

New Discoveries Montessori Academy



Student-Parent Handbook

2023-2024

Providing a quality, comprehensive public education within a Montessori context

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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: _____ Grade _____ Teacher(s) _____
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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 keep your contact information current! Provide change of address and new phone number information to the New Discoveries office or update in the parent portal.

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 2023-2024

Deanna Boettcher	Parent
Tim Dezelske	Parent
Shari Colvin	Community Member
Patti Hoerner	Teacher
Spencer Kangas	Teacher
Chris La Plante	Teacher
Melanie Schiroo	Community Member
Kyle Kovack	Parent
OPEN	Community Member

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

STUDENT - PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

New Discoveries Montessori Academy
1000 5th Ave SE
Hutchinson, MN 55350

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

Website: www.newdiscoveries.org

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

ADMINISTRATION

Kirsten Kinzler, Executive Director
kirsten.kinzler@newdiscoveries.org

Tara Erickson, Human Resources/Office Manager
tara.erickson@newdiscoveries.org

Nicole Schwartz, Administrative Assistant
nicole.schwartz@newdiscoveries.org

New Discoveries Montessori Academy

OUR CORE VALUES:

Dynamic Leadership

At New Discoveries Montessori Academy (NDMA) 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. NDMA will uphold the highest standard of integrity and respect, so they are visible and shared by staff and students at school, at home, and in their community. *Professional Development, workshops, JEPD, Family Discoveries Nights, Student Ambassadors, and Music and Art Showcases will create ongoing opportunities for leadership development.*

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. *Inherent outcome: Positive interactions among and between students, families, staff and community.*

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 in a multi-age classroom that integrates the following Montessori principles:

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

Measurable Accountability

NDMA will passionately pursue measurable rubrics for student and staff achievement and improvement. There will be a continuous improvement process resulting in innovation and achievement beyond state and national requirements. It will be a process of clear expectations, adequate resources, mentoring/coaching, and leadership development within the boundaries of vision, policies, goals, and budget parameters. Students and Staff will be held to the standards-based curriculum and given the necessary technical and human resources available to prepare them for future 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 guide 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

3 year olds	Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday MORNINGS -	8:15 a.m. to noon	Tuition: \$300/month Transportation: \$300/month
4 year olds	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday MORNINGS	8:15 a.m. to noon	Tuition: \$0 – federal grant
4 year olds	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday ALL DAY	8:15 am to 2:50pm	Tuition: \$0 – federal grant
Kindergarteners	ALL DAY, EVERY DAY	8:15 am to 2:50pm	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

E2 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)

Erdkinder - E3 (Grades 7/8)

We have expanded our enrollment to include grades seven and eight and will have two multi-age two classrooms of grades 7/8 this year. "Erdkinder" means "children of the earth," Maria Montessori's term for young adolescents preparing to engage in the larger world around them. Erdkinder provides a unique educational experience for junior high school students, blending elements of more conventional academics (grades and homework) with a learning environment based on the principles of Montessori education. This results in an academically rigorous classroom in a supportive and caring environment that seeks to optimize student independence and creativity.

