

Khalsa Montessori School

Parent Handbook Charter School Students

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Table of Contents

The Montessori Experience.....	3
Charter School Information.....	6
Khalsa Montessori School Programs	8
Enrichment Programs	9
Supporting Success at Khalsa Montessori School.....	10
Attendance: Arrival and Pick-Up.....	12
Charter School Attendance Policy	14
What to bring and what not to bring.....	16
Veggie Tales	17
Dietary Policy	18
Lunch Suggestions.....	19
Health.....	20
Preparedness, illness signs and symptoms.....	21
Arizona School Immunization Law	22
Vaccine Rules for Arizona	
Self-Carry Medication Measures and Policy	23
Emergency School Closure Policy.....	24
Parent Participation.....	25
Communication (Where to find information)	25
Opportunities for Parents.....	26
Parent Agreement	27
Volunteering	28
Special Needs and Learning Challenges	30
Discipline Policy.....	31
Positive Expectations of Behavior	33

Elementary and Middle School Dress Code	34
Student Computer Use Policy	36

04/11

The Montessori Experience

The Montessori system of education is both a philosophy of child growth and a rationale for guiding such growth. It is based on the child’s developmental needs for freedom within limits. A classroom environment is carefully prepared to expose children to materials and experiences through which they develop intelligence as well as physical and psychological abilities.

Dr. Maria Montessori had already acquired fame as a physician when she became interested in education. Her medical background led her to approach education as a scientist, rather than as an educator or philosopher. The classroom was her laboratory for observing, testing and re-testing the validity of practices and materials used to nurture the growth of the child. It is this perspective which holds the Montessori Method apart from the traditional educational approach. The Montessori Method has a deep respect for the child and the “secrets of childhood” and strives for a complete understanding of all aspects of the growing child. Teachers watch the child and develop a classroom environment to meet the child’s changing needs.

The Montessori Method has been used successfully throughout the world in regular classes as well as in classes for gifted, mentally challenged, emotionally disabled and physically-handicapped children. There are now over 2000 Montessori schools in the United States alone. The cost of participating in an established Montessori classroom is generally considered higher than other traditional institutions due to the precision and quality of the specialized materials and the extensive training required of certified Montessori teachers. Also, the teacher-student ratio in Montessori schools allows for frequent one-on-one lessons and a close observance of the child’s needs.

The Prepared Environment

In the Montessori classroom, the children experience a prepared environment of hands-on learning materials and exercises, which develop their intellectual, physical, and psychological abilities. This environment is designed to be responsive to the sensitive periods of the child (i.e., language, order, movement, culture). The prepared environment of the Montessori classroom emphasizes academic challenges and higher level thinking skills along with “Structure and order”, “Freedom”, “Reality and Nature”, “Beauty”, and the “Development of Community Life”. Classrooms encourage the absorption of the rich environment by being relaxed and non-threatening; being filled with attractive and activity-oriented materials; and allowing freedom within structure (i.e., the freedom for children to choose from the varied and carefully presented Montessori materials). Cross-curricular activities and materials are developed in accordance with integrated thematic units.

A multi-sensory sequence of manipulative materials in all areas of the classroom gives children concrete experiences that form a firm basis for their conceptual knowledge. Self-correcting materials provide the immediate feedback required for self-discovery, and teacher demonstrations

allow for learning through observation. Material presentations are one-on-one or in small groups to ensure that the child is neither held back, nor overwhelmed by the pace or level of other children. These multi-sensory materials include:

- **Practical Life** Practical Life consists of exercises in the care of self, care of environment, grace, courtesy, and movement. Practical Life exercises aim to help the child become independent, and to increase concentration, coordination, and control.
- **Sensorial Materials** Sensorial materials move gradually from the concrete to the abstract and are an indirect preparation for Mathematics. They encourage the child to organize and classify abstract concepts like length, color, weight, and texture.
- **Mathematics Materials** Mathematics materials provide concrete experiences of quantity and operations before moving on to abstract symbols. Later, the child is able to abstract mathematical concepts from the foundation of his/her concrete experiences. In the upper grades, students build on this foundation as they explore complex operations, algebra, and geometry.
- **Language** Language materials prepare the child for the “explosion into writing” and “total reading”. These materials allow children to learn to read and write easily and naturally. In the elementary grades, the emphasis is on literature, self expression, and integrated reading and writing throughout the curriculum.

Multi-age classrooms allow for peer learning. Children learn especially well from the observation of slightly older children, while older children are able to demonstrate their mastery of materials by teaching the materials to younger students. Multi-age classrooms provide:

- The stability of three years in the same environment;
- A three-year **student/teacher relationship** which provides a deep understanding of a child’s learning role;
- Opportunities for chronologically older children to become leaders and examples for younger students;
- Opportunities for children of similar skill levels, but different chronological age levels, to work together; and
- An environment conducive to the Montessori Spiral Curriculum, (in which similar concepts and tasks are presented at different levels of complexity at several times during the three-year curriculum cycles).

The Role of the Teacher

Individualized curriculum is provided for each student as our teachers observe performances, record areas of progress and areas of difficulty; and design future presentations and assignments according to the perceived needs and capacity of each child. The “indirect method” neither imposes upon the child, nor abandons the child to a struggle. The teacher observes each child to determine

specific needs and to gain the knowledge needed to prepare an environment conducive to the child's growth. The teacher's role is to prepare the environment, evaluate each student, introduce new materials, and give each child guidance.

