to dropping them off at school, whenever possible.

Due to the number of calls we have received on a daily basis, we have had to implement a procedure regarding phone calls with messages for students. Please read them carefully.

When it is necessary for you to call and leave specific instructions for your child, the message will no longer be taken in the office. Your call will be sent to the classroom. Please, remember to call as early as possible. Often times the class is out of the classroom in the afternoon and your call would go into voice mail. Call prior to 2:00, when possible. The teacher will check for those messages when returning to the classroom.

**\*\*Note –** We understand these calls are necessary at times, but please try to avoid making “daily” calls.  
**\*\*Students will be discouraged from making plans during the day and calling home for permission.** (Refer to After School Plans section of this handbook.)

## PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION

The school makes every effort to try to keep student files current, for emergencies, but we ask for your cooperation in keeping your contact information current. ANY time there is a change in a child's home address, phone number, parent cell phone number, work number, custody information, etc., please **inform the office immediately**. Do not call or email the teacher. Without current information, it is difficult, if not impossible to reach you in the event of an emergency.

Please call the office directly as that is the best way to assure the information gets into the system. By speaking with us directly, if we have questions, we can ask them at that time. **\*\* Note –** Remember that it is very important for you to update us with any changes. We would not want to find ourselves in an emergency situation and not have a way to contact you!

## SHARED SUPPLIES

At New Discoveries, in order to maintain alignment with the Montessori philosophy, each classroom shares all supplies. This means that you do not need to purchase a list of school supplies. Instead, we ask for a nominal fee per student to cover costs.

## Donations

If you are out shopping and are inclined to grab an extra item on the following list, we would accept any of the items for use in our classrooms or Nurse's office:

Kleenex	Copy Paper
Bandages	Crayons/Markers/Colored Pencils
Ice Packs	Pencils
Hand Sanitizer	Pencils/Pencil Erasers
Sanitized Wipes	Paper Clips/Binder Clips
Paper Towels	Small Paper Cups
Paper Plates	Scotch Tape/Blue Tape
Dry Erase Markers	Post-It Notes

## PTO (Parent Teacher Organization)

The mission of the PTO: Parent Advocates providing Resources to improve the learning Environment for New Discoveries Teachers, Students and Staff.

The PTO works closely with the school staff in order to build community within the school. The PTO assists with many events and activities throughout the school year including Staff Appreciation Meals, Field Trip Support, School Pride/Spirit Wear, Family Restaurant Nights, and a variety of fundraising activities. By getting involved with your child's school, you can help make it an even better place for him/her to learn and grow, and find yourself having a whole lot of fun in the process.

For those who would like to get involved, please contact Kari Rettig at [kari.rettig@newdiscoveries.org](mailto:kari.rettig@newdiscoveries.org) or 320.583.2761 (texting – ok).

PTO Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 6:30pm unless otherwise noted.



## VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

There are many opportunities for parents to volunteer at NDMA. For information, refer to the Volunteer sheet in your enrollment packet which is also available in the office. Please fill this form out and return it to the school office. Any time there is a need for family volunteers, we will refer to these sheets and call parents to ask if they would be available.

## BACKGROUND CHECKS

For the safety of our children, background checks will be completed on all regular volunteers who may have student contact, including over-night chaperones, drivers, etc. (There is no cost to the volunteer for this search.)



## PTO Fundraising

Please help support the school by saving the following:

Cashwise Food Club UPCs	Land O Lakes tops
Campbell's Soup UPCs	BOX TOPS for Education
Kwik Trip donuts and Milk Moola	Inkjet cartridges (no toner cartridges)
Target Rewards Card – 5% back to school on all your Target purchases	



## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

NDMA staff and students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America at least once each week as required by Minnesota statute (121A.11) found in the back of this handbook. Exceptions: Anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the pledge of allegiance for any personal reasons may elect not to do so. Students and school personnel must respect another person's right to make that choice. Students will be instructed in the proper etiquette toward, correct display of, and respect for the flag, and in patriotic exercises.

## LOST & FOUND

Lost and Found items may be turned in or picked up in the Main Office. Items not claimed will be given to a local charity several times during the year. All clothing and personal belongings should be marked with some form of identification.