Erdkinder Program Goals

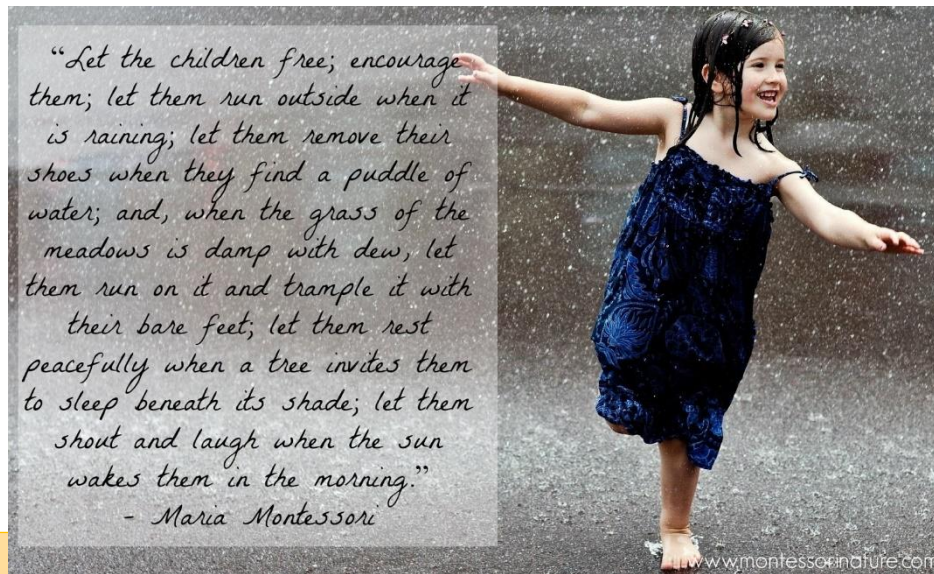
1. Provide a learning environment where adolescents are respected and appreciated
2. Support a sense of community in which students refine their ability to recognize one another as valuable people
3. Self-directed, active learning
4. Nurture independence and interdependence
5. Provide a diverse and integrated curriculum

Elements of the Erdkinder Curriculum

1. Interdisciplinary lessons and projects
2. Connection to natural environment and community
3. Self-expression and creative expression
4. Peer teaching
5. Constructing and creating own assignments
6. Service to others and community
7. Small group projects and work

Components of the Erdkinder Program

1. Independent work time is provided daily; students balance freedom and responsibility through structure and measures of accountability.
2. Multi-age learning (7th and 8th grade students work together)
3. A balance of lessons and work time; lessons are provided in small and medium sized groups.
4. Individualized learning based on each student's readiness to learn.
5. A curriculum that meets the Minnesota Academic standards.



Montessori Principles honored at New Discoveries Montessori Academy:

1. *Movement* can enhance thinking and learning.
2. Learning and well-being are improved through *freedom and choice*.
3. We tend to learn better when we are *interested* in what we are learning.
4. *Intrinsic* motivation leads to meaningful reward.
5. Learning *with and from peers* is powerful.
6. Learning *in context* brings deeper understanding.
7. The teacher is a *guide*.
8. *Order in the environment* is beneficial to children.

Created, December 2018

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

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

Compulsory Attendance Law: Minnesota law states that all students are required to attend school from age 7, or when they enter kindergarten (whichever comes first) until they are 18 years old. A student's failure to attend school may lead to legal action for the parents/guardians and the student. 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: 8:15 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.

Our school day begins at 8:15am and ends at 2:50pm. Students should **NOT** arrive at school before 8:00am due to lack of supervision potentially creating an unsafe environment.

TARDY: Any student arriving after 8:15 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 8:40 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 8:40, 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/Tuancy 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/Truancy 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/Truancy 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 2:50 p.m. We ask that you do 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.

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 8:00 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

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.

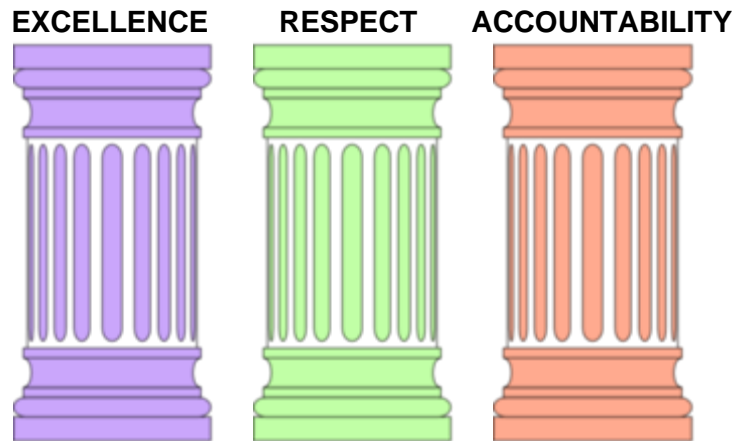
If you choose to walk into the building with your child, or to pick him/her up, please park in one of the designated, marked parking spots. Please walk your child into the building using the marked crosswalk in front of the canopy at the main entrance.