Student Outcomes

- **Independence and internal motivation**, stimulated by the freedom of activity and choices.
- **Self-discipline and concentration**, gained as the child carefully attends to and completes each chosen task without interruption.
- **Self-confidence**, as children learn without comparing themselves to others.
- **Mastery of fundamental skills**, as children learn with concrete materials.
- **Enthusiasm for learning**, as children work at their own pace and according to their own interests.
- **Critical thinking**, developed by reasoning and creative problem solving throughout the curriculum.
- **Transfer of knowledge**, developed through the integrated curriculum.
- **A sense of personal meaning and responsibility**, resulting from the child's social studies and growing recognition of him/herself as a beneficiary of the evolution of civilization and the many contributions of other human beings.

CHARTER SCHOOL INFORMATION

For children entering Kindergarten, Elementary or Middle School

WHAT IS THE CHARTER SCHOOL? The charter is a contract with the State of Arizona to provide a free state-funded public education to school age children.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CHARTER SCHOOL AND THE PRIVATE SCHOOL? Khalsa School operates both a public charter school for kindergarten through 8th grade students and a private school that offers the infant, toddler and preschool programs, school age extended care, and summer school.

The charter school is a public institution and does not charge for its services. Programs offered through the private school are subject to separate policies and fees.

TUITION AND FEES: A charter school is a public school, so there are no fees for enrollment or tuition in the charter school programs. The only charges for charter school children are extracurricular fees for fine arts and other special programs and for enrollment in any part of the optional extended day programs. Most educational institutions rely on donations and fund raising to enhance the quality of their programs and the charter school is no exception. The only sources of revenue for the charter school are state funding and private donations. Since Arizona ranks among the lowest in the United States for public school funding, private donations and grants can make a significant difference in a program. Parent donations are encouraged but not required. The school is part of a non-profit corporation, so donations are tax deductible. Any resident of Arizona may also donate up to \$200 per year (\$400 married filing jointly) to the charter school's extracurricular activities fees fund and receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit deducted from their Arizona state income taxes. You can get more information about tax-deductible donations and the tax credit from the office.

KINDERGARTEN: Kindergarten-aged children who will be five years old before September 1 may enroll in the charter school kindergarten. The charter school kindergarten as funded by the State is a half day program 8:30 to 12:00 noon, Monday through Friday. Extended day is available at the parents' expense for early morning, early afternoon, and late afternoon care.

Montessori education is based on three year learning cycles, 0-3yr, 3-6yr, 6-9yr, 9-12yr, and 12-15 yr. Since the kindergarten year comes at the end of the three-year cycle, kindergarteners remain in the 3-6 class. If you observe in our classroom, you will see the advanced level of work available to the kindergarten children. Please talk to the teachers or ask for the kindergarten brochure if you have further questions about Montessori kindergarten.

ELEMENTARY: Children who will be six years old before September 1, or who have been enrolled in our kindergarten program may enroll in the charter school elementary class. The children are grouped in 3-year cycles of 6-9 year olds (first through third grades) and 9-12 year olds (fourth through sixth grades).

The Montessori elementary curriculum builds upon the independence established in the primary (preschool-kindergarten) class. It is a child-directed, project oriented, creative and inspiring learning environment. Information on the curriculum is available in the office.

The hours of the elementary program are 8:30 am-3:30 p.m. Classes dismiss at 2 PM Wednesdays. Extended day is available at parents' expense for early morning and late afternoon extended care.

MIDDLE SCHOOL: Seventh and eighth grade students are in the Montessori middle school program. The middle school offers a rigorous academic curriculum in a holistic learning environment. The curriculum includes work in the classroom and special projects out of doors and in the community. The projects offer hands-on learning and real-life skills.. Please ask if you would like more information about the middle school. Middle School hours are 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM M, T, Th, F and until 2:00 PM on Wednesday.

CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHER RESUMES: Arizona Statute requires us to inform parents that resumes of all Charter School lead teachers are available for parents to see. Please inquire by email to khalsaoffice@theriver.com if you would like to make arrangements to see a teacher's resume.

POSTED NOTICES: Notices of board, budget and other public meetings, hearings, and reports are available to view on the school website, www.khalsamontessorischool.com on the Announcements link of the Friends and Family page.

EXTENDED CARE: Our extended day program includes early morning care, early afternoon, and late afternoon care. Enrollment in the private school extended care program requires an annual enrollment fee of \$85 as well as the annual SMART tuition program enrollment fee of \$38 per family per year. Please see the Khalsa School tuition schedule for schedule, costs, and payment options.

OPEN ENROLLMENT: Enrollment is open to all interested students if space is available.

COMMITMENT: The long term success of all of our programs depends on the long-term commitment of families. We hope families who choose Khalsa Elementary and Middle School will stay with the program and allow the children the benefit of completing the learning cycles. The program is enhanced by a strong classroom culture established by a community of children familiar with each other and the program.

ATTENDANCE: Consistent attendance is critical to the success of the children in any educational environment. Being present and *on time* each day is especially important in the Montessori setting. Because the children do individual work within the social group of a classroom community, the early morning presentations each day are important so everyone is informed and connected with each other. School funding for charter schools and all public schools is based on daily attendance so regular attendance affects the success of the school as well as the individual child.

