



CANTON MONTESSORI
• S C H O O L •

Canton Montessori School Family Handbook

Main Office

125 15th Street NW
Canton, Ohio 44703
Phone: (330) 452-0148
Fax: (330) 452- 4721

Elementary Annex

3909 Blackburn Rd NW
Canton, OH 44718
Phone: (330) 452-0148
Fax: (330) 452-4721

www.cantonmontessori.org

----- Welcome to Canton Montessori School -----

Canton Montessori School (CMS) offers an exceptionally unique educational program for children ages 18 months through 6th grade. Thank you for partnering with us to provide your child(ren) an outstanding educational experience.

From time to time, Canton Montessori School's policies and procedures may be revised by action of the Head of School and/or the Board of Trustees. Such revisions shall be effective immediately. Families are expected to review the Handbook on at least an annual basis to familiarize themselves with these changes.

If you have any questions about policies and procedures printed in this handbook, please contact the Head of School. In the event of a conflict between the terms of the CMS enrollment agreement and the policies and procedures set forth in this handbook, the enrollment agreement shall govern. A copy of the current compliance report from the Ohio Department of Education is located in the front lobby at the 15th Street location.

Mission Statement

The mission of Canton Montessori School (CMS) is to provide quality programming based upon the education philosophies and principles of the Montessori Method. CMS's purpose is to meet the developmental needs of children of all economic backgrounds through an enriching and nurturing environment. CMS also strives to support and assist parents and staff in the development of their roles and to share its experiences and expertise with the wider community.

Non-Discriminatory Policy

It is the policy of the Canton Montessori School to provide all students with equal educational opportunities. The school shall not discriminate based on race, color, creed, religion, sex, disability, age, religion, national origin, ancestry, or any other legally protected status in its educational policies and programs and employment practices.

Canton Montessori School History

Canton Montessori School was founded in 1968 by a group of parents who wanted to provide a Montessori educational experience for their children. CMS was incorporated as a private, nonsectarian, non-profit preschool for children aged three to six. The school was affiliated with the American Montessori Society to ensure adherence to the highest Montessori standards. The original twenty families formed a self-perpetuating corporate body, hired a certified staff, equipped and rented a classroom in Woodland Elementary School, and equally divided the expense. This treasury, along with considerable volunteer work, paved the way for economic viability as well as educational success.

In the fall of 1969, the school moved to a renovated private home on South Main Street in North Canton. Enrollment increased at a rapid rate. In 1971, the Association leased our present facility on 15th Street NW, a beautiful colonial home located on a landscaped wooded lot. Purchase was made possible in 1973 with monies from a parent-supported building fund.

The school has added several programs since its founding: in 1978, the Extended Day Program for children in their Kindergarten year; in 1980 the Toddler Program for 18 month to three year olds; in 1981, the Full Day option was made available; in 1988, the Infant Program was inaugurated; in 1993, the Parent-Child Community Program was begun; and beginning with the 1999 school year an Elementary Program was added to the curriculum.

Enthusiastic support by CMS families has been the cornerstone of the school's existence. Through active participation on school committees and in many other ways, families work together to build a quality program for their children. The product is an excellent community venture and service to our children. It is a fitting reward for those who have been a part of Canton Montessori School.

The Canton Montessori Association and Board Governance

The Board of Trustees of the Canton Montessori Association is the legal governing body entrusted with the responsibility of assuring a healthy and prosperous school for our children now and in the future. The Board is made up of committed individuals who guide our school through long-range planning, financial management and establishing policy. Members serve three-year terms; the Board elects officers for a one-year term. The Board only directs one employee, the Head of School. The Head of School runs the day-to-day operations of the school and reports to the Board at monthly meetings. The Board develops policy and oversees specific aspects of CMS.

Each September the Board holds the **Annual CMS Breakfast** of the Canton Montessori Association. Families and staff members are strongly encouraged to attend. **At this meeting, the CMS community receives an annual report from the Board of Trustees.**

Instructional Goals

Canton Montessori School's course of study integrates the mental and physical growth of the child with the acquisition of knowledge. The goal of this educational process is to develop the child to his or her fullest potential by taking traditional subject matter (Math, Language, Social Sciences, Physical Science, etc.) and linking facts with the natural developmental curiosities, which emerge in the child's life. The following are some characteristics, which we hope to encourage in children:

- Fluency in basic skills:
Reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, factual expository, etc. is emphasized in the very early years so that the child may rise academically to meet his or her already sophisticated interests.
- Interdisciplinary breadth:
Details are not presented as mere isolated facts, but rather as a network of knowledge tied into the various disciplines always converging on a universal picture of how the world works.
- Self motivation:
Materials are auto-didactic/self-correctional allowing children to teach themselves and thereby develop self-discipline for life.
- Integration of mental and physical fitness:
Disciplines integrate learning with body movement employing hand-eye coordinating tasks, as well as other physical education methods.
- Social responsibility:
Disciplines are geared to moral development so that the child's empathy and ability to cooperate with others is enhanced.
- Appreciation for life:
Factual knowledge is presented in such a manner that the child learns that creation, especially humanity, is to be appreciated and respected.

What We Believe

Young Children

- Each child is endowed with unique characteristics. Who the child will eventually become is a result of the dynamic interplay of the innate personality with the environment, sprinkled with the mystery of grace.
- In every child there is great potential. This potential becomes “actualized” when the child is provided with a nurturing, optimum environment. Conversely, divergent behavior results when the child’s genuine needs are not respected.
- Early childhood is unique and a very important stage of human life. Young children are like sponges -- absorbing all that surrounds them. Thus, they are greatly influenced by their environment and particularly by their relationships with adults.
- The young child’s sensitivity to environment makes the child vulnerable. The child needs guidance, assurance, and sometimes, protection.
- Children have an inner desire to learn, grow, and become independent. They will show us their needs -- we need only to be observers and provide them with the appropriate amount of freedom and guidance.
- Every child has a great need to experience life and to discover their place in “the world.” Their quest for this is their process of unfolding.

How Young Children Learn

- Hands-on experiences provide the basis of learning for the young child. The hands are the instrument of the child’s intelligence.
- The young child uses all five senses to learn. If the child is free to taste, hear, see, smell, and touch, the environment, he/she will learn in abundance.
- Movement is critical to the child’s learning experience. The child must be free (within limits of safety) to explore and interact with the environment.
- Children pass through sensitive periods, times when they are most motivated and capable of learning a particular skill.
- Children learn through imitation, repetition, and trial and error. Having the freedom to make choices is a necessity for early childhood education.
- Self-esteem is directly related to successful learning experiences. Children feel good about themselves when adults trust them to make choices within “the prepared environment.”

Parents

- Parents have a unique relationship with their children. They are the most important individuals in the child’s life. They are the primary source of love, affection, encouragement, care and security.
- Parents are the primary educators of their children. The behavior they model is most likely the behavior their children will imitate and eventually internalize.

- Parents are the greatest influence in a child's life. Parents want what is best for their children and strive to do their best in parenting.
- Parents need support in their awesome responsibility of caring for, protecting and enabling their children to grow toward autonomy, independence and maturity.
- Parenting is a challenge! It is on-the-job training at its best (or worst). It is often "feeling your way in the dark!"
- Parents would do well to cultivate the art of self-forgiveness. It is important to realize that all parents make mistakes. Parents can take heart that these mistakes provide their children with the very opportunity to make great leaps toward maturity.

People Who Work With Young Children

- Need to believe in and respect the uniqueness of all individuals.
- Need to provide children with the security and the freedom they need to develop.
- Need qualities of being even-tempered, patient, empathetic, calm, positive, and flexible. They must personally possess a love of learning and find it rewarding to encourage that quality in others.
- Need physical stamina, a strong stomach, and a sense of humor.
- Need to continually strive to maintain excellent communication with the parents of their students, seeking their insights and experiences. Teachers are to see themselves as being in partnership with parents.
- Need to be forgiving of young children and themselves when they fail to live up to their high expectations.