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

Visitor parking spots are located at the main entrance on the north side of the road.

Please note the bus/van parking spaces are reserved parking for our transportation. Please do not park there.

New Discoveries Montessori Academy Values



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND 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

1. EXCELLENCE
2. RESPECT
3. ACCOUNTABILITY

In addition to the rules, New Discoveries Montessori Academy staff utilize the Responsive Classroom approach and CharacterStrong curriculum to enhance the overall climate of the school, provide staff with techniques to help students solve problems, and provide students with the skills they need to be successful.

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. 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!

CharacterStrong

Through the use of the CharacterStrong curriculum, we have an opportunity to help our students learn the value of empathy, service, and connection. Along with strong academics, our goal is to teach students to be capable, compassionate people, and to empower them to become the best versions of themselves. When our students feel safe, supported, and part of a community, they perform better, act with more kindness, and want to show up to school each day. We believe this curriculum will have a powerful and positive impact on the climate and culture of our school, and it is our hope that families will join us in this work to build a kinder school culture and, ultimately, a kinder world.

CharacterStrong has three main goals for students

Be Kind

Social skills like listening, friendship, solving conflicts, and leadership.
These skills are taught alongside Empathy, Respect, & Cooperation

Be Strong

Skills that help students focus, stay organized, and set goals.
These skills are taught alongside Responsibility, Courage, & Perseverance

Be Well

Skills that help students handle their emotions and deal with stress.

These skills are taught alongside Gratitude, Honesty, & Creativity

How does CharacterStrong relate to behavior management?

All students participate in school-wide and classroom-based social and emotional learning (SEL) opportunities. The purpose of SEL is to develop skills to understand and regulate one's emotional state for personal health and strong, safe relationships.

NDMA staff will explicitly define, teach and review behavioral expectations. We always maintain a primary focus on learning new skills to replace negative behaviors.

Morning Meetings and Community Circles occur regularly in classrooms to teach skills such as empathy, kindness, and careful listening. Circles are designed to create a safe space for all voices and to encourage each participant to step in the direction of their best self.

We use a restorative approach to discipline. Collaborative meetings between school staff, students and families are sometimes required to solve problems. Disciplinary consequences for actions may result, and, when appropriate, the consequences are linked to repairing harm/relationships and learning new skills to solve similar problems in the future. For example, a certain class or school activities may be limited for a student while they practice new skills necessary to participate appropriately. We also strive to include students' voices in developing appropriate consequences. Students of all ages are very capable of developing plans to repair harm. They are especially invested in creating these plans when they feel listened to and understood by the adults supporting them. These plans will be structured through the updated Collaborative Problem Solving Plan (C-PSP).

Collaborative Problem-Solving Plan (C-PSP)

Dr. Ross Greene (Originator of the Collaborative & Proactive Solutions Approach) states that, "The Collaborative Problem Solving model is based on the premise that challenging behavior occurs when the demands and expectations being placed on a kid exceed the kid's capacity to respond adaptively."

The Collaborative & Proactive Solutions Approach helps adults shift to a more accurate and compassionate mindset and embrace the truth that *kids do well if they can* – rather than the more common belief that kids would do well if they simply *wanted* to. This focuses on building skills like flexibility, frustration tolerance and problem solving, rather than simply motivating kids to behave better. The process begins with identifying triggers to a child's challenging behavior and the specific skills they need help developing (Greene, 2021).

