

Steamboat Springs Montessori



Parent Handbook of Policies and Procedures 2010-2011 School Year

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Steamboat Springs Montessori Mission Statement

The mission of Steamboat Springs Montessori (SSM) is to provide a positive Montessori Preschool and Kindergarten education fostering each student in accordance with the Montessori Method.

Educational Philosophy

Welcome to Steamboat Springs Montessori! We look forward to working with you and your child. We offer a safe, loving and fun environment that encourages a child's development socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively.

Our education program is firmly rooted in the teachings of Dr. Maria Montessori. She discovered that children have an innate love of learning and are eager to explore their environment. She observed that when given a rich, purposeful environment, children are by nature self-motivated, independent, self-disciplined, capable of intense concentration, and capable of cooperating with others. Montessori's approach is intended to build upon these qualities so that children can develop into confident and responsible lifelong learners and caring adults.

Dr. Maria Montessori discovered that children have three year "planes of development". Our mixed age classroom spans the 3-6 age range. In our program, you will often find older children gaining leadership skills while helping their younger peers, while younger children follow the models provided by them by older children. We encourage and expect families to commit to the three year program for the benefit of their children's development.

Our Montessori classroom provides a peaceful atmosphere where children are allowed to explore and learn in a hands-on, concrete way.

As children choose their own activities and advance at their own pace, they develop independence and self-motivation, setting a pattern for life. Guidance and support are given by teachers through one-on-one interaction and small group lessons. Our teachers observe each student and continually prepare the environment and support the student by challenging the student to reach their fullest potential.

Dr. Maria Montessori invented many of the materials you will find in our classroom over one hundred years ago. These materials were invented after decades of studying young children. Designed to attract the child, these unique materials guide the student toward success and independence. Each material introduces a single concept, and the materials are self-correcting, allowing the child to make discoveries independent of an adult.

Our curriculum focuses on peace and incorporates conflict resolution, kindness, and grace and courtesy. We emphasize respect for oneself, others and the environment.

The children work in an atmosphere of freedom and responsibility and carefully sequenced Montessori materials are used to introduce children to different areas of learning including:

Practical Life—The children learn everyday activities such as buttoning, lacing, pouring, cleaning, polishing and washing. The goal is to help the children develop self-reliance and muscle control, with emphasis placed on taking care of the environment and taking care of oneself.

Sensorial—Dr. Montessori invented certain materials that aid in the development of the intellectual senses of the child. These include items such as the pink tower, the brown stairs and the knobbed cylinders. These unique materials are oriented to advance the child's development of all five senses.

Language—Our language materials introduce the child to many different elements of language such as sound and symbol, sequencing, conversation, writing and reading. The classroom is organized left to right, simple to complex as a rudimentary reinforcement of reading. Children who are exposed to this method generally have great success learning to read and write.

Mathematics—Many believe the greatest inventions of Dr. Montessori can be seen in the math area of the environment. These specially designed materials provide the child with an introduction to the number system. The sequence of the various apparatus will allow the child to experience math from the concrete to the abstract.

Cultural Studies and the Sciences –Lessons on geography, botany and archeology are commonplace in our classroom. We follow the interests of the children and design activities that promote curiosity about the world around us.

Music, Movement and Art – We strive to develop a child's appreciation of music, movement and art by allowing freedom of expression and freedom of movement around our classroom. We encourage large and fine motor activities, as well as artistic endeavors of all kinds. In addition, we provide lessons on famous artists and musicians, as well as lessons on specific artistic and physical concepts such as: rhythm, intonation, pitch, color, shade and balance.

Non Discrimination Policy

It is the policy and the practice of Steamboat Springs Montessori to operate all of its activities in a manner that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, or national or ethnic origin. It will admit students of any race, color, gender, religion, or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Should a student have special needs, a reasonable effort will be made to accommodate the student and to integrate the student with other students.

Steamboat Springs Montessori will ensure that the school is in compliance with this policy in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship, loan, and tuition assistance programs, and school-administered programs. Steamboat Springs Montessori applies these same nondiscriminatory policies and practices to all activities it is engaged in including hiring and dismissal of employees, lease and purchase of buildings and equipment, and procurement of materials and services.

The Board of Directors

Steamboat Springs Montessori is incorporated as a non-profit, 501c3 Tax Exempt Colorado educational corporation, governed by a volunteer Board of Directors.

The primary functions of the Board are

1. to establish the school's institutional mission and define the fundamental objectives and core values
2. to establish policies under which the school will operate
3. to serve as the chief administrator, translating the school's mission and objectives into day-to-day operation
4. to oversee the on-going operations of the school are within board policy and government regulations
5. to look to the future and plan for long-term institutional growth and development.

As this edition of the handbook goes to press, the members of the Board of Directors are:

Larry Stroman, President

Mickelle Shults, Treasurer/Secretary

John Wilkinson, Member at Large

Michelle Wyant, Member at Large

Karen Kutska, Montessori Educator

Leneh Wingard, SSM Executive Director (non-voting member)

You are invited to attend our monthly board meetings. They are held the first Monday of every month in the Torian Plum Conference room at 1855 Ski Times Square Drive. Meetings begin at 7:00 pm.

Board members serve two year terms, and we are continually looking for new members. Open seats on the board are filled by a vote of the board. Anyone wishing to become a member of the Board of Directors should contact the board president.

How to contact the School

To contact the Executive Director for any issues including enrollment, payments, grievance or kudos, or to discuss the program philosophy or curriculum please call the office number—970- 879-8108.

