

Parent Handbook

Maria Montessori School

2021 Hawthorne Dr. Rockford, Illinois 61107
(815) 654-4906
Home of the Mustangs

<https://montessori.rps205.com>

On Facebook @ Maria Montessori School rps205

On Twitter at [@CCollins_mont](#)



Mission:

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

Vision:

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

Principal's Message

Dear Montessori Families,

Welcome to Maria Montessori School. We are proud to be one of the special programs in Rockford Public School District 205.

Our school, which follows the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, works in partnership with our students, families, and the community to provide a quality 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. All of our classroom teachers hold an Illinois teaching license and are either fully Montessori certified, or are in the training process. Our school holds memberships to 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 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.

A Montessori classroom offers a peaceful, prepared setting where students are exposed to independent and collaborative assignments. Multi-age groupings facilitate leadership skills and advanced opportunities for learning.

Absences, Attendance, and Tardies

It is imperative that your child attends 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 and proof of the appointment from the doctor. A parent or authorized adult will need to come into the school to sign the child out. Do not park in the fire zone when parking; use the front visitor spots.

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.

If your child is more than 30 minutes late to school, he/she will be counted absent for a ½ day. Please make every effort to have your child at school on time. Excessive excused absences may become unexcused absences.

NEW 2023 Attendance Policy: Students missing 10% or more of the school year (or 6 per trimester for two consecutive trimesters) are considered not in good standing and are reassigned to their zone school at the end of the school year.

Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival: Our school day is from 9:00a.m. to 3:25 p.m. Students who ride buses will be dropped off at 8:40 a.m. in the bus zone, located in the front of the school. This zone is for **buses only** to ensure the safety of our students. Students who are transported to school by car should be dropped off in the circle drive 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 at school any earlier than 8:40 a.m. and no later than 8:55 a.m. as they will be marked tardy. If your student

arrives after 9:00 a.m. a **parent must come into office and sign them in.** We are unable to provide supervision for students until 8:40 a.m. so to ensure the safety of your child, please do not drop off until 8:40 a.m. Breakfast is served beginning at 8:40 a.m. If students choose to not eat breakfast, they will go into the school to sit with their classmates before school begins.

Dismissal: Students who ride buses will be dismissed at 3:25 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 gymnasium beginning at 3:20. Again, parents do not park in the pick-up zone, but wait until it is their turn to load their child. Do not pass other cars as it is a safety hazard and 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 ensure the safety of our students!

Bus Expectations

Students who ride the bus are expected to follow the District-Wide behavioral expectations as explained in the Student Code of Conduct: be safe, be respectful, and be responsible. 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 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.

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.

Clothing

At Montessori, we do not have a uniform policy. If clothing your child is wearing is causing a disruption to our learning environment, he/she will be asked to change. If alternative clothing is not available, parent/guardian will be notified to bring a change of clothes. Hats, hoods on heads, and any head covering are not allowed in school. 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. We are looking to keep our students safe at all times. Tennis shoes must be worn for Physical Education Class.

Communications

Our school has a monthly, electronic newsletter which will be emailed to families. 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.

The newsletter updates you on events happening at our school and important school news. Please take the time to read the newsletter and stay informed on school news.

Discipline

Refer to the Student Code of Conduct of the Rockford School District that is sent home with each family for an explanation of students' rights and responsibilities.

Review and Reassignment Criteria

The Rockford Public School District has established universal success plans and reassignment criteria applicable to all of its special programs, including Montessori. The plan is initiated once a child is found to be not in good standing academically.

Home Access Center

Parents have access to the student grade portal, Home Access Center. Look for information coming home with your child on accessing grades and other information.

Lunch and Snacks

All students are eligible for a grant-funded free breakfast and lunch. Students may choose to bring their lunch from home. Please be mindful of packing nutritious and healthy food options to fuel your child's brain and body for learning.

Soda pop and other caffeinated drinks are not allowed in school. White and chocolate milk are available and a water filling station is available to all students to fill personal water bottles.

Snacks and birthday treats should also be healthy choices. Your child's classroom teacher will share more about snacks within their own communication.

Office Hours

The office is open from 7:30 am to 4:00 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.

Parent Teacher Organization

The committee for Parents and Teachers is always looking for more involvement! Please become involved in the committee that plans numerous events throughout the year that are always fun! The committee meets on a monthly basis to plan events, activities and fundraisers. *ALL* are welcome.

Sports

Our middle school students, grades 6-8 can participate in sports tryouts and teams at Eisenhower Middle School. Flyers and notices about such events are placed on a board outside of our gymnasium and posted on PeachJar. This information can also be found on the Athletics page of Eisenhower's website.

Visitors and Volunteers

If you plan to enter our school, you 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 much to do, please ask if you need any guidance in volunteering.