## CELL PHONES, ELECTRONIC GAMES & OTHER ELECTRONICS

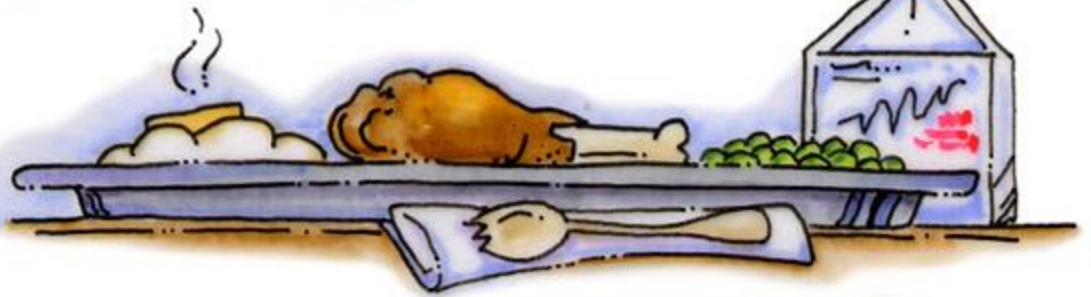
Students are encouraged not to bring portable music players, cell phones or electronic games to school. If a student does bring them, they must be turned off and kept in student lockers at all times. Student lockers are not secure. These devices are brought at student's own risk. Cell phone use during the day is *not allowed*. Should your child abuse this, the phone will be confiscated and the parents will be asked to come and pick it up. NDMA does not assume responsibility if these items are lost or stolen.

## MONEY IN SCHOOL

Students should only bring the amount of money they expect to need on any given day. Do NOT bring large amounts of money to school. The school assumes no responsibility for the loss of money or valuables. **Please label all checks with the student name and what the check is for on the memo line.**



# Hot Lunch



## BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM

Our goal is to provide a safe and happy environment while eating in the lunchroom. Student behavior should support that.

### Student Lunch Accounts

The cost of a **student school lunch is \$2.50**. We prefer you pay for lunches in lots of 10, for \$25.00. We do not suggest that you send cash to school unless you put it in an envelope and clearly mark the envelope with the child's name and what the money is for - LUNCH.

### Morning Breakfast/Snack

NDMA offers morning breakfast/snack for ALL students, pre-school through sixth grade. **K-6 Student Breakfast - \$ 1.00**. There is no charge for Preschool. The menu is planned by our food service coordinator on a monthly basis. You will receive a menu each month listing the items. Breakfast typically includes a fruit item, bread or cereal item and milk.

Chocolate milk or juice is NOT an option for the morning snack unless juice is part of the menu for that morning. Children requiring a milk substitute will have that option. The snack will be delivered to your child's classroom daily. Your child will play a role in preparing his/her own snack and cleaning up as well. The routine will become part of our practical life experience.

NDMA Food Service Prices 2016-2017			
	Breakfast	Lunch	Milk
Student	\$1.00	\$2.50	\$0.35
Adult	\$1.70	\$3.60	\$0.35

### Free or Reduced Meals

If you think your family might qualify for free or reduced lunches, see your enrollment packet for the Application for Educational Benefits or contact the office. The Federal government establishes income/family guidelines and this is how schools determine family eligibility. We encourage families who may qualify to fill out and turn in this application to the office. Families can turn in a new Application at any point during the school year if their circumstances change. Students that qualified last year will still qualify for the first 30 days of this year.

We can only allow a child to eat two (2) lunches after their account is empty, so we suggest that you pay ahead, and perhaps mark the calendar as to when that amount will be gone. Any time there is a discrepancy in a lunch account, please call the school office and ask for the lunch account person. If she is away from her phone, please leave your name and number for her to return your call.

### Visitor Meals

It is possible for parents to come and eat lunch with a child, as long as the parents have spoken with the teacher(s) prior to 8:50 on the day that they will be visiting. Please inform the teacher how many extra lunches to order, and if they will be adult or child, and who you will be eating with. The meal(s) can be paid for at the time of sale. **Adult meal - \$3.50. Child meal - \$2.50**. Please bring the correct amount of money or pay by check. **Remember to sign in at the office and get a visitor badge prior to going to lunch.**

### CLASSROOM TREATS

Please keep in mind when bringing in classroom treats that there may be students with certain dietary restrictions. Please check with your child's teacher in regards to suggestions for safe treats.