----- Important Information -----

Important Contact Information

School Phone Number: (330) 452-0148

School Fax Number: (330) 452-4721

Mailing Address: 125 15th St. NW
Canton, OH 44703

3909 Blackburn Rd. NW
Canton, OH 44718

Email Addresses:

Head of School hos@cantonmontessori.org

Business Manager rross@cantonmontessori.org

School Calendars

The school calendar is published on the website at www.cantonmontessori.org and is also provided in the Registration packet. CMS reserves the right to make alterations to the calendar after it has been distributed.

School Closures and Inclement Weather

When severe weather conditions or other emergency situations arise, there may be occasions when Canton Montessori School may be closed or opt to open for childcare purposes only - referred to as Montessori Alternate Program (M.A.P.). In times of inclement weather, safety is our utmost concern. If you have any reservations about road conditions, please feel free to keep your child home or pick him/her up early rather than take any unnecessary risks. *Canton Montessori School is unable to refund tuition for inclement weather/facility situation closures or for MAP days.*

Calling Off Your Child Policy

Parents are expected to notify the school in the event of their child's absence. Please call the school office at 330-452-0148 by 9 am to report your child's absence.

R.S.V.P. Days

Occasionally throughout the year, Canton Montessori School is open for childcare, but classes are not in session, especially around the holidays and during Spring Break. These days, referred to as 'Records Days' or 'RSVP days,' are intended to give Directresses the opportunity to catch up on mandatory paperwork and student progress reports. CMS is open during regular hours on RSVP dates; however, a family must submit a reservation form to attend.

- Elementary and Kindergarten classes are not in session. Toddler and Pre-primary children may sign up for R.S.V.P. childcare.
- Only those children who attend CMS on a full-day basis are eligible to participate in R.S.V. P.
- Childcare is by reservation only. The school is staffed on R.S.V.P. days based on the number of children who register ahead of time. *Walk-ins cannot be accommodated.*
- Carline is not offered on R.S.V.P. days. If necessary, parents need to accompany their child to his or her classroom.
- *No hot lunch is served.* Please be sure your child has a packed lunch and remember that we are a PEANUT FREE ENVIRONMENT.

Grievance Policy

Should you have any concerns or complaints regarding the school or program, please attempt to discuss these issues first with your child's teacher and then with the Head of School. If you are not completely satisfied with the answers you receive or would like to discuss further, please contact the President of the Board of Trustees.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a cause for celebration and usually are filled with "getting". To help your child appreciate the joy of giving, as well as receiving, you might encourage your child to purchase something from the classroom "wish list" or a book for the school library. Please check with your child's directress for ideas.

----- Admission and Registration at Canton Montessori School -----

Enrollment Forms and Fees

Children 18 months through Grade 6 may be enrolled in Canton Montessori School. Canton Montessori School accepts applications for admission on a rolling basis and students are admitted following a mandatory enrollment process coupled with a space-available basis. First-time applicants are asked to pay an application fee of \$200.00 and, depending on acceptance to the program and the date of enrollment, submit a \$300.00 tuition deposit to hold their space. Students returning after a lapse in enrollment will also be assessed the application fee. Applications for summer and fall enrollment are generally available in February and are due by the end of March.

Enrollment Process

All families will progress through a comprehensive initial enrollment process as detailed below. Once these processes are complete, the admissions committee renders an admission decision and shares

with the family. Once admitted to Canton Montessori School, the prospective family may submit the appropriate application for admission with the application fee and deposit attached as detailed in the "Enrollment Forms and Fees" section above.

Toddler Environment (18 months to 3 years): parent(s) and student(s) visit required. Both parent and student will be interviewed, tour the school, and execute a 20-30 minute observation in the environment. Ideally, this will take place in the environment that the prospective student would be placed although there are exceptions. Lead directress makes recommendation for admission decision. Head of School takes recommendation to the admission committee.

Pre-primary Environment (3 years to 6 years): Two (2) visits are required. *Visit #1:* Parent(s) visit is recommended first. Parent receives interview, a tour, and completes a 20-30 minute observation in the environment. *Visit #2:* Parent(s) visit again with the child for the child's 20-30 minute observation in the environment. Parent and Head of School drop student off and pick up when finished. In some cases, the Directress brings the child to the Head's office. Ideally, the observations will take place in the environment that the prospective student would be placed although there are exceptions. Lead directress makes recommendation for admission decision. Head of School takes recommendation to the admission committee.

Elementary Environment (Grades 1 – 6): Three (3) visits are required. *Visit #1:* Parent(s) visit is recommended first. Parent receives interview, a tour, and completes a 20-30 minute observation in the environment. *Visit #2 & #3:* Prospective student executes two (2) consecutive visits, 9am – 12pm, in the environment. Lead directress makes recommendation for admission decision. Head of School takes recommendation to the admission committee.

****NOTE:** All prospective Elementary students must provide records via records release form from their previous school(s).

ALL Admission decisions are delivered to the prospective family via email and/or phone.

Waiting List Policy

A waiting list will be created for entry into a program that is full. Students will be placed on the waiting list based upon the date of completion of the admission process. Families with one or more children already enrolled will have priority status on any waiting lists, as will children of employees. To move from the waiting list into registration status, payment of any fees required (application fee and/or tuition deposit) is expected.

- Pending completion of the admission process/acceptance to the program and when an application and advanced tuition deposit are received and there is a current space available for the child, that child will be enrolled.
- If a space is not available for the time requested, the family is given the option of being placed on a waiting list. Names are entered on the waiting list in the order the completed application and advance tuition deposit are received.

Previous Montessori Experience

Priority will be given to children transferring in with Montessori experience to allow that child to complete his/her Montessori cycle.

Kindergarten

Child must be 5 by August 1 to be admitted to Kindergarten.

Admission into Elementary Program

If the Elementary Program is at or near capacity, children will be admitted based on the aforementioned guidelines, administrative discretion, and with reference to the following guidelines:

- 1st priority to currently enrolled CMS Elementary students;
- 2nd priority to currently enrolled Kindergarten students who have completed the full three-year pre-primary cycle at Canton Montessori School;

- 3rd priority to currently enrolled Kindergarten students who have completed two years of the pre-primary cycle at Canton Montessori School;
- 4th priority to currently enrolled Kindergarten students who came to Canton Montessori School with prior Montessori experience;
- 5th priority to currently enrolled Kindergarten students who have only completed Montessori Kindergarten at Canton Montessori School;
- 6th priority to students new to the Montessori Method and to Canton Montessori School.

Required Forms and Documents

The following forms and documents must be submitted to Canton Montessori School during the registration process which occurs once a child has been admitted:

- Acknowledgement of Policies
- Child's Medical Statement
- Dismissal Authorization Form
- Emergency Transportation Agreement
- Emergency Medical Authorization
- Health Record
- Montessori Alternate Program Form
- Parent/Child Roster and Publicity Release
- Parent Association Form
- Pin Code Order Form
- Request For the Administration of Medication/CMS Medication Policy
- School Closing Policy and MAP Form
- Birth Certificate (*once at initial enrollment*)
- Immunization Record
- Current Custodial Arrangements (*if needed*)

All forms must have appropriate signatures and be on file before or on the first day of school.

Child's Medical Statement

A licensed physician (MD or DO) must examine every child attending CMS annually. Children enrolled in the Toddler or Pre-Primary program are required to have an annual physical on file not more than 12 months old. The physician must certify that the child is free from communicable disease and has had the required immunizations.

Immunization Waiver

Should a family choose to not vaccinate, CMS requires an immunization waiver. Please see the front desk to obtain an official State of Ohio Legal Immunization Exemption form per Ohio Statute 3313.671 (Exemptions).

Emergency Numbers and Change of Address Notification

It is the family or guardian's responsibility to keep all information current regarding changes to address, telephone number, dismissal authorization or any emergency contacts and numbers. Please contact the front office if there are any changes in your contact information. This information is critical in case of an emergency. **Students will be released only to authorized adults** posted in the student's file. If an emergency arises and authorized adults are unable to pick up the student, a parent or guardian should call the school or write a note with the name and description of an alternate individual. In such an event, the office staff will check ID before releasing a student.