If you would like to make an appointment to speak to the Lead Teacher, please call the office phone during school hours (970-879-8108) or call the classroom (970-870-6083) after hours and leave a message (after 3:30pm, Mon-Fri or all day Saturday or Sunday). Your call will be returned promptly.

Please limit your calls to the classroom to emergencies only as phone calls disrupt the classroom. Emergencies include notifying staff that your child will not be attending school that day.

Steamboat Springs Montessori
PO Box 775104
70 East Maple Street
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477
Office phone - 970-879-8108
Classroom phone – 970-870-6083
www.ssmontessori.org
info@ssmontessori.org

Our Program

Ages Served

Steamboat Springs Montessori offers a mixed age classroom for children ages 3-6 (preschool and Kindergarten).

Program Hours

1st year (3 year olds, morning only) *drop-off time is 8:15-8:30; pick-up is 11:30 -11:45

Monday – Friday 8:30am – 11:30am

2nd year (4 year olds, morning only)*drop-off time is 8:15-8:30; pick-up is 11:30-11:45

Monday – Friday 8:30am – 11:30am

3rd year-Kindergarten *drop-off time is 8:15-8:30, pick-up is 3:00-3:15

For children who will be entering 1st grade in 2011-2012

Monday – Friday 8:30am – 3:00pm

Extended Day

Students under the age of five generally stay for the morning only. However, the parent of any child may petition the board of directors to allow their child to stay for the all day program. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis, and will be based on:

- Available space
- Staff assessment of the child's readiness (including skills readiness interview)
- Teacher recommendation (current or previous)

Please be aware that students who are enrolled in the extended day program are accepted on a trial basis. Parent(s) may be asked return their child to a morning only schedule if the staff determines that the program is not meeting the child's needs, or that the child's presence is having an adverse effect on the program. If this happens, the parents may petition the board at a later time to retry the extended day program.

Our afternoon program is highly academic, and children are developmentally ready to attend this type of program at different times. Remember that children grow and develop at extraordinary rates. For example, if your child is not ready to attend the extended day program at age four, he or she may be ready six months later.

Tuition

<u>Program</u>	<u>Yearly</u>	<u>1st Semester</u>	<u>2nd Semester</u>	<u>(Daily Rate)</u>
1st year (3 year olds)	\$5775	\$2887.50	\$2887.50	\$35
2nd year (4 year olds)	\$5775	\$2887.50	\$2887.50	\$35
3rd year-Kindergarten	\$8580	\$4290	\$4290	\$52

Extended Day: \$22

For 1st and 2nd year students adding the afternoon the daily rate is \$22 in addition to the regular daily tuition for the morning program, prorated beginning the day your child begins attending the afternoon program (see policy on adding the afternoon above).

Tuition Due Dates

Steamboat Springs Montessori has four tuition payment options:

- “The one payment plan” Payment in full: Due June 1st.
 - Preschool: \$5775 (extended day extra)
 - Kindergarten \$8580
- “The two payment plan”
 - Preschool : \$2887.50 due June 1st and \$2887.50 due November 1st (extended day extra)
 - Kindergarten: \$4290 due June 1st and \$4290 due November 1st.
- “The nine payment plan”
 - Preschool: \$641.67 due each month from June through February by automatic bank withdrawal (extended day extra)
 - Kindergarten \$953.33 due each month from June through February by automatic bank withdrawal.
- “The twelve payment plan” 20% of yearly tuition up front and the rest due monthly by automatic bank withdrawal from June through May
 - Preschool: \$1155 due June 1st and \$420 due monthly by automatic bank withdrawal from July through May (extended day extra).
 - Kindergarten: \$1716 due June 1st and \$624 due monthly by automatic bank withdrawal from July through May.

Tuition Payment Policies

- Down payments and arrangements for tuition payments are due June 1st (or upon enrollment if enrolled after June 1st).

- If tuition is not paid as arranged, 3 formal written notices will be sent. After the 3rd notice if there is no action to rectify the situation the child will be disenrolled and the position given to next child on the waitlist.
- Tuition is not subject to adjustment because of illness, vacation, holidays or absence from school.
- If your check is returned for any reason, there will be a \$50 returned check charge added to your account, in addition to any fees charged by the bank.

Tuition Assistance Policy

Steamboat Springs Montessori offers full and partial tuition assistance to families in need. The need may be ongoing or short-term. For confidential assistance see Leneh Wingard, Executive Director.

Tuition Assistance Sources

We receive tuition assistance funding from a variety of sources. Please see Leneh for a scholarship application to find out if you qualify for one or more of these programs:

- Colorado Preschool Program: (CPP is administered by BOCES and the Steamboat Springs School District)
- Colorado Child Care Assistance Program: (CCCAP is administered by Routt County Department of Human Services)
- First Impressions Scholarship Program: (funded by United Way, The City of Steamboat Springs and Routt County), with financial guidelines based on family income levels as a percentage of Area Median Income; awarded in a lump sum to us, and administered by us.
- Center Funded Scholarships: when additional funds are available we use the First Impressions guidelines to distribute them.

Scholarship Committee and Tuition Assistance Awards

A scholarship committee is appointed by the Board of Directors each year. The scholarship committee will determine award amounts based on family income, needs of child and/or family, and total funding available for entire school. The families with the greatest need will be helped first. Families need to reapply for tuition assistance each year.

Admissions/ Waitlist

At Steamboat Springs Montessori, we look for children and parents who share our goal of a nurturing, cooperative atmosphere in which to challenge students to reach their full potential both academically and as citizens and people.