## LIBRARY POLICY AND INFORMATION

### General Rules:

- All students must be accompanied by an adult while in the library
- No food or drink should be brought into the library
- Please use whisper voices only, or no voices while in the library
- Follow procedures when checking out and returning books

### What is the check-out procedure?

Library personnel must be present when returning and checking out books



### How will over-due books be handled?

If a student has an overdue book, he/she will not be allowed to check out additional books from the library until the book is returned or paid for.

### How will lost books be handled?

If a book is lost, the book must be paid for before the student is able to resume library privileges. The payment is entered into a log. If a book is found, after having been paid for, the student may return the book and get the amount paid reimbursed if a new replacement copy has not yet been purchased.

### How are books organized in the library?

Wall bookshelves:

- Chapter Books (white labels) in alphabetical order by call number
- Chapter Series Books (blue labels) in alphabetical order by series title
- Non-fiction and reference (no labels at this time) grouped by category (i.e. Animals, Science)
- Picture books (orange labels) in alphabetical order as bins are labeled

### How should books look on wall bookshelves?

- Books should be alphabetized within each section (chapter, chapter series, etc.).
- Books on shelves should be pushed forward so that all of the bindings are even to the edge of the shelf. This makes each book easy to see and identify. Students should not push in books or intentionally disrupt library organization in any other way.
- Books should be right side up with spine outward and readable.

A lot of work goes into organizing and making our library functional. Students are expected to help keep the library in order by taking the time to put a misfiled book in its proper place when spotted, or straighten books if needed. Anything that you can do while using the library to keep it functional is appreciated.

**Please check the box on the last page regarding Library compliance.**





## COMPUTER USE & INTERNET SAFETY POLICY

In order to use school computers and network resources, students must understand and agree to the conditions in this policy. Students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign this form to acknowledge that they accept these terms before they will be allowed to use *New Discoveries Montessori Academy* computers. The use of New Discoveries Montessori Academy computers and the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Any misuse or abuse of the conditions listed below will result in the loss of privileges.

- + Computers are for academic purposes only. Any other activity is not allowed, including games, playing music, internet messaging, email, etc.
- + Students are only allowed to print materials related to their class work or project work, and must receive permission from a staff member before printing.
- + Students are not allowed to download files or programs from the Internet that are not related to classwork.
- + Students are not allowed to use the Internet unsupervised.
- + Students must take proper care of the computers while they are using them. Any form of vandalism is not allowed. This includes any malicious attempt to physically deface, disable, destroy, or hack into computers or the network, or to harm or destroy data of another user.

Students who do not comply with the above conditions will have privileges revoked. On the first offense, the student will lose privileges for 2 weeks. For the second offense, the student will lose privileges for 1 month. On the third offense, Students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will have a conference with instructional staff to determine the next step. In cases of vandalism, students and their families will be responsible for any reasonable cost necessary for repair or replacement of the item, as well as potential legal consequences.

**Please check the box on the last page regarding Computer Use & Internet Safety compliance.**

# ATTENDANCE (503)

Adopted: 08/01/06

Revised: 08/19/13

New Discoveries Montessori Academy Policy 503

## I. PURPOSE

Regular school attendance is one of the more important components in achieving a successful education. As stated in the Minnesota State Statutes, section 120A.22, Subdivision 5 and 6, any child enrolled in kindergarten through the age of 16 must receive instruction.

## II. DEFINITIONS

**Truancy** is a child's willful absence without lawful excuse from one or more class periods on seven different school days. **Continuing Truant** - MN Statute 260A.02 provides that a continuing truant is a student who is subject to the compulsory instruction requirements of MN Statute 120A.22 and is absent from instruction without valid excuse within a single school year for:

- Three days if the child is in an elementary school; or
- Three or more class periods on three days if the child is in middle school, junior high school, or high school; or
- When a student is classified as a continuing truant, the school may notify the student's parent or legal guardian that the child is considered truant and inform the parents of the provisions of Minn. Stat 260A, 260C, and 120A regarding truant students. The school may also refer a continuing truant to the Ramsey County Attorney's Office Truancy Intervention Program.

**Habitual Truant** - MN Statute 260C.007 defines an habitual truant as:

- A child under the age of 16 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days if the child is in elementary or for one or more class periods on seven school days if the child is in middle school, junior high school, or high school; or
- A child who is 16 or 17 years of age who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school.