Students with Special Needs

For some students with learning differences, a Montessori environment can be an ideal fit. Canton Montessori is happy to meet with the families of children with learning differences to determine if the school is able to meet their child's needs. A current IEP or 504 Plan and additional documentation regarding services the child has utilized is a necessary piece of information in making that determination.

Classroom Placements:

Your child's classroom placement is something we take seriously. Classroom placements are determined by the out-going and in-coming Directresses and assistants that work with the children. Many factors will be considered so that our environments are balanced by gender, age, learning styles, and social dynamics. Our staff works very hard to find the best classroom placement for each child. *Siblings:* Sibling placements (including multiples) in the same classroom will be addressed on a case-by-case basis and placement will be reviewed annually.

----- Tuition and Payments -----

Canton Montessori School, a private, non-profit organization, relies on tuition and fees, as well as fund-raising efforts on the school's behalf, to sustain itself. Accordingly, it is necessary that payments be made consistently and on time. Please read this Tuition and Payments section carefully and address any questions to the Business Manager or Head of School. The goal of this information is to provide clarity and to prevent misunderstandings regarding parent/family financial obligations.

1. An **Application Fee** of **\$200** for a first-time applicant is due with the initial Application and is **non-refundable**. Additionally, a tuition deposit of \$300.00 is required to reserve an enrollment space.
2. An annual **Tuition Deposit** for currently enrolled students of **\$500** is due upon submission of an Application. **If submitted by the deadline** (usually March 31 unless another date as determined by the Board of Trustees), the full \$500 deposit will be applied to the August invoice. Applications for currently enrolled students received **after the deadline** will be considered late and the student's re-enrollment will be determined on a space-available basis, **\$200** of the Tuition Deposit will be considered a late enrollment fee, and **\$300** will be applied to the August invoice. **Tuition Deposits will not be refunded after July 1st**. Requests for Tuition Deposit refunds **prior to July 1st** must be submitted in writing to the Business Manager.
3. **Tuition payments are due on the first of the month** (or the 1st and 15th if using Electronic Funds Transfer). A late fee penalty of **\$25 per month** will be charged on balances more than **30 days** past due. Families with balances more than **60 days** past due must bring their account current before their child(ren) can return to school.
4. Because Canton Montessori School budgets on an annual basis, and because in-school days vary month to month due to holidays, illness, inclement weather, etc., **tuition charges are spread out equally over the academic year (August - May)**. Families must understand:
 - a. families intend for the child to complete the entire academic year;
 - b. tuition is based on the full academic year;
 - c. families are obligated to pay tuition for the entire academic year;
 - d. the ten monthly tuition payments will be applied towards the academic year tuition obligation;
 - e. no refunds will be given for absences or for scheduled or unscheduled school closures due to inclement weather/facility situation (such as no electricity/heat); and,

- f. if a student withdraws during the academic year, the remaining unpaid academic year tuition obligation will be pro-rated only if withdrawal policy conditions apply. See **Withdrawal Policy**.
5. **Withdrawal Policy** – If it is necessary to withdraw the child for any reason, the parents or legal guardians must give the school written notice of intent to withdraw **thirty (30) days in advance of the withdrawal date**. CMS will pro-rate tuition to the amount due and payable through the withdrawal date. This enables the school to enroll a student from the waiting list.
6. If a child is scheduled to miss **more than two consecutive calendar weeks** during the school year (10 consecutive business days), the family may opt to pay **1/2 of the total monthly tuition payment** to hold that child's space until the child is able to return OR can opt to withdraw and re-enroll on a space available basis. **No refunds or reductions** will be given for the initial consecutive, two-week period of absence.
7. A **limited amount** of financial assistance is available for families who qualify based on financial need as determined by the FACTS application. To apply, families must submit a FACTS application by **April 1** for the upcoming academic year. Once the FACTS results are received, CMS will notify applicants of any available financial assistance in writing. Families must accept their offer in writing within **10 days**. Financial assistance will be awarded **after April 1** based on available funding.
8. Checks and electronic payments returned for insufficient funds will be assessed a **\$25 returned check fee**. Any electronic payments processed separately or after the established remittance date will incur a **\$20.00 fee**.
9. **Separation from school**. In a case of adverse conditions between the school and a family, a **one-week** notice will be given to the parents or guardian to remove the child from the school. Under these conditions, annual academic year tuition will be pro-rated based on the amount due and payable through the separation date according to the ten-payment plan.
10. Families are expected to pay the charges for tuition and fees monthly through a bank direct payment program. A Payment Plan Agreement form is available at the front office. If an electronic payment is declined or fails, a \$25 processing fee will be charged. For parents/families paying via the one or two payment plan for the academic year, payments that are submitted 10 days past the due date or are returned by the bank will result in a \$25.00 processing fee. These charges will be strictly enforced. **A student will be dismissed from CMS if tuition and fees are more than 60 days past due.**
11. Enrollment for the school year will be cancelled if tuition for the previous school year is not paid in full by May 30, and/or summer programming is not paid in full by July 15. When the account is paid, the student will be considered for an open spot or placed on a waiting list.
12. All financial commitments to CMS must be met before student records (except for health records and standardized testing results) will be released to another school. Signature of **BOTH** parents (if married, partners, or jointly registering child) is **REQUIRED** on the enrollment form.
13. Families who enroll more than one child will receive a 5% reduction on tuition of the child with the lowest cost.

14. Families who enroll their child(ren) for the entire summer program are eligible for a pro-rated reduction for one week of vacation.

Tuition payments for the academic year may be made in one, two, ten or 20 payments. Payment for the one payment plan is due August 1. Payments for the two-payment plan are due August 1 and January 1. These payments may be made by check or credit card. Payments for the 10 and 20 payment plan are drawn electronically from a checking or savings account per the Payment Plan Agreement. Invoices for the academic year are issued in early July. Invoices for Summer Camp are issued in early May with a due date of June 1st. Payment for summer can be split in half with the second payment received by July 1st. Parents currently participating in the electronic draw of funds will have the option to continue that format or to come out of that process for Summer Camp.

Canton Montessori School strives to make a Montessori education available to a large number of students. It hopes that the families who attend the school will represent a diversity of backgrounds, circumstances, and outlooks. CMS recognizes that private education can be costly and invites inquiries concerning financial assistance. Families receiving a tuition reduction are not eligible for any additional tuition waivers or discounts.

CMS offers financial assistance to students each year. Financial assistance is awarded without regard to the applicant's color, race, national origin, religion, sex, or disability, dependent upon current available funds. Parents should contact the Head of School for further information.

Fundraising & Family Involvement

Because tuition covers only part of the revenue needed to operate the school, we rely heavily on parent and family assistance to keep the school running. Some revenue is generated by the Annual Giving Campaign and fundraising events. Your tax-deductible donations to CMS enable us to provide additional programming, supplies and services for our students and staff.

Additionally, to promote a sense of community, families of enrolled students are encouraged to provide volunteer service to school each year. Assistance is usually needed for a variety of school activities. Discuss service opportunities with your child's Directress and school-wide opportunities with the office staff. These could include building classroom fixtures, helping teachers prepare materials, assisting in the office or a classroom, maintaining the playground, serving on the Board of Trustees, participating in a fundraising event or many other activities.

Materials Fee

A \$60.00/year activity fee is assessed kindergarten students to cover enrichment activities such as art, music, movement, world language, field trips and advanced academics. A \$75.00/year activity fee is assessed elementary students to cover enrichment activities such as art, music, movement, field trips and World Language. Additionally, all elementary students are provided materials (paper, folders, pencils, scissors, glue, etc) for the year at a cost of \$75.00/year.