We encourage applications from all interested families. Steamboat Springs Montessori admits students of any race, color, gender, religion, national and ethnic origin and supports all abilities as specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Steamboat Springs Montessori maintains an ongoing waitlist of interested families. Children can be placed on the waitlist at any time by calling 970-879-8108. (Children must be born to be placed on the list; expectant parents may call any time after their child is born). Priority enrollment status will be given to siblings of existing or previous students and to those who have been previously enrolled in other Montessori programs.

Decisions for acceptance into our program are made based on the needs of the class, using our waitlist. Our goal is to balance the ages and genders of the classroom. We expect families to commit to the three year program. This often means very few spots are available at the 2nd year and Kindergarten levels.

Registration and Enrollment

There will be a \$50 non-refundable registration fee for each new child (child who has not attended SSM before) at the time of registration.

Registration happens on a yearly basis. For existing students, the registration paperwork must be submitted by March 1st for the following school year, and a tuition payment must be made by June 1st. Any existing student whose forms are not received by March 1st, whose tuition is not received by June 1st or who has not made special arrangements with the school will be considered to have withdrawn from Steamboat Springs Montessori. After March 1st, new students will begin to be admitted to take all available openings.

A deposit of \$200 for returning students and \$500 for new students will be required to hold your child's place at our school. Deposits are due with registration forms. Deposits will be applied toward tuition.

All registered students will be sent an enrollment packet. **Enrollment paperwork is due back by June 4th, 2010.** After that time it will be assumed that children with incomplete paperwork have decided to withdraw, and the child's position will be given to the next child on our waitlist. (The exception to this is the Statement of Health form which needs to be filled out by a healthcare provider. This form is due before the back to school picnic in August.)

Withdrawals

When a student leaves Steamboat Springs Montessori, the student must withdraw from class. Formal withdrawal must be written and submitted to the school at

least 30 days prior to the effective date. Parents will be asked to fill out an evaluation form and sign a withdrawal form that will be kept on file.

Bills for tuition go out June 1st. After this date you are committed to the program for which you have reserved a spot.

TUITION REFUNDS ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR ANY PROGRAM. (Morning, Extended Day, or Kindergarten)

An exception to this policy is made if an appropriate replacement student can be found to fill the withdrawing student's space. In this case, tuition for the withdrawing student will be refunded, and the refund will be pro-rated to the day the replacement student starts.

A withdrawal form is provided in the appendix.

Dismissal

Steamboat Springs Montessori reserves the right to dismiss any child for:

- (1) Failure to pay fees when due, and/or lack of adherence to our tuition payment policies
- (2) Conduct of the child/children or parents which disturbs the peace and order of the school or staff.
- (3) Abusive behaviors and/or verbal threats by parents toward program staff, other parents, or children (Immediate Dismissal).
- (4) Child exhibits special needs or needs related to a serious illness that cannot be met at SSM. In this case staff will make every effort to involve the parents and other appropriate resource persons, in order to decide together on the best course of action for the particular child, prior to any dismissal.
- (5) Lack of cooperation from parents with the program's efforts to resolve differences and/or meet the child's needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences.

Should a student be dismissed (requested to withdraw), a refund will be prorated.

Dismissal decisions will be made solely by the Board of Directors. Parents have the right to petition, in writing, within 10 (ten) working days to the Steamboat Springs Montessori Board of Directors if they object to the dismissal. Please address all written petitions to:

Board of Directors
Steamboat Springs Montessori
PO Box 775104
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

The School Community and Volunteering

Steamboat Springs Montessori is a community of students, parents and educators. Together our ideas and input literally shape and run the school.

Steamboat Springs Montessori only accepts families that are willing and interested in participating in the broader life of the school through social and educational activities and volunteering.

Observing the Classroom

Parents and other visitors are encouraged to observe the children at work! Contact you the Lead Teacher to let her know when you would like to visit.

You will want to see the class at its normal routine and not responding to the novelty of your presence; therefore, when you visit, please try to remain quiet and unobtrusive. A great deal can be learned by patient and quiet observation of your child and his or her classmates at work.

During the first sensitive weeks of the school year, students (especially the youngest or new children) are familiarizing themselves with a new routine and new environment. Therefore, the Lead Teacher will let parents know when observations may begin.

All visitors, even parents, need to sign-in upon their arrival.

- All visitors are required to sign-in on the Guest Visit Sheet and strictly follow the Guidelines of Observation.
- A staff member will give instructions at the time of your arrival to ensure that your participation is rewarding to you and a benefit to all the students.
- Please take note of any questions or comments you have for the Lead Teacher. She has an obligation to the children during school hours and will be happy to accommodate your questions outside of school hours.

Observing your child's life at school helps you better know your child and his or her activities and interests. We hope to see you soon!

Parent Volunteers

As a non-profit organization run by a volunteer Board of Directors, parent volunteers are essential to Steamboat Springs Montessori. It is an exciting responsibility to be part of this community that governs itself.

We require a minimum of 10 hours of parent volunteering per semester per child.

Parents can meet this volunteer requirement in many different ways including:

- Serving a 2-year term on the Board of Directors
- Talking to the Board of Directors to see what committees need chair people or members
- Talking to your child's teacher to see how you can help in the classroom

- Create materials for use in the classroom
- Drive and assist with field trips and special events
- Share your special talents with our children (musical, crafts, etc)
- Help with the maintenance of our building – small repairs, snow shoveling, etc.