Attendance the first days and weeks of the new school year are also important for establishing the classroom community and individual expectations for the rest of the year.

CONFIRMED ENROLLMENT IN THE CHARTER SCHOOL WILL BE HELD UNTIL THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL. CHILDREN WHO DO NOT ATTEND THE FIRST DAY AND WEEK OF SCHOOL WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE ROSTER AND PLACED ON THE WAITING LIST.

Khalsa Montessori School Programs

PRIVATE SCHOOL

- **EARLY CHILDHOOD: Infants through Kindergarten:** We offer conscious, loving, childcare in a stimulating Montessori learning environment for your children.
- **EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM at the River Road campus: all ages.** Additional hours of care available to children enrolled in all our programs, including early morning, early afternoon (kindergarten only) and late afternoon care. Extended care requires additional fees and forms. Early afternoon extended care for kindergarten students is also available at the Camden campus.
- **ARTSY KIDS (early childhood) AND SMARTS! (elementary and middle school) summer programs at the River Road campus: all ages.** Our unique integrated summer programs to encourage the child's natural spirit of creativity and discovery. The program includes daily activity choices of attractive work, imaginative play and experiments in sciences and the arts. Registration for the summer program occurs in the spring of each year.

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

- **ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL:** Kindergarten through 8th grade. Through a contract with the State of Arizona, we provide a state-funded public education to children in kindergarten through eighth grade. The Charter School is funded by the State of Arizona and welcomes tax deductible charitable contributions from parents and others.

The Montessori curriculum builds upon the independence established in early years. The classrooms are child-directed, project oriented, creative and inspiring learning environments. Extended care and summer programs are available through our private school for families who require childcare beyond the normal school day or school year. Although there is no charge to parents for the Charter School program, there are charges for childcare and summer programs offered by our private school.

Enrichment Programs

Field Trips

There are usually a few field trips during the school year. Children may ride in a city bus, school bus or van, private car, or they may walk. We may request parent chaperones. We do not guarantee all school busses are equipped with seat belts. If you would like to volunteer to help with field trip supervision or transportation, please let us know.

Creative and Fine Arts

Movement, music, drama, violin, and art may be offered throughout the school year. Please see the extracurricular information included with your enrollment materials for current information on program offerings.

Physical Education

The physical education program offers a blend of non-competitive games and physical skill-building activities. On P.E. days, children must wear athletic shoes and appropriate clothing for running and sports. Children without appropriate footwear will not be able to participate.

Extracurricular Fees

Extracurricular activities supplement the regular curriculum. Extracurricular activities fees support these programs. These fees are eligible for the Arizona State tax credit program. There are also a limited number of scholarships available. Families will receive more information about the extracurricular fees and scholarships at enrollment time.

Supporting Success at Khalsa Montessori School

You can support your children's success at Khalsa School by demonstrating respect for school and learning—

- get them to school on time every school day
- communicate with the school if there are life events, phases or stages that may affect your child at school
- never question the school or teachers in front of the children. If you have a question, problem or concern, talk to the teacher or one of the administrators directly
- be involved, volunteer, show that school is something you value
- honor school policies
- support school goals
- provide time, place and resources for homework
- let them tell you about work that comes home
- read

You can support your children's success at Khalsa School by demonstrating respect for others and community—

- teach common courtesies, good manners
- teach respect for elders, adults, the wisdom that comes with time
- teach respect for peers, that everyone has value
- teach respect for life and living things
- teach polite language, don't allow rude language
- teach listening skills
- engage in conversation, ask open ended questions
- teach inquisitiveness, seeking to understand, avoiding blame and accusations, avoiding labels and judgments
- teach empathy, to treat others as we wish to be treated
- teach cooperative problem solving strategies
- avoid media that encourages fighting and violence
- participate together in family activities and chores
- participate together in community service

You can support your children's success at Khalsa School by demonstrating self-respect and empowerment—

- teach personal responsibility for choices, responses and outcomes
- teach that mistakes are learning opportunities
- teach independence, offer "the least amount of assistance necessary to do it myself"
- teach the relationship between privileges and responsibilities, between freedom and self-sufficiency
- teach motivation from within, not from threat of punishment or promise of rewards
- hold high (and reasonable) expectations
- encourage imagination, inquisitiveness
- believe your children are capable, good people, trust, "you can do it"
- allow them to struggle with their own challenges, don't hover
- teach them to take care of themselves and their belongings
- help them to be the person they want to be

You can support your children's success at Khalsa School by demonstrating respect for the world we share and the things in it—

- help them to organize their belongings, provide containers, a place for everything, simplify
- teach the skills to help with family chores
- teach the skills to care for and maintain personal space and belongings
- provide order
- spend time together in nature, notice nature everywhere
- teach sensitivity and awareness of nature, how to protect and avoid harm
- conserve resources, avoid waste
- reduce, reuse, recycle
- increase awareness of interconnections, the ripple effects of our choices

Attendance: Arrival and Pickup

CONFIRMED ENROLLMENT IN THE CHARTER SCHOOL WILL BE HELD UNTIL THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL. CHILDREN WHO DO NOT ATTEND THE FIRST DAY AND WEEK OF SCHOOL WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE ROSTER AND PLACED ON THE WAITING LIST. *Please plan your family's calendar to ensure your child's attendance the first day and full week of school.*

Attendance the first day of school affects our funding for the whole year. Consistent attendance is critical to your child's success at school and to the success of the school. Our state funding is based on daily attendance and our records are audited.