----- School Organization -----

Administration

The Head of School, the Business Manager, and the front office staff handle daily administrative functions. Please feel free to ask them questions and share your concerns. If daily administrative tasks are not performed satisfactorily, contact the Head of School and, if not resolved, please address your concerns to the Board of Trustees.

Staff

Each CMS classroom will have a Montessori-certified lead teacher and an assistant teacher.

----- Instructional Programs -----

Toddler Program – 18 to 36 months

The Toddler classroom is specifically tailored to support the young child's neurological, physical and emotional development. Classroom activities are designed to assist the children in making a positive and purposeful separation from their parents and to enable them to establish new and bonding relationships with other children and adults while being engaged in purposeful activities. The teachers facilitate the safe, enjoyable exploration of the "prepared environment" by the toddler-aged "scientist!" The maximum adult/child ratio is 1:7.

Pre-Primary Program – 3 years to Kindergarten

The Pre-Primary environment is designed to meet the needs of the three to six-year-old child. The "prepared environment" is a place where the child can pursue his/her desire to learn about him/herself and his/her world with as little frustration as possible – at his/her own pace. The teacher prepares an environment for the child that is rich in self-corrective teaching materials and learning opportunities. The Directress, through careful observations, guides the child to activities geared to his/her needs and interests. The adult/child ratio is 1:12.

Kindergarten Enrichment Program

We have designed a program rich in learning opportunities, responding to the emerging social, cognitive and creative capabilities of Kindergartners. The afternoons are spent exploring lessons with Montessori advanced materials and complimentary curriculum including the arts, foreign language, and cultural subjects.

Elementary – Grades 1 - 6

Elementary students are provided with a curriculum rich in academics and interpersonal skill development. Elementary students experience learning situations that develop proficiency in academic areas such as Mathematics, Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, World Language, and the Arts along with enhancing communication skills. The student is encouraged to become a creative thinker and problem solver while developing group effectiveness skills and an understanding of time management. The teachers guide the students from concrete "hands on" learning to the ability to reason, question and think abstractly. Students receive individualized lessons.

----- Daily Schedules, Pick-up & Dismissal Times, & Carline -----

Environment	School Start & End Times	Arrival Times	Dismissal Times
Toddler	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon	8:45 – 9:00 a.m.	12:00 noon for ½ day students
Pre-Primary	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon	8:45 – 9:00 a.m.	12:00 noon or 3:15 – 3:30 p.m.
Elementary	8:45 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.	8:30 – 8:45 a.m.	3:15 – 3:30 p.m.

Licensure

CMS is an Ohio Department of Education (ODE) licensed Preschool & Charter Non-Public Elementary School, approved to be in the care and custody of your child(ren) during the hours of 7:00am – 6:00pm. CMS cannot accept children before 7:00am daily, nor provide care to children after 6:00pm daily.

CMS does not provide transportation for students. Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school. The City of Canton has requested that the Market Avenue driveway of

our parking lot be used as an entrance only. Please observe this request by using the 15th Street drive as an exit only.

Carline Arrival & Dismissal

For your child's safety and for your convenience, we offer arrival and dismissal carline. Your child will be greeted by a staff member and escorted into the building. Please enter the parking lot from Market Avenue and turn to the right going around the planter in the parking lot. Proceed with caution to the "drop-off" point in front of school, and wait for a staff member to welcome your child and assist him/her into school. Please do not get out of your car while in carline as this significantly slows down the process. If you wish to walk your child into school, park in a parking space and walk into the school.

8:30 – 8:45 a.m.	Elementary arrival
8:45 – 9:00 a.m.	Toddler/Pre-Primary arrival
12:00 noon	Toddler/Pre-Primary ½ day dismissal
3:15 – 3:30 p.m.	Afternoon dismissal

For the purpose of safety and in order to maintain a smooth traffic flow, vehicles may not be left unattended in the car line area at any time and cars are strictly prohibited from passing on the left when exiting the car line unless guided by a staff member.

Please be prompt in picking up your child by the dismissal time you requested. Your tuition is based on the hours you arranged for your child. **Half-day Toddler and Pre-Primary dismiss from 12:00 to 12:15 p.m. Full-day children dismiss between 3:15 – 6:00 p.m.** Parents should not line up prior to this time to prevent potentially unsafe conditions on Market Avenue. The dismissal car line should follow the same pattern as the arrival car line. **Any child remaining after their designated pick-up time will incur a late fee of \$10.00 per hour. This late fee will be added to the next invoice and must be paid in full. Please be aware that due to litigation in the state of Ohio we will not be able to attend to car seat and seat belt arrangements for your child(ren).**

An adult must escort students who leave the school at times other than the regular scheduled dismissal times from the building. Parents must verbally notify the staff that the child is leaving school premises. Parents are responsible for their children on the school grounds before arrival and after dismissal. They should not be allowed to run freely along the curbs or in the parking lot. The building closes at 6:00 p.m. Please plan your pick-up time to allow for gathering belongings, saying goodbye and leaving the building without rushing. Parents of children remaining at CMS after 6p.m. will initially receive a reminder; subsequent late pick-ups will result in a late charge.

Pick-Up by Authorized Adults ONLY

Students will be released only to those authorized adults identified in the student's file. If an emergency arises and authorized adults are unable to pick up the student, a parent or guardian should call the school or write a note with the name and description of an alternate individual. In such an event, the office staff will check ID before releasing a student. If no written or verbal authorization is given, we will attempt to contact the parent or guardian while the individual waits in the office. We will release a student only with written or verbal authorization. For the safety of all students, they will not be released to any individual who appears to be intoxicated with drugs or alcohol. Should any verbal or physical abuse erupt, the police will be summoned immediately. If a custody agreement exists for your child, please turn it in to the office. Only current court orders will be honored and any changes in court orders should be shared with CMS immediately.

----- **Communication** -----

Canton Montessori School has an open-door policy. Feel free to call the school with any questions, concerns, or comments. Staff will address your specific situation or direct you to the appropriate person. Please bring student concerns to your student's teacher and school-wide or policy concerns to the Head of School.

Opening of School Parent Meetings

Opening of School Parent Meetings are designed to give parents information about the process of transitioning into a new setting, the daily schedule, important school policies, and all other information that will contribute to a positive and enjoyable school experience. They also provide an opportunity to build a stronger parent-teacher partnership, which directly enhances the child's experience at CMS. All new and returning families are encouraged to attend their child's meeting.

Annual Meeting

Once a year, the CMS Board of Trustees schedules a meeting to discuss the status of Canton Montessori School and its goals and aspirations for the future. We expect that parents will attend this meeting as we recognize that it is parental involvement in the life of the school that ensures the highest standards of quality for our children.

Newsletter & Calendar

The Canton Montessori School newsletter is distributed monthly via email, is posted in the lobby of the school and on the school's web site. This is a valuable source of information about each classroom, as well as school-wide happenings.

CMS Website and Facebook

Canton Montessori School's website is www.cantonmontessori.org. This extensive site provides up-to-date details about calendars, schedules and other important events. Canton Montessori School frequently utilizes its Facebook page as a means of communication with families regarding events, updates and daily school activities.

Montessori Compass

Montessori Compass is a parent portal that allows CMS to stay connected with parents and families throughout the school year - sharing messages, calendar events, photos, and progress reports. In addition, educational resources about the Montessori Method, courtesy of Montessori Compass and the Montessori Foundation, are available in Montessori Compass. Parents who provide CMS with an email address are automatically added as users to Montessori Compass and are invited to log in to create their own password.

Special Events

Parents are notified of special events, such as Family Nights, fundraisers, school activities, etc., via email, fliers in cubbies, the CMS Facebook page, and school signage.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled a minimum of two times a year. Your child's teacher will provide you with in-depth information regarding his/her development. Your questions are also welcome at that time.

Visitors*(see final page of handbook for additional detail)

Parents are encouraged to visit the school. Any parent of a child enrolled at CMS is permitted access to the school during its hours of operation to contact his/her child, evaluate the care provided by the

program, the premises, or for other purposes but must be **approved by the Head of School**. Upon entering the premises, the parent must report to the school office.