Volunteer needs will be posted at the school, in the classroom newsletter and in flyers that are sent home. Please let us know your special skills/interests so we can include you in our diverse community of volunteers!

Family Partnership Plan

Our school has a family partnership plan in place to help promote involvement with our families and improve communication between staff, families and the Board of Directors.

Our goal is to build parent support for and involvement in our non-profit school. To achieve this important goal we conduct the following activities which are listed on your calendar.

- “Back to School Picnic and Open House” with a classroom walk through. This event is a social gathering for the students and parents, and is a great opportunity for families to meet each other and our staff. Held the week prior to the opening of school. We usually have greater than 90 % participation from our families.
- “Fall Celebration”. This event is a social gathering for the students and parents. The children display items they have been working on in the classroom. Held in the month of October.
- “Winter Celebration”. This event is a social gathering for the students and parents. The children display items they have been working on in the classroom. Held in the month of December
- “End of the Year Picnic and Open House/Kindergarten Graduation”. This event is a social gathering for the students and parents. The children display items they have been working on in the classroom, and the Kindergarten students often give a brief “performance”. New families enrolling for the following school year are also invited. Held in the month of June
- We ask parents to volunteer in various capacities as their time and interests allow, with a minimum volunteer commitment of 10 hours per child per semester. Our goal is to have 100% of parents sign up for an activity involving them in the school, administration or Board of Directors.

- Classroom and office newsletters which include information on community events and resources, as well as exciting happenings in our classroom go out every other week.
- Our website is another great place to find information about our school and programs. Visit us at: www.ssmontessori.org. We have a special "Parent Page" where you will find our calendar, snack schedules newsletters and more.
- Important community information as well as classroom information and updates are posted on our "Parent/Community" board in our classroom.
- Parents are encouraged to learn as much about the Montessori Method as possible so that they may give their child the added benefit of incorporating this style at home. To this end we have a well stocked "Parent Library" in our classroom with many great books and magazines on the Montessori Method and other applicable parenting resources. Additionally, we send home the magazine "Tomorrow's Child", published by the Montessori Foundation, quarterly.

PLEASE JOIN US BY PARTICIPATING IN THESE FUN EVENTS AND TAKING ADVANTAGE OF OUR NEWSLETTERS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS.

General Information

School Calendar

The Steamboat Springs Montessori school calendar is similar though not exactly the same as the Steamboat Springs Re-2 School District in order to accommodate families with older children in the public schools. You will receive a school calendar upon enrollment.

The First Day of School

We encourage new and returning families to visit the classroom at the “Back to School Picnic and Open House” prior to the first day of school. This gives the children a chance to meet the teachers and familiarize themselves with their school setting.

Many young children and their parents feel a bit nervous when they leave one another in an unfamiliar situation. A few tears may even be expected. It is okay. Our gentle and loving teachers are prepared to help make this a smooth transition that is safe, secure and enjoyable for everyone.

We have found that a short and positive goodbye is easiest for the child. We do not recommend parents bringing their children into the classroom, as the prolonged goodbye often makes the separation more difficult. Feel free to call the school for reassurance that your child has settled in and is adjusting well.

On the first day of school, please do not come into the classroom unless previously arranged with the Lead Teacher.

Clothing

Children must be dressed in clothing that they can *easily manage themselves*. Please remember to have weather appropriate clothing, as we will be going outside everyday. Also please remember that your child may get dirty, wet, or messy as he or she explores the materials in our classroom (fancy or “special” clothing is not recommended). Help them dress for success!

What to Bring / What Not to Bring to School

Each child is provided a “cubby.” The cubby space is a small closet like space with two hangers and one small basket.

Only small backpacks, which can easily fit in their cubbies are allowed (but not necessary).

Each child must have:

1. A pair of slippers **that are easy for the individual child to put on and take off.** Since children grow rapidly, parents should check throughout the school year to make sure slippers fit their children.

2. One change of clothing including: socks, underwear, pants and shirt should be stored at the school in a clear zip-type bag with the child's full name clearly marked. When outdoor clothing is brought to school in the winter, please make sure to label coats, boots, hats, mittens or gloves, mufflers, snowsuits and snow pants, etc with the child's name. All clothing will be stored in the child's own cubby space.

NOTE: PLEASE CLEARLY MARK YOUR CHILD'S ITEMS WITH A MARKER USING FULL NAMES.

3. Toys - Toys should not be brought to school. They are often lost, fought over, or broken.
4. Show and Share—Our class schedules a time for Show and Share daily. When it is your child's turn to bring snack, he or she also brings a Show and Share item. Children enjoy bringing in an item from nature, a special souvenir from a trip, something they have made, or a favorite book. Items that have educational value are best. Again, **please do not send in toys.**

The most important thing your child can bring is a healthy self. All else is secondary.

Student Arrival and Departure

School begins at 8:30.

Arrival Time—Students are highly recommended to be on time so that each student can enter the classroom and become settled before the start of class.

Staff members will be attending the loading/unloading area from 8:15 am to 8:30 am to assist in student arrival and sign-in. At this time the parents will sign in the students upon arrival.

After 8:30 am, parents will need to bring their children into the facility, help them get settled, and sign-in. If a student is late to class on a day that a field trip is taken, that student will need to find the group to join them, no teacher will be at the school for supervision.