The new C-PSP layout will be a collaborative problem-solving session with the student and the adult. This plan is intended to teach students to take ownership of their challenges and help staff identify the skills the student is lacking, the triggers, expectations, antecedents, situations, and context they're having difficulty meeting (unsolved problems). The goal is to reduce challenging behaviors by helping the student solve those problems, rather than modify their behavior through rewards and punishments. The layout will also help staff to take a proactive approach by identifying and prioritizing the students' unsolved problems.

Major Behaviors

If there is fighting, severe defiance, harassment, threats, destruction, theft, vandalism, weapons, etc. the BIS must be consulted prior to any decision regarding consequences.

The BIS will make decisions regarding ISS or OSS. In either case, the BIS will:

- 1) write suspension letters
- 2) notify parent by phone and email letter
- 3) copy/scan the letter to classroom teacher, admin, office
- 4) set up re-entry meeting with parents
- 5) document in JMC

Bus Conduct Reports

The BIS will receive all bus conduct reports, make decisions regarding consequences, notify parents by email and document in JMC.

The office will be responsible for notifying transportation of any changes due to above disciplinary actions. The office will stay informed regarding above situations so they can respond to parents regarding issues.

Behavior Specialists

We are very fortunate to have two Behavior Specialists on staff at NDMA to assist with student behavior issues.

Resource Room

If you have continued social skills concerns about a student, please contact our Social Skills Specialist in the Resource Room.

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 always monitor the

activities of students 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.

**Complete copies of these policies are available for your review on the school website.*

The Four Key Domains of Responsive Classroom



Engaging Academics

Learner-centered lessons that are participatory, appropriately challenging, fun, and relevant and promote curiosity, wonder, and interest.



Positive Community

A safe, predictable, joyful, and inclusive environment where all students have a sense of belonging and significance.



Effective Management

A calm and orderly learning environment that promotes autonomy, responsibility, and high engagement in learning.



Developmentally Responsive Teaching

Basing all decisions for teaching and discipline upon research and knowledge of students' social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

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 its learners. It is our intent to serve special needs students on an official IEP (Individual Education Plan) primarily in the regular classroom. Co-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). **Tops need to meet bottoms no matter what you are wearing. No hats or hoods will be allowed to be worn in the school building.** 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, they 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: snow pants, 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 being 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 which require a doctor's note.

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/doctor. Proper footwear is required.

TRANSPORTATION /BUS /VAN RULES

Students shall be aware that all school rules, policies, and regulations apply to behavior on buses/vans 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/van. NDMA provides on-the-bus safety training and emergency evacuation procedures annually for all students.

Remember, RIDING THE BUS/VAN 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/van consistently misbehave, the driver or NDMA administration may request a seating chart for the entire bus/van. 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/van 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 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 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 or any 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.

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. 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 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>

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. Stay tuned for further weather announcements as they become available, in case the late start turns to a closure. **Since we have our own transportation, you will watch/ listen for closings or delays for New Discoveries Montessori Academy.**



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.

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 ensure the information gets into the system. By speaking with us directly, if we have questions, we can ask them at that time. You may also do this through the parent portal.

**** 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 consumable 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
Ziplock Bags	

PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) – WE NEED YOU!!!

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 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 Kirsten Kinzler at kirsten.kinzler@newdiscoveries.org or 320.583.1877 (texting – ok).



VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Please contact the office for volunteer opportunities.

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:

BOX TOPS – Don't forget to scan your receipts!

KWIK TRIP SCRIP

Target Rewards

Coca Cola Gives – enter codes online

Amazon Smile



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.