Please help us by following these procedures when your child is missing ANY PART OF THE SCHOOL DAY

Arrival: Please arrive on time, no later than 8:25 a.m.

Early Arrival: Students should not be dropped off or be unsupervised at school before 8:15 AM unless they are registered for AM extended care (at River Road campus). If your student is registered for AM extended care, a **parent (or other adult) must sign the child in** using their full name. If you need to drop your child off before 8:15 AM, and you are not registered for AM extended care, you may use emergency extended care services. Sign your child in on the extended care roster, and ask the staff member for an emergency care fee envelope, pay the fee, and leave the envelope with the staff member. Parents at either campus will be charged hourly emergency use extended care fees at the time their child arrives prior to 8:15 a.m. If a child is left unsupervised before 8:15 AM, they will be taken to extended AM care by a staff member, and the parent will be charged hourly emergency use extended care fees.

On Time Arrival: Students may be dropped off or walked onto the playground at 8:15 AM. Please check parent notices posted on the kiosk, listserv, and in parent communicator folders each day.

Late Arrival: Students arriving late must be signed in by their parent or other adult on the late arrival-early pick-up sheet, located in the front office, and obtain an office pass, **before** the child enters the classroom. **Please walk your child to class.**

Absence/ Tardy: If your child will miss a whole day, or part of a day of school, please call before 9:00 a.m. to let us know the reason for the absence. Arizona State law requires automatic withdrawal after 10 consecutive unexcused absences.

Pick-Up: Please be on time to pick up your child. Please arrive at dismissal time (or 5:40 for extended care at River Road campus). Please check all the parent message centers (kiosk, communicators, bulletin boards) daily for important notices. **We require a written note or phone call to authorize anyone other than the parent to pick up a child, regardless of whether the adult is listed as an emergency contact on the Blue Emergency Card.** Extended care is available only at the River Road campus.

Early Pick-up: If your child needs to leave school before the end of the school day, please sign your child out on the late arrival/early pick-up sheet in the front office, **before** you get the child out of his/her classroom. **Written permission is required if someone other than the parent is picking up the child.** If your child returns to school the same day, you must sign them in again in the office.

Late Pick-up: If you cannot pick up your child on time, please call us so we can explain your delay to your child and arrange staff schedules, if necessary. ***For River Road campus: Remember, our staff is never available after 5:40 p.m. Please make other arrangements if you will be later than that. There is a \$1.00 per minute charge for pick-up after 5:40, payable at that time to the staff present. (After three late pick-ups after 5:40, extended care privileges will be revoked until the following school year.) For***

Camden Street campus: Remember, our staff is never available after dismissal. Please make other arrangements if you will be later than that. There is a \$1.00 per minute charge for pick-up after dismissal, payable at that time to the staff present.

Parking: If you are going to get out of your car, please park in a designated parking space. If you are dropping off or picking up your elementary or middle school student, please use the red curb. The curb is for stopping only. **No parking.** Handicapped spaces are not intended for drop off. Parking in handicapped spaces can result in a fine.

DES Notebook: Families who receive Department of Economic Security (DES) assistance for the extended day program at the River Road campus must sign in on the attendance notebook each time the child is dropped off and picked up. Remember, **DES pays only for days of attendance**, so it is important that attendance records are accurate. Make sure your signature is complete. The family is responsible for additional charges due to absence, or inaccurate or incomplete records.

Blue Emergency Card: The Blue Emergency Card contains vital information, and it is important for all information on the card to be kept up to date.

- Please notify us of any changes in the addresses or phone numbers for your family or authorized emergency contacts, and update immunization records as needed.
- The names of at least two people who are authorized to pick up your child from school must be on the card. These are the only people we can release your child to without special permission from a parent in writing. **We require a written note or phone call to authorize anyone other than the parent to pick up a child, regardless of whether the adult is listed as an emergency contact on the Blue Emergency Card.**
- If your child becomes sick or injured at school, and you are unable to pick them up, we will contact the emergency contacts on your child's Blue Card. We are required to call the Tucson Police Department or Child Protective Services should we be unable to reach a parent or other authorized individual for pick-up.
- In an emergency, we will accept special permission by phone to authorize a person who is not on your child's Blue Card to pick up your child. In this situation, that person will be required to show a picture ID before we release your child to them.
- Be advised that staff is instructed not to release any child to a caregiver or parent who appears impaired or unable to provide adequate safety for your child.

Charter School Attendance Policy

Rationale: It is important that parents understand the necessity of regular attendance and accept responsibility for their child's attendance. We consider school attendance the primary responsibility of the parents. Each student is required to attend classes every day except when illness, injury or conditions beyond the family's control prevent attending classes. Frequent absences for any reason are certain to have a negative effect on a student's performance in school. **Khalsa Montessori Charter School views regular school attendance as crucial to a child's academic and social success.** Specific class room lessons are ongoing and some cannot be repeated for children who were absent. These lessons are essential for the student to move successfully through the program.