Departure Time—Parents or caregivers must sign out their students each day. When class is dismissed for each session, staff will be attending the loading/unloading area as needed on the following schedule:

Morning session—11:30am to 11:45am

Kindergarten /Extended Day—3:00pm to 3:15pm

Please have your child unload from the right side of the car. This will avoid having to walk in front of or behind the car. This is especially important in the winter when the parking lot may be icy.

A late departure fee of \$10.00 is due for every fifteen (15) minutes (or fraction thereof) a child is picked up after the pickup time (11:45 for the morning and 3:15 for the afternoon). Each family is allotted one warning per year. Thereafter, the late fee will apply. Payment for late pick up is expected immediately, and is

made directly to the staff member on duty at the time of pick up or drop off. There are no exceptions.

NOTE: DURING DEPARTURE, CHILDREN ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE OUTSIDE THE FENCE UNTIL THEY ARE ACCOMPANIED BY THE PICK-UP PERSON TO THE VEHICLE OR OFF OF THE PREMISES, EVEN IF SIGNED OUT. **PLEASE WALK YOUR CHILD TO THE CAR** TO AVOID ANY UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENTS.

Sign-In and Sign-Out

For safety reasons there is a sign in and sign out sheet. Authorized parents or caregivers will need to sign the sheets each time they drop off or pick up their child.

Pick up by Non-Parent / Guardian

No child will be released to any adult without permission from parents or guardians. Upon enrollment you will be asked to provide the names of all persons authorized to pick up your child from school. Should you need someone other than those listed on the enrollment form to pick up your child, the school must be made aware **in writing** of the person's name, address, phone number and the approximate number of occurrences this person will be picking up your child.

Please be aware that if the staff is not acquainted with the person authorized to pick up your child they will be required to show identification before the child is released to them.

Should an unauthorized adult attempt to have a child released to them, parents will be contacted by staff and the child will remain at the center until a parent or authorized adult arrives.

Car Seats

We understand that occasionally you will need to leave your child's car seat at school for transportation reasons. We are unable to have car seats left inside the classroom, as there is no space for them. Please leave car seats outside. You may need to cover the seat with a heavy-duty plastic bag to protect it from moisture.

Lunch

Children enrolled in the Kindergarten or 2nd year programs that are staying for lunch will need to bring a small sack lunch. Lunches are stored in the refrigerator and dispensed to the students after the dismissal of the morning session. All lunch food should be brought in a single container, either a sack or small lunch box, and the student's name must be clearly marked.

Please refrain from sending juice boxes or bottled drinks. Children serve themselves water using a pitcher and drinking glasses. All drinks need to be poured into a drinking glass.

Lunch food will not be shared between students, so general allergy restrictions do not apply.

At our school we encourage healthy meals. Feel free to send sandwiches, soups, pastas, or a portion of last night's dinner. The children enjoy lunch, just as an adult would, using a placemat, plate and real flatware. Food is laid out onto plates or into bowls before the children eat. A microwave is available to heat food as necessary (An adult will use the microwave).

No Lunchables, candy or soda, please.

Snacks

Parents provide snacks on a rotating basis. Please remember that the snack should be plentiful enough to serve 25 children, plus one more serving to be used as an example setting. We ask that the snacks be as prepared as possible before being brought to class. Please wash all fruits and vegetables before cutting. Snacks should be on time (no later than 9:00am) as snack is part of the classroom program and accessible to students throughout the session. If your child is ill the day you have been assigned to bring snack, please have the snack delivered before the start of class. Birthday snacks are encouraged; however, please make arrangements with the Lead Teacher prior to planning the snack.

Please keep the snack simple. We ask that you send two of the following three items: a fruit, a vegetable or a grain. Examples of appropriate snacks are:

- Bananas and whole grain crackers
- Cucumbers (cut into slices) and Cantaloupe (cut into bite sized pieces)
- Baby Carrots (cut in half lengthwise) and pita bread (cut into small triangles)

Please no dips or sauces, or graham crackers.

We will inform you of classroom allergy restrictions as soon as we are aware of them.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays and half birthdays (to accommodate summer birthdays) are special events at Steamboat Springs Montessori. We celebrate with the honoree at line time. You can make this event the very best by doing the following:

1. Discuss with the Lead Teacher specific details of preparing for your child's birthday celebration.
2. Birthday snacks are welcomed and, on the day of the celebration, they are eaten on the group line. A separate morning snack should also be provided. Special treats should contain nutritional value (i.e. no or little frosting). Please provide treats already portioned into individual servings (i.e. muffins) and remember that these young children do not need a very large portion. Some ideas for nutritious birthday snacks include:
 - Mini muffins
 - Fruit kabobs
 - Chocolate dipped strawberries (check allergy list first)

3. Parents are encouraged be a part of the celebration at line. You can expect to see an incorporation of some basic laws of astronomical science as the birthday honoree travels around the line as the earth travels around the sun.
4. Customarily in Montessori classrooms, the birthday student gives a gift to the school. This is an optional practice. If you and your child should choose to provide a gift to the school on her birthday, we suggest that it be wrapped so that she may open and present it to the classroom. A Gift Wish List is available at the school.

A handout is available at the school that fully describes the birthday celebration. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

Lost and Found

A lost and found is maintained at the school. It is the responsibility of the parent / guardian to identify items in the lost and found. All items not claimed by the last day of school before winter break and the last day of school before summer will be donated to charity.

Bathroom Use, Diapering and Toileting Policy

The bathroom is always available to the students for use at any time. For students with special needs, the staff will maintain a discreet and confidential policy. All students will be instructed in hand washing and personal hygiene after toileting.