----- Field Trips -----

Kindergarteners and Elementary students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of field trips throughout the year.

Permission Slips & Payment

Students are required to have a dated and signed permission slip on file to be able to participate in any field trip. A permission slip will be sent home to approve all field trips and to collect important information. Teachers will notify parents of upcoming events. Field trip notifications will include the date, times, description of the activity, cost (if any), mode of transportation and supply list. Please remember to put cash or checks in an envelope with the student's name and the purpose or event for which it should be used.

Travel by Bus

Students riding in a bus will be expected to sit quietly in their seat, listen to and abide by the rules given to them by the Bus Driver. Students having difficulty behaving appropriately will sit by an adult.

Travel by Foot

While walking to the park or other near by locations, children will walk with a partner. Chaperones will instruct the children when to cross the street. Older students will be expected to use the buddy system when using public restrooms.

----- Health and Safety -----

Canton Montessori School complies with all local and state rules and regulations by providing an environment that is free of all known health and safety hazards in accordance with Social Services, Health Department and School District rules. We make a conscientious effort to correct any situation that could endanger the health and safety of students and adults at our school. Please bring to our attention any safety hazards you may observe.

CMS Security and PIN Codes

In order to ensure the safety of your children, we have instituted a security system throughout the building. It is necessary for each family to obtain a security PIN code to allow them access to and throughout the school. PIN codes may be requested at the Front Desk.

Tornadoes and High Winds

When a tornado or high wind warning is issued, students will be moved away from windows and into a designated safety area. Staff and students will utilize rehearsed safety procedures.

Fires, Fire Drills and Safety Drills

All students and staff practice fire and safety drill evacuations on a regular basis. Escape routes for fires are posted near the door in each classroom door. Staff members are ready to execute safety precautions and evacuations when the alarm goes off. Fire extinguishers are easily accessible in the event a small fire breaks out. There is no smoking allowed in the building or on school grounds.

Reporting Student Abuse

If any staff member or parent of a CMS student has reason to believe that a child attending the school has suffered any wound, injury, disability, or condition that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect, the

employee or parent should immediately inform the Head of School, who shall report the suspected abuse or neglect as required by Ohio law.

Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drugs and Weapons

Alcohol, tobacco, non-prescription drugs, illegal substances, or weapons will not be allowed in the school, on the grounds of Canton Montessori School nor at any CMS-sponsored activity.

----- Personal Belongings-----

School clothing should be child-manageable and appropriate for movement. We request that a *seasonally* appropriate complete change of clothing be stored in your child's cubby at all times. Elementary students are expected to follow the elementary dress code (please see the Elementary Dress Code section of this handbook). The school is not responsible for clothing that is not taken home at the end of the year or if a child withdraws from school.

Toys brought into the classroom can present a serious problem. Therefore, we ask that toys from home remain at home. This will eliminate the problem of "hurt feelings" if parts from the toy become lost or broken.

At the beginning of school, teachers will help students to learn where their belongings such as slippers, coats, and lunches should be stored. Your child will then be expected to care for their belongings on their own. If your child continues to leave their belongings in other places, they will be gathered and placed in Lost and Found. Please **clearly label all** students' belongings such as lunch boxes, hats, slippers, jackets, shoes, and blankets.

----- Student Health Guides -----

(See final page of handbook for additional details.)

Accidents and Illnesses

Injuries, such as bumps, cuts, fevers and rashes may happen in the course of a student's day. If your student is hurt to the point that it disrupts his or her day, you will be contacted. Likewise, the school will immediately notify the parent or guardian of the child's condition when a child has been observed with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness:

- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24 hour period);
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or making a whooping sound;
- Difficult or rapid breathing;
- Yellowish skin or eyes;
- Conjunctivitis;
- Temperature of 100°F;
- Vomiting;
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infection;
- Stiff neck;
- Unusual spots or rashes

Communicable and Infectious Diseases

Canton Montessori follows Ohio Revised Code 3301-37-1 regarding management of communicable disease procedures at Canton Montessori School.

If an outbreak of a communicable disease should occur, the school will notify families in the affected room. For the health and safety of all adults and students, the Head of School may notify the Health Department upon confirmation of a communicable or infectious disease. Universal precautions will be observed at all times. Please contact the Head of School or your child's Directress if your student has contracted or been exposed to a communicable disease outside of the school.

3301-37-11 Management of communicable disease.

(A) A person trained to recognize the common signs of communicable disease or other illness shall observe each child daily as he enters a group. A "person trained to recognize the common signs of communicable disease" means any person trained in prevention, recognition, and management of communicable diseases as required by paragraph (D) of rule [3301-37-07](#) of the Administrative Code.

(B) The following precautions shall be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease:

(1) The program shall immediately notify the parent or guardian of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness.

(2) A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his parent or guardian:

(a) Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a twenty-four-hour period);

(b) Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound;

(c) Difficult or rapid breathing;

(d) Yellowish skin or eyes;

(e) Conjunctivitis;

(f) Temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit taken by the auxiliary method when in combination with other signs of illness;

(g) Untreated infected skin patch(es);

(h) Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool; or

(i) Stiff neck; or

(j) Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation.

(3) A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated from other children. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the director and the parent or guardian. The child, while isolated at the program, shall be carefully watched for symptoms listed in paragraph (B)(2) of this rule as well as the following:

(a) Unusual spots or rashes;

(b) Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing;

(c) Elevated temperature; or

(d) Vomiting.

(4) Programs shall follow the Ohio department of health "communicable disease chart" (September 2009, odjfs.state.oh.us/forms) for appropriate management of suspected illnesses.

(5) A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be:

(a) Cared for in a room or portion of a room not being used in the preschool program;

(b) Within sight and hearing of an adult at all times. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised;

(c) Made comfortable and provided with a cot. all linens and blankets used by the ill child shall be laundered before being used by another child. After use, the cots shall be disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent, or, if soiled with blood, feces, vomit, or other body fluids, the cots shall be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent;

(d) Observed carefully for worsening condition; and

(e) Discharged to parent, guardian, or person designated by the parent or guardian as soon as practical.

(C) Each program shall have a written policy concerning the management of communicable disease. The policy shall include, at a minimum:

(1) The program's means of training all preschool staff in signs and symptoms of illness and in hand-washing and disinfection procedures;

(2) Procedures for isolating and discharging an ill child and policy for readmitting such child;

(3) Procedures for notifying the parent or guardian immediately when a child is exhibiting signs or symptoms of illness or has been exposed to a communicable disease; and

(4) Procedures regarding the care of a mildly ill child. "Mildly ill child" means a child who is experiencing minor common cold symptoms, but who is not exhibiting any of the symptoms specified in paragraph (B) of this rule or a child who does not feel well enough to participate in activities, but who is not exhibiting any of the symptoms specified in paragraph (B) of this rule.

(5) Procedures for notifying all parents of enrolled children when children are exposed to a diagnosed communicable disease such as pink eye, ringworm, chicken pox, or lice.

Health Information from the State of Ohio

Healthchek is Ohio's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program. It is a service package for babies, kids, and young adults younger than age 21 who are enrolled on Ohio Medicaid. The purpose of Healthchek is to discover and treat health problems early. If a potential health problem is found, further diagnosis and treatment are covered by Medicaid.

Healthchek covers ten check-ups in the first two years of life and annual check-ups thereafter and offers a comprehensive physical examination that includes:

- medical history
- complete unclothed exam (with parent approval)
- developmental screening (to assess if child's physical and mental abilities are age appropriate)
- vision screening
- dental screening
- hearing assessment
- immunization assessment (making sure child receives them on time)
- lead screening; and

- other services or screenings as needed

If your children are enrolled on OH Medicaid, **Healthchek** services are available. If you are younger than age 21 and are also enrolled, you can also receive **Healthchek** services.

Diapering Procedure

Canton Montessori follows Ohio Revised Code 3301-37-12 regarding diapering procedures at Canton Montessori School.