Tardies, Excused and Unexcused Absences: An absence is defined as a day, or part of a day exceeding 90 minutes (1-8 grades; 36 minutes kindergarten) away from school. Khalsa Montessori Charter School reports its attendance by "instructional minutes". We consider all instructional minutes to be of equal value, and therefore consider children tardy who arrive at school late, leave early, or leave school and return later. Tardy children not only miss important social and instructional time, they also can cause classroom disruption and confusion when settling in late or preparing to leave early. Please make every effort to make sure your child(ren) experience the full classroom experience every day by dropping them off and picking them up according to our daily school schedule.

Khalsa Montessori Charter School recognizes two types of absences, **excused and unexcused**. An excused absence occurs when the student is unable to attend class for reasons of illness, injury, or conditions beyond the student's control, *and a parent calls in or provides advance notification in writing*. An unexcused absence is an absence under any other condition or circumstance than that stated above. According to Arizona State Law, 10 consecutive unexcused absences will result in an automatic withdrawal from school. The State of Arizona considers tardies and unexcused absences to be discipline incidents, and the Discipline Incident Report is part of our regular state reporting.

Khalsa Montessori Charter School receives all its funding for facilities, materials, teachers, staff, and programs from the State of Arizona based on attendance. ***Excused and unexcused absences affect funding the same way. When attendance is low, funding is affected.*** Please schedule doctor and other appointments for scheduled school closure days, or for after 2:00 PM, and schedule family trips during designated school breaks.

Examples of excused absences:

- Students who are ill and whose attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others.
- Students in whose *immediate family* there is a serious illness or death.
- Students in observance of recognized religious holidays of their faith.
- Students participating in professional evaluations providing they bring a doctor's certificate upon return.
- Other reasons deemed appropriate by the school administration for being absent from school. ***We discourage absence due to family vacations. If students accompany the family for a special trip, please notify both teacher and principal in writing prior to the absence. Attendance in class is essential for learning, so please schedule family trips during designated school breaks.***

Examples of unexcused absences:

- Students who are absent from school without any of the conditions described above.
- Students who are willfully absent from school without the knowledge of their parents.

It will be the child's responsibility to make arrangements with their teacher to make up work and tests.

Excessive absence: We define excessive absence as absence which exceeds ten percent (10) of the total required days. School sessions total 180 days. The school will periodically review records and notify parents of excessive absences, reminding them of the attendance policy. When absence exceeds 10% of the school year, the director will require an assessment of academic standing. If a student's academic standing puts them at risk for retention, a mandatory meeting with the parent/guardian, Khalsa Montessori School staff and student (if appropriate), will be held and an action plan will be developed. Attendance, and the reasons for the absences, will be considered with other factors including work completion and performance on standardized tests when determining promotions.

Steps to follow regarding an absence:

- If your child will miss a whole day, or part of a day of school, please call 529-3611 ext. 500 before 9:00 a.m. to notify the office stating the reason for the absence or tardy.
- A doctor's statement will be required for an extended illness and/or chronic illness.
- Students will be allowed one day for each day absent to complete missed homework/class work. (If a student is absent two days, work will be due two days after return).
- The responsibility for completion of all work accumulated over the duration of their absence rests with the student. If work is not completed within the allotted time, the work will not be accepted without a mandatory conference, and will be considered as a factor in determining promotion.
- Tests missed because of absences will be rescheduled within a week of a student's return to school.

What to Bring

- **Nutritious lunch**, including juice or milk. **Please respect our request for vegetarian lunches containing no meat, eggs, or refined sugar.** At least one day a week, children may participate in a special lunch option and do not need to bring lunch. All PM extended care children at River Road campus need an extra snack in their lunch box every day. Lunches are not refrigerated, so families need to send “blue ice” and an insulated lunch box.
- **At least one day per week**, we offer special lunch options as a Parent Organization fundraiser. Families pay a fee and the children receive the special lunch option.
- **Water bottle** (required). This should be taken home daily for cleaning and refilling. Water fountains are on site.
- **Seasonally appropriate clothing** for daily outdoor play in all weather. Clothes need to meet the guidelines outlined in our Elementary/Middle School dress code policy. Parents may be contacted to provide alternative clothing should a child come to school in inappropriate clothing. Remember to provide sturdy, practical clothes and shoes for our active (and sometimes messy) school environment.

PLEASE LABEL ALL OF YOUR CHILD’S POSSESSIONS, including jackets, sweaters, etc., and LEAVE FRAGILE AND VALUABLE ITEMS AT HOME. We cannot be responsible for lost or broken items. Lost and found items are periodically donated to charity.

What Not to Bring

These items are prohibited from use on campus including extended care, classrooms and playgrounds and field trips.

- Toys, dolls, sticker books, trading cards, games, make-up, nail polish, and other non-educational items.
- Food containing meat, eggs or refined sugar.
- Electronic devices such as cell phones, CD players, MP3’s and hand-held video games. Cell phones are allowed with a written request from the parents. Please ask in the office for a student cell phone permission form.
- Flip-Flops, cowboy boots, high heels and other inappropriate shoes or clothing that can interfere with safe play.
- Any dangerous or illegal items.
- Clothing or hairstyles that may be a distraction to self or others.
- Money.
- Personal sports equipment: skateboards, balls, etc.
- Candy and gum.
- Personal school and art supplies unless specifically requested by teacher.
- Comic books, magazines and catalogues.