Steamboat Springs Montessori position on Toilet Training:

- Most children, except those with special needs, are developmentally ready to be fully toilet trained by age 3.
- Not being toilet trained by age 3 is an indication that the child is not developmentally ready for our preschool program.
- Some toileting accidents are expected as a child transitions into preschool.

Steamboat Springs Montessori Policy on Toileting:

It is our expectation that children are toilet trained before starting school. However, if your child is still in the transitional stage, we are willing to implement a program with the parents and teachers' input to facilitate the process.

- A 6-week transitional period from the student's start date will be permitted in recognition of the fact that enrollment commitments may need to be made before toilet training has been completed.
- During the 6-week transitional period, the occurrence of toileting accidents will be charted for each child.
- During the 6-week transitional period, parents will be notified if toilet accidents are a persistent concern. Parents will be asked to focus on consistent toilet training at home.

- Each child is required to have a change of clothing (pants, shirt, underwear, socks) labeled and placed in a zip style gallon plastic bag to be kept at school.
- If a student wets his or her pants at school, he or she will be guided to change his/her own clothing. The child will be assisted with hygiene and things that she cannot do for herself in accordance with the Colorado Rules and Regulations for Child Care Centers. Wet clothing will be sent home. Please remember to replace the change of clothing the next school day.
- If a student has a bowel accident at school, the parents will be called to immediately come and get the child. This is for several reasons: 1) When a child has a bowel accident it is often a sign of disease or great stress; the ill or stressed child needs to rest at home. 2) Our teachers are needed to teach in the classroom, and cannot take the extended time necessary clean up a child who has had a bowel accident. 3) The risk of disease to our staff and other students is extremely high when dealing with human feces.
- After the 6-week transitional period, a toilet training plan will be developed and implemented between the teacher and the parents. The plan may include (but is not limited to): a requirement that parents take their child to see a doctor, a break from school, or disenrollment until the child has achieved toilet independence.

Discipline

We strive to define and maintain limits so that each child can learn to show, release, and accept their feelings in an appropriate manner. We want the children to feel secure within these limits so they can learn to control their own behavior and progress toward becoming a responsible member of the group. We believe that respect for the child and providing good role models of acceptable behavior are important components to effective discipline.

If a student continues to behave outside the guidelines of classroom etiquette and courtesy, they may be asked to take a short break away from the group. Behavior that is not tolerated includes, but is not limited to: fighting and physical violence (even between siblings); taunting or teasing (even between siblings); willful destruction of school or student property; and disrespect toward adults and children.

Steamboat Springs Montessori reserves the right to call parents and request the parents temporarily remove the student from class for the rest of the day; however, this is not a common event. If there is an ongoing disciplinary difficulty the Lead Teacher will consult the parents and the Executive Director if needed.

Parent Communication

It is very important for us to have open communication with our families. Your opinions and ideas are valuable to us, and we want your input. Our primary mode of communication with families is our "Take Home Folders". Typically on Thursdays, your child will bring home newsletters and important notes, as well as any handmade creations he or she would like to show you.

At least one parent/teacher conference will be scheduled per semester (November and March). The Lead Teacher or Executive Director may wish to have additional conferences with parents, and parents will be notified so an appointment can be arranged.

Parents are also welcome to make an appointment at any time to discuss your child's progress with the Lead Teacher or Executive Director.

Additionally, please check our "Parent/Visitor" bulletin board and our website (www.ssmontessori.org) for more information about our classroom and community events, and join us for our open houses, parent education nights, and social gatherings throughout the year.

Communication Between Families

All parents will receive a roster that includes phone number, mailing address and email address for all students enrolled at Steamboat Springs Montessori.

While we encourage communication between families, we ask that you refrain from sending notes (such as birthday party invitations) to other families through school and instead use the mailing addresses provided on the roster.

Also, please be aware when conversing with other families in the parking lot area to ensure that you are not blocking other parents from entering or leaving the lot.

Newsletters

Both the Lead Teacher and the Executive Director send home a newsletter via email once a month. With this system, communication occurs at least twice a month with our families. Parents are welcome to contribute or assist.

Special Information from Home

In the event that a significant change occurs in your home, please consider informing the school. All information will be regarded as confidential. We will accept your judgment as to the kinds of changes that may affect your child's behavior, security, and general well being. Common causes of distress include:

- either or both parents being away from home for an extended time
- new person living in the home
- illness of a family member
- any hospitalization
- accident or death in the family
- new caregiver

- death of a pet

The Executive Director and teachers will keep you informed of any significant changes in the school environment that may affect your child as well.

Field Trips

Field trips are defined as anything outside of the school premises, including walks. A general field trip permission form is enclosed in the enrollment packet and is required for each student.

If necessary, transportation may include Alpine Taxi Service and the Steamboat Springs Public Transportation System. Field trips not covered in the general permission form require special permission slips furnished by the school. Students must turn in special permission slips before they will be allowed to participate. Parents have the option of their child attending or not attending field trips. If you choose for your child not to attend the field trip, your child must be picked up before we leave for the trip.

All field trip drivers must have a valid driver's license, proof of insurance and a first aid kit in the vehicle. Parents must provide car seats for those children for whom Colorado law requires them.

School Closures

Should the Steamboat Springs Re-2 School District choose to close schools (e.g. weather, health emergency, power outage etc.), our school will also be closed. If the conditions requiring a closure are localized (i.e. power outage for our building only) you will receive a phone call as soon as we are aware of the problem. If a situation arises warranting the closing of school while class is in session, parents or the Emergency Contact adult will be notified to pick students up from the school.

