



Maria Montessori School

Parent Handbook

2021 Hawthorne Drive Rockford, Illinois 61107

(815)654-4906



www3.rps205.com/schools/AS/mariamontessori/

Principal's Message

Dear Montessori Families,

Welcome to Maria Montessori School. We are proud to be one of the specialty schools in Rockford Public School District 205. We serve students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through Eighth.

Our school, which follows the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, works in partnership with our students, their families, and the community to provide a quality, world-class educational experience.

This handbook is designed to be a helpful reference for parents, so I hope you take the time to look through all of the items for your information.

Should you have any questions or concerns in any area, please always feel free to call the school or send me an email.

I look forward to a wonderful school year.

Sincerely,

Candice Collins

Principal

Phone: 815.654.4906

Email: candice.collins@rps205.com

About our School

Maria Montessori School educates students in grades pre-kindergarten through eighth grade.

Our classroom teachers are all Montessori trained and either hold current Montessori credentials for the levels they teach or are working towards certification. In addition, all of our teachers hold an Illinois teaching license. Our school is proud members of both the American Montessori Society and the Association of Illinois Montessori Schools, which provide us with Montessori specific opportunities for staff development and school improvement.

Our students are all part of Rockford Public School District 205. They are a culturally diverse group of students who are educated in a prepared environment, based on the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori.

Mission Statement:

Collaboratively engage students in an authentic, world-class Montessori education.



Vision: Nurturing the mind and the spirit of the child so each student becomes a self-actualized, compassionate member of society.



Our school is committed to the goals set forth in our 5 year Strategic Plan:

Goal 1: Growth and Development

Goal 2: Authenticity

Goal 3: Quality Staff

Goal 4: Optimal Climate

These goals align with our school's mission and vision and the following values:

Learning~ Respect~ Community~ Erdkinder ~Independence~ Justice, Peace, and Equity

Discipline

Refer to the Student Code of Conduct of the Rockford School District that was given at registration for an explanation of students' rights and responsibilities.

Exit Criteria

The Rockford Public School District has established universal exit criteria applicable to all of its alternative programs, including Montessori. The packet is available online or will be provided upon request.

Healthy Eating Choices

Soda pop and other drinks containing caffeine are not allowed in the cafeteria for meals.

Office Hours

The office is open from 7:00 am to 3:30 pm on school days. An answering machine is available for messages before and after office hours and at times during the school day. Please leave a detailed message and we will return your call. Do not leave a message about a change in transportation—changes are only made when you speak with someone in person. Sending a note to the teacher is the best method to communicate changes in transportation.

Morning Arrival Procedures

Arrival: Our school day is from 7:40a.m. to 2:10 p.m. Students who ride buses will be dropped off at 7:25 a.m. in the bus zone, located in the front of the school. This zone is for **buses only** to ensure safety of our students. Students who are transported to school by car should be dropped off in the parent drop-off zone located in the back of the school. Do not park in the drop-off zone; wait until it is your turn to unload your child, and do not pass another car after your child has unloaded as other students are crossing the road to enter the building. Staff members are outside to supervise drop-offs. Students should not arrive to school any earlier than 7:25 a.m. and no later than 7:40 a.m. as they will be marked tardy. If your student arrives after 7:45a.m., a **parent must come into office and sign them in.** We are unable to provide supervision for students until 7:25 a.m. so to ensure the safety of your child, please do not drop off until 7:25 a.m. Breakfast is served beginning at 7:25 a.m.

Afternoon Dismissal Procedures

Dismissal: Students who ride buses will be dismissed at 2:10 to the buses which load in the bus zone, located in the front of the building. All students who are parent pick-ups will be dismissed to the back car zone beginning at 2:10. Again, do not park in the pick-up zone. Wait until it is your turn to load your child. Do not pass other cars as it is a safety hazard, and please stay in one lane. Staff members are present for parent pick-up and it is a smooth process if all parents follow the procedures.

Any changes in transportation (i.e. a bus rider is going to be picked up or a parent pick-up needs to ride the bus) must be given to the teacher in a written note so that we are aware of the change. Please do not call the office to make last minute changes unless it is an emergency. We will not permit any child to leave school with an unidentified person.

Thank you for helping us to ensure the safety of our students.