Please see office staff to retrieve confiscated items.

Veggie Tales

Khalsa Montessori School was founded in 1976 as a vegetarian Montessori School. Since then the school has grown and many of the families and staff are not vegetarians, but we have worked to maintain the same gentle vegetarian school atmosphere with which we started.

Many parents ask about our **vegetarian policy**. Khalsa School is a total package. When parents make a choice to enroll at Khalsa School, they are choosing our whole program-the campus, the Montessori method, the staff, the community of families and our unique Khalsa School philosophy, which is the soul of our program.

The Khalsa Montessori School philosophy is a holistic one. As a holistic school, we are concerned with the academic growth of the children, as well as their physical development and inner growth. As a holistic school, we are concerned with our services to the children and we work to provide a meaningful environment for the staff, families and all members of the school community, including our furry friends. As a holistic school, we view our curriculum as preparing the children not just for school, but for life. Academic subjects are valued; and we emphasize the development of healthy and respectful relationships with self, others and the world we share, and sensitivity to our interconnectedness. **It is this profound respect for all living things that is the basis for the request that only vegetarian foods be brought to school.** Please do not include meat, fish, eggs, poultry, etc. in your child's lunch.

Just as it is not easy for a smoker to understand just how difficult it can be for a non-smoker to be in a smoky environment, we realize it is not easy for a non-vegetarian to understand the sensitivity of a non-meat-eater. Not that many years ago it would have seemed extreme for a place of business to declare itself smoke-free, now it is not considered unusual at all. In fact it is the norm.

The economic, social, political, health, and environmental impacts of meat consumption are well documented. Our commitment to providing a gentle, healthy, respectful, peaceful environment at Khalsa Montessori is deep and profound. Whatever your personal choices may be, we hope you will understand and accept this part of our unique culture and appreciate its value in creating the whole picture of who and what we are.

Dietary Policy

Khalsa School is a vegetarian and sugar free environment.

At Khalsa School we believe that a simple, wholesome diet results in healthier, happier children. We have seen time and again the effects of overly refined foods and excessive sweets on the behavior of these sensitive little beings. **Please respect our request for only vegetarian and sugar-free foods for lunchboxes, snacks, and classroom projects.**

- **Snack:** Families provide individual snacks for their child. Items need to be non perishable, vegetarian, peanut and sugar free. Please refer to the snack suggestions page or ask your child's teacher if you need ideas on what to send. Children who participate in our late afternoon extended care program need enough items in their lunch to be available as an after school snack.
- **Food Allergies or Sensitivities:** If your child has allergies or other special dietary needs, please inform your child's teacher in writing, and make a note of it on your child's Blue Emergency Card. These cards need to be kept up to date, so please inform us if food restrictions change. We prohibit sharing of food to prevent children from ingesting foods that may be harmful to them.
- **Special Occasions.** If you would like to bring a treat to share with the class for your child's birthday or other special occasion, we ask that you follow our dietary guidelines and respect our request for no meat, eggs, peanut products or sugar. Health regulations require that any food items served to the class must be commercially prepared. You may consider non-food items such as stickers, or a class gift, such as a book or plant
- **Pizza Day and Catered Lunch:** Parents can choose to participate in a weekly pizza day, and/or a catered bag lunch purchased from a local restaurant. Pizza day is a Parent Organization sponsored fundraiser. Families pay a fee and the children are served pizza once a week. Parents provide side dish and beverage. The catered lunch option is a weekly bag lunch that offers a variety of menu choices. Parents pay a fee and the food is delivered to the classroom once a week. Parents provide a beverage on that day.

Lunch Suggestions

Wholesome, filling foods are easy to find in your supermarket or specialty stores like Trader Joe's, Food Conspiracy Co-op, Whole Foods, Sunflower Market, or the 17th Street Market. Many items are available at traditional grocery stores.

- Pasta
- Macaroni & cheese
- Bagel
- Rice & veggies
- Rice & beans
- Other grains such as millet, quinoa, tabouli
- Couscous (cooks in 5 minutes)
- Baked tofu
- Tofu pups (like hot dogs, but made with soy)
- Tofu burgers / Veggie burgers (Trader Joe's has several varieties)
- String cheese
- Granola bars
- Sandwiches and wraps (on bread, rolls, pita, crackers, tortillas)
- Cheese
- Avocado
- Tofu
- Hummus
- Nut butter (cashew, sesame, almond) & jelly
- Tortillas with beans, cheese, avocado, nut butter (no peanut), or cream cheese
- Fresh or dried fruit
- Peanut-free nut mixes
- Veggie sticks (carrots, celery, jicama, cucumber)
- Yogurt (flavored with fruit or with veggies for a dip)
- Cottage cheese (plain or mixed with fruit or veggies)
- Juice (in no-spill containers unless your child is likely to finish boxes)

Health

Keep sick children home. Please safeguard your child and the other children by keeping him/her home if signs of illness are present. If your child will be absent due to illness or any other reason, please phone the absence line to let us know. The list on the following page reviews guidelines for deciding if a child should be at school. Please familiarize yourself with this list. **Children with fever must be kept home until normal temperature is maintained, without Tylenol or other fever reducing medications, for a full 24 hours.**

Notification. Please notify us of any illnesses, especially contagious conditions (strep, chicken pox, staph, etc.) so we may notify other families to be alert for symptoms.