Ohio Revised Code 3301-37-12 Diapering Procedure

(A) The changing of diapers for all non-toilet-trained children shall be handled in conformity with the following methods:

- (1) The changing of diapers for all non-toilet-trained children shall occur in a space that contains a hand-washing facility.
- (2) The program shall provide disposable gloves for diapering; however, the use of gloves or hand sanitizer does not preclude requirements for proper hand washing.
- (3) If an infant's diapers are to be changed in his crib or at a central changing station, there shall be some separation material between the infant and the changing surface. The material shall be discarded and replaced after each change.
- (4) The central diaper-changing station or crib shall be disinfected after each diaper change with an appropriate germicidal agent in a manner consistent with manufacturer guidelines. If the diaper-changing station is soiled after the diaper change, it shall be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent.
- (5) Any product used during diaper changing on more than one child shall be used in such a way that the container does not touch the child. Any product obtained applied to a child shall be applied in such a manner so as not to contaminate the product or its container. Common containers shall be cleaned and disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent when soiled.
- (6) For the purpose of diapering, topical ointments and creams provided by parents shall include written instructions. Such instructions shall include the name of the ointment, cream, or lotion; name of the child; birth date of the child; date; and signature. Written instructions shall be valid for no longer than three months. Authorization for administration of the ointment, cream, or lotion may be cancelled by written request of the parent at any time.

(B) Storing of clean diapers shall be handled in accordance with the following methods:

- (1) A clean supply of diapers stored in a specifically designated area shall be available at all times.
- (2) Diapers or clothing used during diaper changing and brought from the child's home shall be stored in space assigned exclusively for each child's belongings. Soiled clothing and/or diapers shall be sent home daily.

(C) Storage and laundering of soiled diapers shall be handled in accordance with the following methods:

- (1) Diapers or clothing soiled with fecal matter and sent home with a child need not be rinsed at the program facility, but may be placed directly into a plastic container or bag, sealed tightly, stored away from the rest of the child's belongings and out of the reach of children.
- (2) Soiled diapers to be disposed of or cleaned by the program shall be placed in a common plastic-lined covered container which shall be emptied, cleaned, and disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent daily or more frequently as needed. Diapers to be laundered at the program facility should be stored in an appropriate germicidal solution until laundered.
- (3) Soiled diapers to be commercially laundered shall be held for pickup for laundering for no longer than seven days.
- (4) Diapers to be laundered at home or by the program shall be held for laundering for no longer than one day.
- (5) Soiled disposable diapers shall be discarded daily.

Injury

Your child will be treated for minor injuries by a CMS staff member. If your child becomes injured and requires medical attention, CMS will contact the parents or the emergency contact as listed on the child's Emergency Medical Authorization form and/or 911. A staff member will accompany a child who needs emergency transportation by ambulance. In all instances, an Accident/Injury/Illness Report will be completed and a copy will be provided to the family of the child.

Medical Emergencies and Transportation

Emergency phone numbers for your doctor, dentist and hospital of choice are kept in each student's permanent file. CMS staff will attempt to notify parents as soon as possible if their student is seriously injured or needs medical care above and beyond what the CMS staff is able to provide. As per the Emergency Medical Authorization Form, the student's physician, dentist and other providers may be contacted for instructions. CMS staff will take whatever steps necessary to obtain emergency care, which include, but are not limited to, calling paramedics, calling another physician, having student taken to the hospital of choice, having student taken to the closest emergency room or clinic with appropriate equipment. Any expense incurred will be borne by the student's family or family insurance.

Medication Policy

A signed and dated medication form must be on file in order for CMS staff members to administer any medication, preparation, ointment, etc. The following procedures must be followed:

Per ORC rule #3301-37:07, in order for Canton Montessori School (CMS) to administer *any type of medication*, food supplement, modified diet, or fluoride supplement, CMS must:

- Obtain written instructions from a licensed physician/dentist using the *Request for Administration of Medication for Child Care form (JFS #01217)*
- Maintain a written log which includes dosage, date, and time medication was administered. This log shall be kept for one year from the date of administration
- Ensure that only employees who have completed a drug administration training may administer medications
- Ensure that medications are stored in a designated, locked storage place except drugs requiring refrigeration which shall be kept in a refrigerator not accessible to children
- An appropriate measuring spoon or cup is included

Outdoor Activity

Outdoor activity is considered an important part of our curriculum as children need motor/muscle movement. Therefore, a period of outdoor activity will be included in the daily schedule unless unfavorable weather conditions prevail. All children attending school will be expected to go outside with their class whenever the weather permits. In the case of a medical condition, a child may be kept inside the building provided a note from the child's physician (valid for three days) is received.

Sunscreen

Sunscreen will be applied when children are outdoors on sunny days, or when the weather dictates. Please be sure to provide an adequate supply of sunscreen for your child.

When to Keep a Sick Student Home**(see final page of handbook for additional detail)

Please keep your student home if he or she has symptoms of illness including: an oral temperature above 100°F+ within the last 24 hours, any undiagnosed rash, repeated diarrhea or vomiting, sore or discharging eyes or ears, profuse nasal discharge, a stiff neck or unexplained lethargy **and** keep your child at home for at least 24 hours after these symptoms disappear. Please notify us if your student will not attend school. Particularly, let us know the nature of the illness so we may alert other parents if necessary.

----- Meals and Snacks -----

Snacks are served daily, once in the morning and again after naptime to Toddlers and Pre-Primary children. Your child's Directress will create and distribute a monthly schedule requesting each family

to contribute a specific snack once a month. This calendar can also be found under the “For Parents” button on the Canton Montessori website at: www.cantonmontessori.org

----- Early Intervention Services for Toddlers -----

CMS is required to provide families information regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C Assessments and Screenings. This requirement is for early intervention services for toddlers. More information can be found at <https://dodd.ohio.gov/>

----- Dress Code and Dressing for School -----

General Guidelines

It is important for every student to come to school each day in comfortable, seasonally-appropriate clothing. Remember that the Montessori method is sensorial in nature and your child will likely be outside for a part of the day so you are discouraged from sending your child to school in clothing that is difficult to clean or care for. Dressing your child in layers is always a good idea as the temperature can vary considerably throughout the day. Proper footwear is key to safety. Please do not send your child to school in shoes that are difficult to wear or keep on, such as flip flops or heels of any kind. Jewelry is also discouraged as it can be a safety concern and is easily lost or damaged. All children's hair must be natural color.

Elementary Dress Code

Tops:

Girls- Blouses or polo shirts in solid light blue, black, navy blue or white. Both short and long sleeves are acceptable.

Sweaters (v-neck or cardigan) in solid navy blue, black, white or gray.

Blue Canton Montessori T-shirt, zip up fleece or hooded sweatshirt.

Boys- Button up dress shirts or polo shirts in solid light blue, navy blue, black or white. Both short and long sleeves are acceptable.

Sweaters (v-neck or zip up) in solid navy blue, black or gray.

Blue Canton Montessori T-shirt, zip up fleece or hooded sweatshirt.

Bottoms:

Girls- Jumpers, skirts, “skorts”, pants and shorts in solid navy blue, black or khaki. Solid navy blue, black or white socks. Leggings or tights may be worn ONLY with a skirt or jumper.

Boys- Pants or shorts in solid navy blue, black or khaki. Solid navy blue, black or white socks.

Shoes: NO BRANDS OR LOGOS may show. Students have ONE pair of inside shoes that stay at school all year. If shoes become too small or worn out, we will send home for replacements. Closed toe shoes may be worn for “outside shoes” to and from school and during recess. Rain or snow boots should be available as well. **NO FLIP FLOPS OR SANDALS PLEASE.**

Girls- “Inside shoes” must be solid black, navy blue or brown shoes. If they are dress shoes, they must be “Mary Jane” style with a strap (no slip ons). If they are tie shoes, laces must also be black, navy blue or brown. NO BRANDS OR LOGOS may show. Students may have one pair of inside shoes that stay at school all year. Any closed toe shoes may be worn for “outside shoes” to and from school and during recess.