Absences, Attendance, and Tardies

It is imperative that your child attend school each day in order to learn. When students miss school, they miss out on the daily classroom experience, presentations of skills and materials, and student/teacher interaction. Please do all you can to schedule appointments outside of the regular school day. If you need to schedule an appointment during school hours, please provide a written note to your child's teacher. The parent or authorized adult will need to come into the school to sign the child out. **Do not park in the Fire Lane.** Be sure to use the Visitor Parking spots to the left of the main office.

If your child is absent due to an illness, it is your responsibility to call the office to report the absence. Should your child become seriously ill or injured at school, we will contact you at once. If we cannot reach you, we will use the emergency contact information you have provided. It is important that we have the name and phone number for someone that will be able to come for your child if there is sickness or injury.

Please make every effort to have your child at school on time. If your child arrives after 7:45am, he/she will be marked tardy. Per District policy, excessive tardies will result in student lunch detentions, parent/guardian conference with administration, and involvement of the truancy officer.

If your child is more than 30 minutes late to school, he/she will be counted absent for a ½ day. Excessive excused absences may become unexcused absences.

Bus Expectations

Students who ride the bus are expected to follow the District-Wide behavioral expectations as explained in the Student Code of Conduct. Students who do not follow the rules will be subject to discipline during the school day and parent notification. Chronic bus incidents may result in mandatory Saturday safety classes or loss of bus riding privileges.

Please refer to the District's Student Code of Conduct Handbook for expected bus behavior.

Cell Phones and Electronics

Students are not allowed to use or carry cell phones or electronics during the school day or while on school property. If a student has a cell phone for emergency purposes, it should be turned off and stored in the child's backpack at all times. We cannot guarantee the safety of phones, electronics, or other expensive electronics. If a student does not comply with the rules, the device will be held in the office until an adult is able to come pick it up and the student is subject to disciplinary measures as stated in the Code of Conduct.

Student Birthday Celebrations

Recognizing birthdays, or The Celebrating of Life, is a unique and special part of our program. For this celebration, teachers may choose to coordinate a healthy, shared snack with the families of their students or not. Families will not be allowed to send in cupcakes or other unhealthy foods.

Classroom Placement

Montessori students are placed in multi-aged classrooms as follows:

- PreKindergarten/Kindergarten
- Grades 1, 2, and 3
- Grades 4, 5, and 6
- Grades 7 and 8

Students are placed based on multiple factors to support the best learning conditions for each child. Ultimately, the building principal makes the final determination of classroom placement.

Clothing

We do not have a uniform policy. We do follow the dress code of the District, as referenced in the Code of Conduct. When dressing your child, please be mindful of appropriate, safe, and comfortable clothing. Remember to dress your child according to current weather conditions, especially for recess on extremely hot or cold days. Safe shoes are a must while at school. Tennis shoes are always a safe shoe. Please avoid flip flops, high heeled shoes, or anything that has too much exposed skin, including spaghetti strapped tanks. Skirts and shorts must be appropriate in length. The length is determined by placing the arms at the side and having fingertips fully extended while touching material. All pants must be secured at the waist with no undergarments showing. Outerwear (jackets and coats), hoods, and hats are not to be worn in the school building. Tennis shoes must be worn for Physical Education Class.

Every Friday is Spirit Day at Montessori. Students and staff are encouraged to wear spirit wear clothing items or our school colors, blue and silver. You may purchase clothing items from our Parent Teacher Organization during the school year.

Communications

Our electronic newsletter is emailed to families each month. Please ensure you have provided a working email. If you are not able to receive this by email, please inform the office so that a printed copy can be sent home with your child.

Follow us on social media:

On Twitter	CCollins_Mont
On Facebook (PTC maintains)	@montessoriptc
Principal's Blog	www.montessorirps205.weebly.com

Parent Teacher Organization

The committee for Parents and Teachers is always looking for more involvement! Please become involved in planning numerous fun events throughout the year.

The committee meets on a monthly basis to plan events, activities and fundraisers. *ALL parents* are welcome.

Email: mariamontessoriptc@gmail.com

Visitors and Volunteers

All visitors and volunteers are required to check-in at the front office to secure a printed badge. You will need your state license or ID.

Our parents are committed to volunteering at least 5 hours during the school year. There is always so much to do, please ask if you need any guidance in volunteering.