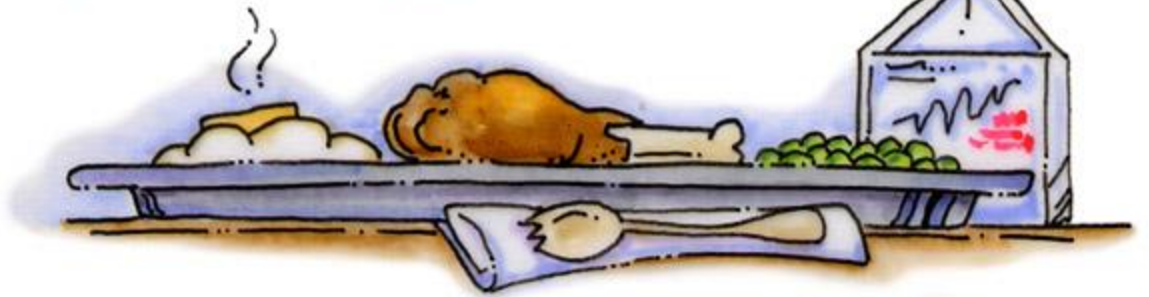
CELL PHONES, ELECTRONIC GAMES & OTHER ELECTRONICS

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's 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.

Free School Meals Program

A new universal school meals state law provides no-cost breakfast and lunch to Minnesota's 800,000-plus students, regardless of their family's income. This legislation provides a maximum of one free breakfast and one free lunch per day to students at participating schools. A second breakfast and /or a second lunch is considered an ala carte item and must be priced at the adult meal rate.

You will still need to fill out the Alternate Educational Benefits Application as this does help our school with funding in other educational areas.

Morning Breakfast/Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Snack

NDMA offers morning breakfast/snack for ALL students, pre-school through eighth grade. 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. Our Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program will be delivered to your child's classroom 3 days per week. Your child will learn about their fruit or vegetable and play a role in preparing the snack and cleaning up as well. The routine will become part of our practical life experience.

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 - \$4.95. Child meal - \$3.00/\$3.50.** 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 unless previously arranged by a teacher and the library specialist.
- Food or drink is not allowed in 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 checking out books. Students in 7th and 8th grade may, with the permission of their teacher, check out books using the self-check-out form if no library personnel are present.

What is the return procedure?

Each classroom will select student helpers to bring their class's books back to the library on their assigned day. books may also be returned individually anytime to the bins marked "Book Return".

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:

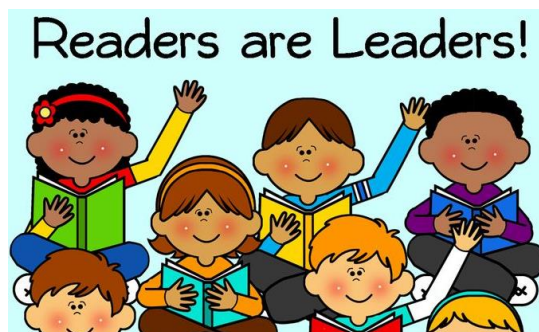
- Chapter Books (white labels) in alphabetical order by call number
- Chapter Series Books (blue line on the labels) in alphabetical order by series title
- Non-fiction and reference books (white labels) grouped by dewey decimal system call number (i.e. 636.8 for cats, 811 for poetry)
- Picture books (orange line on labels) in alphabetical order.

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.





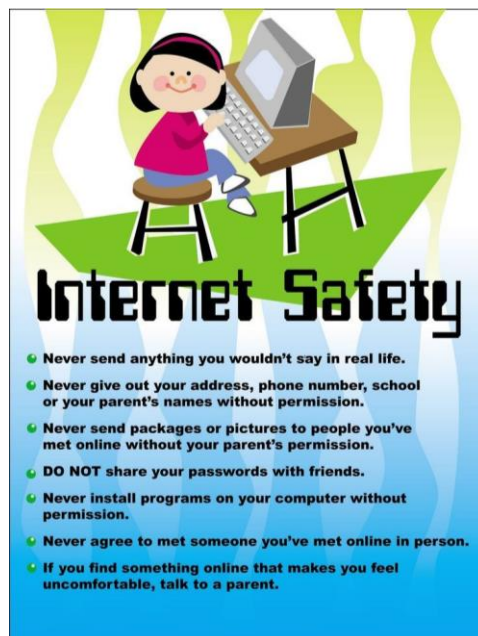
COMPUTER USE & INTERNET SAFETY POLICY

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 (503P)

Adopted: 08/19/13

Revised: 10/18/21

Reviewed: 10/18/21

New Discoveries Montessori Academy Policy 503P

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 the McLeod County Attorney's Office Truancy Intervention Program.