Boys- “Inside shoes” must be solid black, navy blue or brown shoes. If they are tie shoes, laces must also be black, navy blue or brown. NO BRANDS OR LOGOS may show. If students wear athletic shoes for “inside shoes”, they must have black or brown laces that can be tied or velcro straps. Students may have one pair of inside shoes that stay at school all year. Any closed toe shoes may be worn for “outside shoes” to and from school and during recess.

Phys Ed Clothes:

All Students –

- Must wear UNIFORM COLOR comfortable pants or shorts.
- CMS t-shirt
- Athletic shoes as described above. (Logo and color for SHOES does not matter for Phys. Ed. only)
- Wear these items to school all day on Phys. Ed. day.
- Jeans, dresses and skirts are NOT permitted for Phys. Ed. class.
- NO LOGOS may be seen on clothing. Nike, Under Armour, etc. will not be allowed.

Other Important Reminders:

**Absolutely NO...Hoodies, sweatshirts, shirts, pants, leggings, shorts or jackets that are not uniform colors

**Absolutely NO...Characters, cargo pants, and distracting accessories (light up jewelry or watches, jingly bracelets, glittery bows , etc.)

**Absolutely NO logos on clothing (including Phys. Ed. day)

**Hair color MUST be a natural color.

CMS SPIRITWEAR and JEAN DAY:

- MONDAY IS JEAN DAY! Students may donate \$1 to wear jeans on Mondays. Money collected will be used to support a project or outreach in our community.
- Jeans should be in good shape, no holes or rips.
- Students must wear a uniform shirt OR CMS spirit wear shirt with jeans. Any color CMS shirt is acceptable on MONDAY.

Dressing for Outdoor Activities

Canton Montessori School believes in the benefit of fresh air and exercise. Therefore, a period of outdoor activity will be included in the daily schedule unless unfavorable weather conditions prevail. Please always send your children to school prepared for outside activities. This includes, boots, hats, gloves, snow pants etc., as CMS students will go outside for recess up to and including temperatures of 20 degrees Fahrenheit including wind chill factor. Each classroom's daily outdoor activities will be coordinated by their teacher. Pre-K, Kindergarten and Elementary children should have both indoor and outdoor shoes.

----- Policies -----

Attendance and Tardiness Policy

Parents should notify the school in the event of their child's absence. Please call the school office at 330-452-0148 by 9 a.m. to report your child's absence.

Canton Montessori School believes that patterns of good attendance are set by children in their early school years and are dependent in a large part on the attitudes of the parents. It is important for children to have a sense of security and well being in their relationship with school. Continuity and consistency add to a child's sense of security.

Extreme absenteeism and tardiness are major deterrents to a students' success in school. In addition, habitual tardiness causes the child to constantly play catch up, often missing important discussion, direct teacher instruction, and scheduled activities. In the event of frequent tardiness, parents will be called for a conference.

Any extended absences should be discussed with the Head of School prior to the student missing school. Elementary students who arrive later than 15 minutes to class will be considered tardy. After three (3) unexcused tardy days, the student will be considered having been absent one (1) day.

In an effort to be consistent, the following have been determined to be "Excused Absences":

Personal Illness	Doctor/Dentist appointments
Illness in family	Observation of religious holiday
Death of a relative	School-sanctioned activities
Family emergency	Family vacations – prior approval required by the Head of School

The schedule for children who are enrolled for less than 5 days/week will not be automatically altered to accommodate attendance on an alternate day if Canton Montessori School is closed on a day a child normally attends. A Temporary Schedule Change form must be completed and the family will be charged the regular rate for all schedule changes.

Holding Policy

Pending completion of the admission process and acceptance to the program, when an application and advanced tuition deposit are received and there is currently space available for the child, that child will be enrolled. This space may be held for up to six months from the date the application and deposit are received.

Student Conduct Policy

We recognize that acceptable behavior is essential to develop responsible citizens and to ensure an effective school community. One of the desired goals of a CMS Montessori education is to foster positive behavior through development of self-discipline, respect for oneself, and awareness of the worth and dignity of others. The Montessori approach for development of such positive behavior is seen as a communication triangle among the child, school, and home.

Students are expected to:

- Respect the rights, property, and dignity of others;
- Demonstrate socially acceptable behavior and mutual courtesy;
- Preserve the degree of order necessary for a positive learning environment;
- Accede to the authority of the staff.

The ultimate goal of self-discipline is best achieved where all students, personnel, and parents maintain mutual respect and courtesy. Parents, students, and professional support staff together are responsible for establishing and maintaining an environment for appropriate behavior.

Withdrawal Policy

A signed application for admission for the upcoming school year submitted after July 1 binds you to pay the full tuition and fees for the upcoming school year. In the event an enrolled student is withdrawn from CMS for any reason after the June 30 withdrawal date, but prior to the completion of the school year, the student's parents or financial guarantor will be liable for tuition and any other charges incurred, including service charges, NSF charges, charges for extended hours or late pick-

up, fundraising contributions and tuition fees for one (1) month from the date written notice of the withdrawal is received by the CMS office.

Parents or guardian requesting to transfer their student to another school must provide CMS with a signed Release of Records form from the receiving school. Specific requested documents will be forwarded to the new school. Any requests exceeding five pages in quantity will be assessed on a per page basis (\$15). All financial commitments to CMS must be met before student records will be released.

Student Visitor Policy*(see final page of handbook for additional detail)

All visitors requesting to visit with a child at CMS must have an approved authorization. This authorization may be given on the ETA or Dismissal Authorization form, or by the parent/guardian contacting the school either verbally or in writing. The directress must be notified in advance and should inform the office staff. If a visitor comes to the school and does not have prior permission to visit with the child, we will call the parent/guardian. The visitor will not be allowed to visit with the child unless we are able to contact the parent/guardian for approval. A staff member will be present during the visitation.

Discipline Policy

The development of inner discipline in the child is a goal of Canton Montessori School. This development consists of self-direction, parental direction, and direction from the school. Parents, in conjunction with the school must be involved in the child's discipline. To this end, the following guidelines have been established for disciplinary action:

- A. Consistency. Discipline should always endeavor to be firm, just, impartial, and in the best interest of the individual student and the school community. Consistency is vital in maintaining discipline.
- B. Compassion. Discipline should be enforced in a positive manner, never through the use of physical force or sarcasm. The staff addresses specific behaviors and refrains from attacking the child's whole personality.
- C. Communication. Communication among the school staff, the parents, and the student is essential in discipline matters.

Each student is an individual with his own behavior patterns. Inappropriate behaviors, however, will be addressed to preserve a suitable atmosphere for learning, to protect the rights and dignity of others, and to build a sense of individual responsibility and self-worth. Young children will be redirected to ensure successful choices. Older children discuss the classroom ground rules, expectations, and limits. A time to sit and observe acceptable behavior may also be implemented.

In cases of recurring misbehavior, the Directress will contact both the Head of School and the parent(s). Cases of flagrant, recurring misbehavior may result in suspension or expulsion. All disciplinary procedures will comply with appropriate state statutes and constitutional revisions.

Please find below the Ohio Administrative Code Guide for Behavior Management and Discipline, standards by which all Department of Education facilities must comply. We are required to post this information in a prominent document with you. The number at the beginning is the specific OAC code. To read more, go online <http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/3301-37-10>.

Ohio Revised Code 3301-37-10 Behavior Management/Discipline

(A) A preschool staff member in charge of a child or a group of children shall be responsible for their discipline.

(B) The center shall have a written discipline policy describing the center's philosophy of discipline and the specific methods of discipline used at the center. This written policy shall be on file at the center for

review. Constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques are to be used at all times, and shall include such measures as redirection, separation from problem situations, talking with the child about the situation, and praise for appropriate behavior.

(C) Behavior management/discipline policies and procedures shall ensure the safety, physical, and emotional well-being of all individuals on the premises.