Medications. Medications to be given at school (including over the counter preparations, herbal remedies or other natural medicines) require a signed consent form, available in the office. All medications must be in the original container, labeled with the child's name and date. Medications will be kept in a locked container and administered as directed on the permission form. Medications needed on an occasional or continuous basis require updated permission forms every two months. Medicine should be picked up after the medication cycle ends. Unclaimed medications will be discarded.

Sick children will be sent home. Children who arrive at school with symptoms of illness will be sent home. Children sent home with a fever should stay home the following day. If your child becomes ill at school, we will call you to make arrangements to pick him/her up. If we fail to reach you, we will phone people listed on your child's Blue Emergency card. Please keep all of your contact and emergency phone numbers current.

Immunizations. Immunizations must be kept up to date. Children lacking necessary immunizations will have 15 days to comply with requirements. Please notify us of new immunizations, dietary or other health-related information. We are required to report the immunization history of all children each year to the Pima County Health Department.

Injury/accident policy. If your child is injured at school, we will provide standard first aid and contact parents directly if further medical attention may be required. Parents will receive an "ouch" report documenting how the injury happened and how we addressed it. If a child is injured at home, please notify the school in writing so we are aware of the source of the injury. In addition, please provide the school with written instructions (from you or your child's physician) regarding any required treatments or activity restrictions for your child due to injury, accident or illness.

Be Prepared...

Be familiar with the signs and symptoms of communicable diseases listed on the following pages.

Find a doctor or clinic with hours that meet your needs.

Ask about your employer's rules on missing work if your child is ill. Are sick child benefits provided?

Although the best place for an ill child is at home with a parent to care for him, you may need to arrange now for care when your child is ill and you cannot be home.

Write down the name and phone number of neighbors and friends who could care for your child. Keep this list in your wallet. Include the number of the local "Sick Child Care Program." (Available through Childcare Resource and Referral.)

Talk with other parents. Perhaps a parent who does not work would be willing to care for mildly ill children.

Be familiar with our school's policies about giving medications. If your child will be given medicine while at school, be prepared to complete and sign the Medication Consent Form.

Certain signs and symptoms in children may suggest the presence of a communicable disease. These children should not be in the group setting:

Fever: An under arm temperature of 100°F, or oral temperature of 101°F. The child may return when he has been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducer such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen.

Breathing: Difficult breathing or hard coughing.

Diarrhea: Two or more abnormally loose stools in the previous 24 hours.

Vomiting: Two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours.

Eye/Nose: Mucus or pus from red eyes or cloudy or thick drainage from the nose.

Sore Throat: When fever or swollen glands are present.

Rash: Undiagnosed rashes with fever or other signs of illness.

Sores: Infected sores with pus, crusting or yellow or green drainage which cannot be covered by bandages.

Itching: Persistent itching or scratching of the body or scalp.

Unusual Color: These signs suggest hepatitis (liver infection) and should be evaluated by a health care provider.

Eyes or skin – yellow (jaundice)

Urine – dark (strong tea or cola color)

Your child may return to school when s/he is no longer contagious to others and s/he feels well enough to participate in activities.

Guide To The Requirements Of The Of The Arizona State Immunization Law For The Parents Of Children Entering School

WHY YOUR CHILD NEEDS SHOTS

The Arizona School Immunization Law requires that children be up-to-date on their immunizations (shots) to attend school or child care. Diseases like measles and whooping cough spread quickly, so children need to be protected before they enter school. Most children need booster shots before starting kindergarten and most high school students will need a tetanus diphtheria (Td) booster shot.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED AT REGISTRATION

You will need your child's Immunization Record. It must show the date your child was given each required shot. If you do not have an Immunization Record or your child has not received all the required shots, call your doctor now for an appointment or the local health department for the date and location of the next immunization clinic. For more information, call Pima County health Department at 740-3755 or check the Internet at <http://www.pimahealth.org/schools/index.html>

Self-Carry Medication Measures

In 2005, the Arizona Legislature passed two bills related to the rights of school aged children with asthma and allergies. The first bill allows for a pupil who has written parental consent to possess and self-administer handheld inhaler devices for breathing disorders. It also establishes an exemption from civil liability for school districts and employees who, in good faith, make decisions and take actions to implement these provisions. The provisions of this bill are as follows:

- Allows for the possession and self-administration of prescription medication for breathing disorders by the pupil who has been prescribed the medication by a licensed physician or licensed health care professional if the pupil's name is on the inhaler device or medical container.
- Exempts school districts and employees from civil liability for all decisions made and actions taken in good faith to implement these provisions.
- Requires parents to provide annual written documentation authorizing the pupil to possess and self-administer a handheld inhaler.

The second bill requires school districts to adopt and enforce policies and procedures to allow pupils with anaphylaxis to carry and self-administer emergency medications while at school and school sponsored activities. Again, school districts and employees are immune from civil liability for all decisions made and actions taken in good faith to implement these provisions. The provisions are as follows:

- Requires school districts to adopt policies and procedures to allow pupils who have been diagnosed with anaphylaxis, by a specified licensed health care provider, to carry and self-administer emergency medications, including auto-injectable epinephrine, while at school and school sponsored activities. The policies adopted must require a pupil to notify the nurse or designated staff person of the use of the medication as soon as possible.
- Declares that the pupil's name on the prescription label on the medication container or on the medication device and annual written notification from the parent or guardian of the pupil is sufficient proof that the pupil is entitled to the possession and self-administration of the medication.
- Exempts school districts and employees from civil liability for all decisions made and actions taken in good faith to implement these provisions, except in the case of wanton or willful neglect.