Should the school need to be closed for an extended period due to an unexpected situation such as a disease outbreak, refunds will generally not be issued. If a family wishes to request a tuition refund for the duration of the closure, they may petition the Board of Directors in writing within ten (10) days of the closure. A decision will be issued at the next meeting of the Board of Directors.

Television and Video Viewing

Television and videos are not used at Steamboat Springs Montessori.

Records and Confidentiality

The records concerning the licensing of Steamboat Springs Montessori are open to the public, and may be reviewed by making a request in writing to the Executive Director or the Colorado Department of Human Services. Documents regarding information identifying children or their families are not open. Scholastic records, health reports, social or psychological reports are available to parents upon written request. Additionally, personnel and children's records are available, upon request, to authorized personnel of the Colorado Department of Human Services as per state regulation. All records will be kept at the center and on file for at least 3 (three) years as per state regulations.

Student Health

At Steamboat Springs Montessori we value wellness and encourage it among our community.

We ask that children be kept at home when they are ill.

Signs your child is too sick to attend school

- Any fever in the last 24 hours
- Any vomiting in the last 24 hours
- Any diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- Any undiagnosed or contagious rash
- Conjunctivitis (Pink-Eye)
- Profuse nasal discharge, which is green or yellow.
- Students go outside to play every day. If you feel that your child may be too sick to go out to play, he is probably too ill to be at school.

Please notify the school if your child has a communicable disease.

Absence

Whenever your child is ill and won't be coming to school, please call the classroom, **870-6083**, between 8:00am and 8:30am to let us know that he or she will be absent. (Please do not call the office – it is not on site of the school.)

If your Child Gets Sick at School

If your child becomes ill at school, we will contact you to arrange for him or her to be picked up right away. We understand how difficult it can be for working parents to break free during the day, but children do get ill from time to time. You may want to make arrangements with a friend or relative in advance.

Hand Washing

Hand washing is an excellent way to keep germs and diseases from spreading. In an effort to keep our children, families and staff healthy the following is a list of all times students and staff are asked to wash their hands while at school. It is also recommended that students and families incorporate the same hand washing procedures at home.

- Upon arriving at school
- After playing outdoors
- After using the restroom
- Before and after preparing, eating or handling food
- After contacting bodily fluids (blowing nose, coughing etc.)

Allergies

At Steamboat Springs Montessori we understand that our students may have a variety of food and/or other allergies. All known allergies are posted in the classroom. Please inform the school upon enrollment if your child has any allergies. Food sent from home for student lunches is never shared between students, and is the responsibility of the parents. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate students with allergies.

Emergency Care

All of our staff are trained in first aid and CPR. In the event of any medical situation that requires immediate medical attention, we will want your child to be treated right away. Please remember to keep your emergency information form up-to-date. We must be able to reach you at any time during the school day.

Please let the school know upon enrollment if there are any special medical needs or requirements, (allergic reactions, etc.) for your child.

If your child needs immediate medical attention, and you cannot be reached, your enrollment agreement authorizes us to seek medical care in your name. We will call 911 as necessary. We will continue our efforts to contact you.

Accident/Injury Procedures

The following procedures have been established in the event a student becomes injured while at school.

The safety of our students is our number one priority.

In the Case of a Minor Injury

- A staff member will attend to the child. Appropriate first aid will be administered when needed, and the injury will be reported verbally to the person who picks up the child.

In the Case of Serious Injury

- The staff will contact the parents.
- For serious/life threatening injuries 911 will be contacted.
(Parents will be expected to assume responsibility for any expenses occurred.)
- If the child needs to be seen by a physician immediately and the parents cannot be reached, he/she will be transported to the hospital via ambulance. A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and will stay with him/her until the parents arrive.

Medication

By state law, we are only permitted to administer medication prescribed by your physician. **All medication sent to school must be in the original container.**

labeled by the physician or pharmacy, stating the name of the child, medication and dosage.

We cannot administer non-prescription medication. **Please do not send it to school.** If you feel your child needs over the counter medication, you must come to school and give it to your child yourself.

YOU MUST HAVE YOUR PHYSICIAN FILL OUT A MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION FORM BEFORE WE CAN ADMINISTER ANY MEDICATION. A copy of the form is provided in the appendix of this handbook.

General Child Safety

- While in the care of Steamboat Springs Montessori all children will be supervised as per the licensing requirements of the State of Colorado. Daily attendance will be taken and a daily record of arrival and departure times listing each student will be maintained.
- Should a child become lost or kidnapped, the police and parents of the child will be contacted immediately. Any and all extra staff will become available to assist the police and parents in searching for the child. The Executive Director is the liaison for the school with the police and press. Appropriate forms will be filed.
- Should there be a fire or other natural disaster, the staff will first see to the safety of every child and follow the emergency procedures developed in conjunction with the local fire department and civil defense, which will be posted in the school. Parents will be contacted immediately as the situation permits. Parents should wait to hear from the staff of the school, police or fire officials, or public announcements on the radio.
- Emergency drills will be practiced on a regular basis in compliance with the regulations of the State of Colorado. Each drill will be documented and this documentation will be available for parental review at anytime requested.

Evacuation Plan

Evacuation is used to get students and staff out of the building quickly and efficiently in the event of an emergency.