## III. GENERAL POLICY and PROCEDURES

### Excessive Tardies

**3 tardies**—A phone call to parents by an administrator will be made to discuss the importance of being punctual.

**5 tardies**—A meeting between the classroom teacher, an administrator, and a parent/guardian will be scheduled by an administrator or classroom teacher to discuss tardies and how student achievement is impacted. If a meeting at the school is unable to take place, a home visit by the classroom teacher and/or an administrator will be scheduled. We will assist the parent/guardian in developing a plan to address the truancy concern(s).

### Absences

As stated in the Minnesota Statutes, Subdivision 12, **Excused Absences** are:

- Illness of the student, which causes him/her to remain home or go to the doctor (please ask the doctor for a note and return it to the office immediately.)
- Medical/Dental appointments
- Family emergencies
- Death of a family member or near relative
- Religious holiday (please inform the office ahead of time)

Students whose absences are excused are required to make up all assignments missed or to complete alternative assignments as deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher.

### Excused Absences per trimester:

Classroom teachers and/or office staff will be monitoring the number of absences within each trimester as well as a cumulative total of absences. The following steps will be taken to ensure the child is receiving instruction.

**4 days**—an administrator will call the parents to notify them of the growing number of absences. The parents will also be made aware of the NDMA policy and procedures if the absences continue.

**6 days**—a meeting between the classroom teacher, an administrator, and a parent/guardian will be scheduled by an administrator or classroom teacher to discuss absences and student achievement. If a meeting at the school is unable to take place, a home visit by the classroom teacher and/or an administrator will be scheduled. We will assist the parent/guardian in developing a plan to address the attendance concerns(s).

**18 days or more per school year** may warrant an Education Neglect/Truancy Report to the child's county of residence. As stated in the Minnesota Statutes, section 120A.22, Subdivision 6, a school district may require a child to receive instruction in summer school. Attendance records, data results, and classroom observations will determine if the child is required to attend summer school.

### Unexcused Absences

Some examples of absences that are **not excused**:

- Parents who do not call the attendance line to report their child's absence or send a note about the absence when the child returns
- Overslept
- Missed the bus
- Car trouble
- Baby-sitting
- Shopping
- Running errands
- Needed at home

**Unexcused Absences:** Classroom teachers and/or office staff will be monitoring the number of absences within each trimester as well as a cumulative total of absences. The following steps will be taken to ensure the child is receiving instruction.

**1 day**—a phone call to parents by an administrator will be made regarding truancy

**3 days**—the child is considered "continuing truant" as defined in MN Statute 260A.02. A meeting between the classroom teacher, an administrator, and parent/guardian will be scheduled by an administrator or classroom teacher to discuss absences and student achievement. If a meeting at the school is unable to take place, a home visit by the classroom teacher and/or an administrator will be scheduled.

**5 days**—a meeting between an administrator and parent/guardian will be scheduled by an administrator to discuss Continuing Truancy. (Minnesota Statute 260A.02) If a meeting at the school is unable to take place, a home visit by an administrator will be scheduled.

**7 days**—child is considered "habitual truant" as defined in MN Statute 260.007. Educational Neglect/Truancy Report will be filed with McLeod County and a letter to Parent/guardian informing them of the filed report.

**121A.11 UNITED STATES FLAG.**

Subdivision 1. **Displayed by schools.** Every public school in Minnesota must display an appropriate United States flag when in session. The flag shall be displayed upon the school grounds or outside the school building, on a proper staff, on every legal holiday occurring during the school term and at such other times as the board of the district may direct. The flag must be displayed within the principal rooms of the school building at all other times while school is in session.

Subd. 2. **School boards to provide flags and staffs.** The board must provide the flag for each of the school buildings in their districts, together with a suitable staff to display the flag outside of the school building and proper arrangement to display the flag in the building, and a suitable receptacle for the safekeeping of the flag when not in use.

Subd. 3. **Pledge of Allegiance.** (a) All public and charter school students shall recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America one or more times each week. The recitation shall be conducted:

(1) by each individual classroom teacher or the teacher's surrogate; or

(2) over a school intercom system by a person designated by the school principal or other person having administrative control over the school.

A local school board or a charter school board of directors may annually, by majority vote, waive this requirement.

(b) Any student or teacher may decline to participate in recitation of the pledge.

(c) A school district or charter school that has a student handbook or school policy guide must include a statement that anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reasons may elect not to do so and that students must respect another person's right to make that choice.