(D) The center's actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:

(1) There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.

(2) No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.

(3) No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.

(4) No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle.

(5) No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse.

(6) Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.

(7) Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.

(8) Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use.

(9) Separation, when used as discipline shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability, and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.

(10) The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

(E) The parent of a child enrolled in a center shall receive the center's written discipline policy.

(F) All preschool staff members shall receive a copy of the center's discipline policy for review upon employment.

CMS Perspective on Biting

Biting is a very common behavior among children birth to three years of age. Biting is a form of communication and is almost always either a response to the child's need not being met or coping with a challenge or stressor. At Canton Montessori School we believe by understanding the developmental stages of the children in our care and their individual needs, we can proactively deal with biting behaviors to prevent them from escalating.

We understand that children biting other children is one of the most common and most difficult behaviors to deal with in early childhood settings. It can occur without warning, can be difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the families and the caregivers involved.

For many toddlers, the biting stage is just a temporary part of the process of learning what is socially acceptable and what is not. For other children, biting is a persistent and chronic problem. They may bite for a variety of reasons including teething, frustration, inadequate language skills, stress, changes in the environment, feeling vulnerable, to have a sense of power or as a way to obtain what they want from another child. In order to alleviate some of the triggers for biting, CMS has many practices in place that are known to help prevent incidences of biting in small children:

1. Quality relationships: Staff develops nurturing relationships with the children and gets to know each child individually. Staff is given many opportunities for professional development to help learn ways to build quality relationships with the children.

2. Environmental influences on child's behaviors: Children are given opportunities to work in both small and large groups; there is a variety of work and children are taught how to share "work;" the

environment in a Montessori classroom is often quiet and productive which is very soothing to children; and staff are very aware of and willing to help a child that is feeling overwhelmed.

3. Targeted social-emotional supports: Children have a daily routine that they follow which consists of circle time, time to pursue own work, and snack time. Children learn early how to navigate classroom transitions in a way that helps them build confidence and alleviate stress. Staff talks about emotions/feelings through books and other work and teaches strategies to help children learn to calm themselves.

When a child is bitten:

For the biter:

1. The biter is immediately removed with no emotion, using words such as “biting is not okay – it hurts.” We will avoid any immediate response that reinforces the biting or calls attention to the biter. Caring attention will be focused on the child who was bitten.
2. The biter will not be allowed to return to current work/play and will be talked to on a level which he/she can understand. “I can see that you want that truck, but I can’t let you hurt him. Teeth are for smiling, friends are for hugging.”
3. The child will be redirected to other work/play.
4. Staff will complete an incident report and notify the family of the biter when the child is picked up for the day.

For the victim:

1. Staff will separate the child who was bitten from the biter.
2. Special attention will be given to comfort the child.
3. Staff will administer appropriate first aid as follows:
 - Assess the wound and if it is bleeding, apply pressure directly to the wound, using clean, dry cloth, until the bleeding stops.
 - Clean the bite wound with a mild soap and warm running water for approximately 3 – 5 minutes.
 - Rinse thoroughly, and pat dry with a clean, dry dressing.
 - Should the wound require immediate medical attention, appropriate action will be taken and parents will be notified.
4. Staff will then complete an incident report to notify family of the victim that the child has been bitten.
5. Staff will work together as partners with the parents of both the biting child and frequent victims to keep all informed and develop a joint strategy for change.
6. Teachers will consider early transition of a child “stuck” in a biting behavior pattern or a change of environment, if appropriate.
7. Biting may indicate the presence of a sensory processing disorder. If a child is exhibiting a consistent pattern of biting, parents should be referred to their family physician or other professional to have the child assessed.
8. Staff will prepare the parents of the biting child for the possibility that the child may have to be temporarily removed from the school and help them to make contingency plans.
9. If it is deemed in the best interest of the child, the school, and other children, CMS may terminate the child from Canton Montessori School for the duration of the biting stage. This stage will be mapped out as part of the written plan of action.

Biting Confidentiality

In compliance with NAEYC confidentiality guidelines, CMS staff will maintain complete confidentiality of all children involved when notifying parents that their child has been bitten or bit another child.

Student Technology Policy

Student use of the Internet is governed by principles of ethical use and current law governing copyrighted materials, etc.

The use of Internet accounts is a privilege and may be revoked by a Directress, Assistant, Head of School, Internet Coordinator, or Internet Provider at any time.

All telecommunications access on school computers is limited to school-obtained accounts and is restricted to educational business and school related projects. (Personal Accounts on commercial services or other Internet providers may not be used in school). The Directress, CMS Staff, or Internet Coordinator must supervise student use.

The student, parent and sponsoring teacher must sign an Internet use consent form before the student can access the Internet. This consent, which is distributed to Elementary families on an annual basis, must be kept on file.

Computers, including all information, programs, and software and use privileges belong solely to the school and are subject to review and inspection at any time without suspicion or cause. The school reserves the right to inspect copy and/or delete all files and records on school computers or accessed through school accounts.

Pacifier Policy

One of the goals of the Montessori method is to help the child become independent and learning to self-soothe is important. As such, pacifiers are only used at nap time. We will gladly store one for your child in the classroom. If your child uses one for car rides, please be sure that it is put away before entering the classroom.

----- COVID-19 Guidelines -----

In the event that a national emergency occurs that mirrors the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021, Canton Montessori School will continue to follow any and all mandated guidelines that are passed down by the CDC, therefore the Governor of Ohio's office, therefore the Ohio Department of Health(ODH), therefore the Ohio Department of Education(ODE).

As of 7/13/21, the date that this handbook was updated, the State of Ohio has zero mandated COVID-19 restrictions in place. However, it is recommended that any Ohioan who is not fully vaccinated observe all guidelines with respect to mask wearing, social distancing, and hand washing/sanitizing as outlined in the "Mitigation Plan" below.

General statement on COVID-19

In February of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic was recognized to be a threat to the safety of all Ohioans. On March 16, 2020, Governor Mike DeWine issued a state mandate closing all K-12 schools. On April 3, 2020, this initial mandate was extended through the end of the school year. On June 9, 2020, CMS was allowed to reopen for its summer program under strict guidelines provided by the Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and Ohio Department of Health (ODH). On August 20, 2020, CMS was allowed to open for the 2020-2021 school year, again, under strict guidelines issued by the CDC/ODH. Prior to opening for both the summer program and for 20-21, CMS released to parents and the public detailed plans for reopening including drop-off/pickup procedures, daily environment schedules, and a comprehensive Mitigation Plan as well as other documents and resources. **This information can be found on the CMS website under the ["For Parents" Tab](#), "COVID-19 Information" and "COVID-19 Tracker".** Canton Montessori School will

continue to follow all state mandates and will work in tandem with the Canton City Public Health Department, the Stark County Health Department and our families, faculty and staff to ensure that we provide the safest possible environment for a sustained, authentic delivery of our Montessori curriculum.

COVID-19 Pledge, Waiver, and Release

It is the policy of Canton Montessori School that all parents read, sign and submit the “COVID-19 Pledge, Waiver, and Release” which is shared with all families via email (PDF) and in their welcome folders prior to enrollment and/or re-enrollment. This document is created jointly with the [“Mitigation Plan”](#).

In the event of state mandated closure:

It is the policy of Canton Montessori School that, in the event of a state mandated closure, CMS will initiate and deliver a “remote learning plan” by environment. Each environment will deliver the plan utilizing a combination of resources including but not limited to: Google Classroom, Zoom, Facetime, and YouTube. All remote learning plans and their respective delivery vehicles are preapproved by the Curriculum Committee and therefore the Head of School.

***Visitors:**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, visitors are prohibited from entering the building at any time unless previously approved by the Head of School. This includes but is not limited to: parents/guardians, vendors, and letter carriers/delivery services.

****Student Health Guides:**

Please refer to the COVID-19 [“Mitigation Plan”](#) for specific CMS procedure pertaining to COVID-19 and the [“COVID-19 Tracker”](#) for additional guidance.