We have three designated "safe havens" in the event we have to evacuate the building. These "safe havens" are Spring Creek Trailhead, Butcher Knife Trailhead, and the Steamboat Springs High School. The Lead Teacher will determine the safest evacuation route taking into consideration weather conditions and where the potentially harmful situation is located. In most cases the children will be evacuated on foot to the Steamboat Springs High School.

Parents will be notified to pick up their children by the Executive Director or a member of the Board of Directors, and will be given the pickup location. If we are unable to reach a child's parents we will contact persons on the Emergency Contact/Authorized Pick up List.

In An Emergency The Lead Teacher or Supervising Adult:

- Will account for all students IMMEDIATELY.
- Will take emergency contact info, cell phone, authorized sign-out sheet, attendance sheet, and 1st aid/evacuation kit.
- Will evacuate students at least 300 feet from the emergency threat.
- Will tend to any children with medical emergencies or will assign care of injured children to another adult.
- Will consider weather conditions and the nature of the emergency and will decide on the safest evacuation location.
- Will consider individuals with disabilities that may need assistance evacuating.
- Will stay with students keeping them in a group.
- Will call 911 and the Executive Director, or will assign calls to another adult, being sure to relay the evacuation location to the E.D. so he/she can relay this information to parents.
- Will use the classroom attendance sheet and authorized pickup list to make sure all children are signed out by an authorized adult.

All students and staff:

- Will leave the building immediately in a calm and orderly manner, using the safest exit and directions given by the Lead Teacher or emergency personnel.
- Will get (and remain) at least 300 feet from the building.
- Will wait for instructions from the Executive Director, President of the Board of Directors, or Emergency Personnel.
- Will not return to the building or move to another side of the building unless told to do so.
- Will remain out of the building until they have received an “all clear” from emergency personnel.

Complaints and Reporting

Parents are encouraged to have open communication with the teachers, staff and Board of Directors of Steamboat Springs Montessori. Parents should feel free to schedule time with the Lead Teacher or Executive Director to discuss any issues or concerns. We ask that parents refrain from discussing issues with the teachers and staff during school hours as this interferes with the educational instruction.

If parents are dissatisfied after conversing with teachers or staff, or are for any reason uncomfortable talking to teachers or staff, parents are encouraged to communicate with any member of the Board of Directors. Parents may also leave messages for any teacher, staff member or board member at the office phone number, 970- 879-8108.

Reporting of Licensing Complaints

Licensing complaints should be filed with:

The Colorado Department of Human Services/ The Division of Child Care
670 Kipling Street
Denver, CO 80215
(303) 239-4300.

Include in the report:

Steamboat Springs Montessori
70 East Maple Street
Steamboat Springs, CO 80487
(970) 879-8108

Reporting of Child Abuse

The following is the regulation by the Colorado Department of Human Services as found in the General Rules for Child Care Facilities, and is required to be given to all parents at the time of admission:

7.701.53 Reporting of Child Abuse.

- A child care facility must require each staff member of the facility to read and sign a statement clearly defining child abuse and neglect pursuant to state law and outlining the staff member's personal responsibility to report all incidents of child abuse or neglect according to state law.
- Any caregiver or staff member in a child care facility who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect must immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the county department of social services or local law enforcement agency.
- If the suspected child abuse occurred at the childcare facility, the report of suspected child abuse must be made to the county department of social services, police department, or other law enforcement agency in the community or county in which the childcare facility is located.

- If the suspected child abuse did not occur at the child care facility, the report of suspected child abuse must be made to the county department of social services in the county in which the child resides or to the local law enforcement agency in the community in which the abuse is believed to have occurred.
- At the time of admission the facility must give the child's parents or guardian information that explains how to report suspected child abuse or child neglect.
- To report child abuse or neglect in Routt County Colorado call:
 - The Department of Human Services (970) 879-1540Or Contact
 - The Colorado Department of Human Services/ The Division of Child Care, 670 Kipling Street, Denver, CO 80215, (303) 239-4300.

Appendix

Withdrawal and Evaluation Form

Date: _____ Name of Student: _____

Reason for withdrawal: _____

Withdrawal effective date: _____

Please describe how you feel your child has or has not benefited from our program:

Would you recommend this program to others? _____

Do you feel that the staff has demonstrated a working knowledge of the Montessori Method? _____

What would you change about the program?

Parent Signature: _____

Please note that all records must be kept by the school for three years and will remain confidential. Should you want a copy of your child's records or work portfolio, you must submit your request in writing to the school.

Office Use Only

Additional comments or recommendations:

Lead Teacher Signature: _____

Executive Director Signature: _____

Board of Directors Signature: _____

Permission to Administer Medication in Child Care
(One form per medication)

**If your child is not currently taking medication,
please save this form for future use.**

To be completed by the child's healthcare provider with prescriptive authority. (Please write legibly)

Child _____ Birthdate _____

Medication _____

Dosage _____ Route _____

Time of Day Medication is to be Given _____

Special Instructions _____

Purpose of Medication _____

Possible Side Effects _____

Start Date _____ End Date _____

Signature of Person with Prescriptive Authority _____

Print Name _____

Date _____

Phone # of Office or Clinic _____

To be completed by Parent or Guardian

I hereby give my permission for _____ to take the above medication, in child care, as ordered by the healthcare provider. I understand that it is my responsibility to furnish this medication.

Signature of Parent or Guardian _____

Date _____

Note: The medication is to be brought to childcare in the original container which clearly states the child's name, the healthcare provider, the name of the medication, date, time and dosage. This form must also be filled out completely in order for the medication to be given. This is a Division of Child Care Licensing requirement.