(d) A local school board or a charter school board of directors that waives the requirement to recite the Pledge of Allegiance under paragraph (a) may adopt a district or school policy regarding the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Subd. 4. **Instruction.** Unless the requirement in subdivision 3 is waived by a majority vote of the school board, a school district must instruct students in the proper etiquette toward, correct display of, and respect for the flag, and in patriotic exercises.

**History:** *Ex1959 c 71 art 7 s 14; 1998 c 397 art 9 s 4,26; 2003 c 120 s 1,2*



# New Discoveries Montessori Academy #4161

## 2016-2017 School Calendar

BOARD APPROVED: 05.02.16  
updated: 07.20.16

**2,3,4:** ESY  
**9,10,11:** ESY  
**15-19:** Back-to-School Prof Dev  
**18:** Open House 5:30-7:30pm  
**22:** First Day of School

August 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**19**  
**1** NOTE: There is NO 2hr Late Start in Jan  
**2:** NO SCHOOL - Holiday Break  
**10:** Family Night (Literacy)  
**13:** NO SCHOOL/Prof Dev  
**16:** NO SCHOOL - MLK Day

**2-5:** NO SCHOOL - Labor Day  
**14:** 2hr Late Start/Prof Dev  
**17:** Family Night (Environmental)

September 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

February 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

**18**  
**1:** 2hr Late Start/Prof Dev  
**17:** NO SCHOOL/Prof Dev  
**20:** NO SCHOOL - President's Day  
**26-28:** Montessori Education Week  
**28:** CH Celebration Showcase 6:30pm

NOTE: There is NO 2hr Late Start in Oct  
**6:** Conferences 3:30-7:30pm  
**7:** NO SCHOOL - Conferences  
**20-21:** Professional Org Mtgs

October 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

March 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

**21**  
**2** **1-4:** Montessori Education Week  
**2** **1:** 2hr Late Start/Prof Dev  
**7:** Family Night (STEM)  
**15:** Conferences 3:30-7:30pm  
**16:** NO SCHOOL - Conferences  
**17:** NO SCHOOL - Spring Break

**2:** 2hr Late Start/Prof Dev  
**7:** E2's Got Talent Showcase 6:30pm  
**14:** NO SCHOOL - Teacher Work Day  
**15:** Family Night (Community)  
**1-25:** NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving

November 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

April 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

**19**  
**0**  
**2** **5:** 2hr Late Start/Prof Dev  
**14:** NO SCHOOL - Good Friday

**2:** 2hr Late Start/Prof Dev  
**-30:** NO SCHOOL - Holiday Break

December 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

May 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**12**  
**1** NOTE: There is NO 2hr Late Start in May  
**0** **4:** E1 Celebration Showcase 6:30pm  
**16:** Last Day of School  
**17:** End-of-Year - Teacher Work Day  
**23,24,25:** Summer Learning Discoveries  
**30,31:** Summer Learning Discoveries (tent.)

Start/Late Starts/End  
No School  
Summer Learning Discoveries/ESY  
School Events  
NO SCHOOL STUDENTS - Work Day/Prof. Dev.  
Family Discoveries Nights  
Board Mtg. - 3rd Monday/month 5:30

June 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

**0**  
**0** **1:** Summer Learning Discoveries (tent.)  
**0** **6,7,8:** Summer Learning Discoveries (tent.)

Total Student Days 171 Total Teacher Days 182.50 + 12 hrs Late Start



## Student-Parent Handbook Signature Page

We ask students **and** parents to acknowledge the NDMA Student-Parent Handbook. Please read through the handbook discussing it together, then sign and return this page.

- ☐ I have read the **NDMA Student-Parent Handbook**. I agree to follow it to the best of my ability.
- ☐ I have read and agree to comply with the **Library Policy**.
- ☐ I have read and agree to comply with the **Computer Use Policy**.
- ☐ I have read and agree to comply with the **Recess & Playground Rules**.
- ☐ **Permission to Sled:** As a parent/guardian, I give my permission for my child to sled at NDMA. By signing this permission slip you are assuming full responsibility for injuries.
- ☐ I have read and agree to comply with the **Transportation Rules**.
- ☐ **Late Arrivals:** As a parent or guardian, I agree to always sign in at the office with my child upon late arrival on a normal school day.

Student Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_