Habitual Truant - MN Statute 260C.007 defines a 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 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)
- Family vacations on a limited basis (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 absence – a phone call to parents by an administrator will be made regarding truancy

3 absences – 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 absences -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 absences – child is considered "habitual truant" as defined in MN Statute 260C.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.

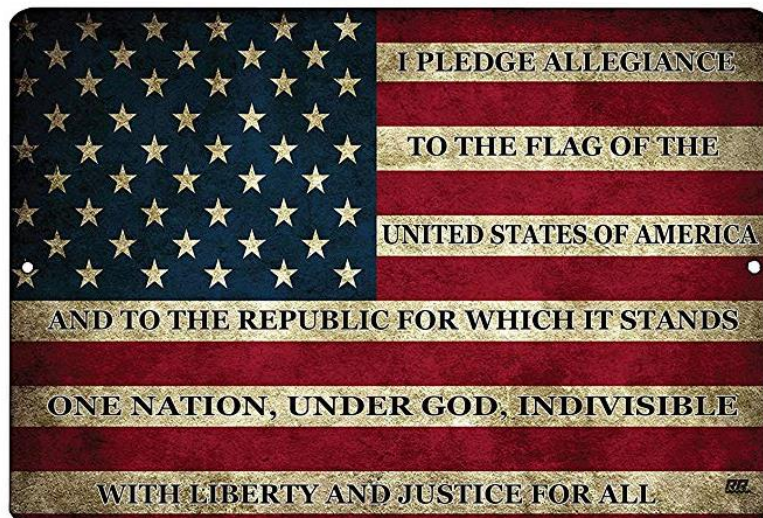
(b) Any student or teacher may decline to participate in recitation of the pledge.

(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

2023-2024 School Calendar

Regular Hours: Monday-Friday 8:15a.m.-2:50p.m.

Attendance Line: 320-234-6362 ext. 1

1-3: ESY 8-10: ESY
14-17: Prof. Development
17: NDMA Open House 5:30-7:30p
21: First day of school
24-25: No School

1-4: No School: Labor Day
5: Preschool First Day

29: No School: PD/Workday

6: Early Release 12:30p
17: Conferences (Evening)
18: No School: Conferences
19-20: No School

3: No School: PD/Workday

21: End of Tri 1
22-24: Holiday Break

1: Early Release 12:30p

21-29: Holiday Break

Board Approved: 03/20/2023
Update Approved: 07/20/2023
1: Holiday Break
12: No School: PD/Workday
15: No School: MLK
19: Early Release 12:30p

1: Conferences (Evening)
2: No School: Conferences
16: Early Release 12:30p
19: No School: President's Day
29: End of Tri 2

1: No School: PD/Workday

25-29: Spring Break

1: No School
12: Early Release 12:30p
26: No School: PD/Workday

3: Early Release 12:30p
16: Last day of Preschool
17: Early Release 12:30p
27: No School: Memorial Day
29: Last Day of School
30: Teacher Work Day

18-20: Summer Learning Discoveries
25-27: Summer Learning Discoveries

July 2023						
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

January 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
31	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			

August 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February 2024						
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

September 2023						
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March 2024						
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October 2023						
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29	30	31				

April 2024						
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28	29	30				

November 2023						
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26	27	28	29	30		

May 2024						
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

December 2023						
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

June 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

182 Total Teacher Days

170 Total Student Days

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1000 5th Avenue SE, Hutchinson, Minnesota 55350 320.234.6362(w) 320.234.6300(f) www.newdiscoveries.org

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/call 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: _____

Providing a quality, comprehensive public education within a Montessori context