SELF-CARRY MEDICATION POLICY

Khalsa Montessori School self-carry medication policy is as follows:

- Students with a doctor's prescription may carry and self-administer asthma medication or epinephrine at school and while participating in school-sponsored activities. The student is required to notify the office of the use of medication as soon as possible.
- The medication must be clearly labeled with the student's name on the medication container or on the delivery device.
- Parents will provide annual written notification that the student is entitled to the self-administration and possession of the medication. (See below)
- Khalsa Montessori School and all its employees are exempt from civil liability for all decisions made and actions taken in good faith to implement this policy, except in the case of wanton or willful neglect.

Copies of self-carry permission forms are available in the school office.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE POLICY

Khalsa Montessori School may be closed for a temporary period in case of an emergency arising out of fire, flood, loss of essential utility service, inclement weather or a similar emergency when the health, welfare, or safety of the children is in question. This may occur after all efforts have failed to keep the school open or to provide alternate accommodations or programs for the temporary period. In the event of an emergency, the safety of students and staff are of greatest concern.

General Guidelines:

1. The decision for a classroom(s) closure or for an early dismissal will be made by the director of the school. (Note: the director's approval is not required to evacuate in an emergency).
2. Students will not be dismissed prior to regular dismissal time unless parents or their designates have been contacted.
3. If it is not possible for students to remain at the school, the director will arrange to take unreleased students to an alternate location until regular dismissal time. The Director will ensure appropriate safety and supervision for students in attendance.

Power Outages/ Loss of Essential Utilities:

1. Generally, school will remain open during power outages and/or loss of essential utilities.
2. Extended or dangerous utility loss may result in school classroom closures and early dismissal.

Exceptional Circumstances:

1. In the event that school is cancelled due to exceptional circumstances before school opens in the morning, notification to parents and staff will be made via the telephone or other means, as appropriate.

Communication:

1. Annually, at enrollment, a notice will be given to parents and staff advising of the school's policy for classroom closures.
2. The Director will devise a communication network for use in the event that school is closed or students are dismissed early, and will designate staff to initiate that network.

Parent Participation

We encourage and welcome your active participation in your child's experience at Khalsa School.

Please:

Communicate! We are sharing with you the important task of educating and caring for your child. In order to work together, we need feedback from you and are ready to listen to your suggestions and concerns. We encourage you to keep us informed of changes in your child's life or home that may require sensitivity of teachers, and we hope you will be open to our observations. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year, or you can call to make an appointment with the teacher at any other time. All staff have message slots in the office if you would like to leave a note. All head teachers have voice mail.

Cooperate! Please read materials sent home, and follow the policies we've established for the smooth operation of our school.

Participate! Parent education nights and other programs are scheduled periodically to acquaint parents with each other, our program, and information that we hope will help in your job of parenting. Families are asked to contribute 20 hours of parent participation service per school year. We also encourage you to be involved with the school's active Parent Organization and to consider serving on a parent committee. If you would like to observe, visit, or assist in your child's classroom, please arrange, in advance, directly with your child's teacher. Check your child's classroom letter for details on what your their classroom might need. When you visit the school, please be sure to stop in the office to sign in and receive your visitor's badge.

COMMUNICATION - Where to find information

- **Parent Communication Folders** – these folders contain classroom events and reminders, messages specifically for your family, school events, and ouch reports (documenting injuries that occur at school). *If your child has two households, let us know in writing if you need duplicate notices.*
- **Communication kiosk and bulletin boards**– contain general announcements and reminders for the whole school community. Please check periodically for information on upcoming events and school news.
- **Parent Handbook** - review periodically for policy reminders, etc.
- **School Student Directory** – a list of students, parents, addresses, home phone numbers and student birthdays distributed to all Khalsa School families. Information for the River Rd. directory is collected on the Student Roster form at enrollment.
- **Call us** - if there's anything else you want to know about, please ask. Please see "Who To Talk To" for appropriate people to talk with.
- **School Listserv** – available by e-mail for weekly announcements, updates, and community reminders. This group is for parents, teachers, staff, and students of Khalsa Montessori School. Postings are for school related information only. To join, please email Khalsamontessori-owner@yahoogroups.com.

Opportunities for Parents

Visiting the school: Because a new person in the classroom can be a distraction for the children, we ask that you follow a few simple guidelines:

- Contact the teacher in advance to arrange for your visit. Please come to the office and sign in for a visitor's badge.
- Please take a few minutes to listen and observe what is happening.
- Adjust your voice and movements to the level of the classroom.
- Adults are not the center of attention in our child-directed environments. The teachers try to be as unobtrusive as possible and allow the children to lead. As Maria Montessori advised, "Follow the child."

Observations: If you would like an opportunity to understand your child's experience at Khalsa School more completely, you may make an appointment with the classroom head teacher to spend a morning observing one of our classrooms. Please observe the following guidelines. The classroom teacher may provide additional guidelines.

- When you come to observe, the teacher will show you where you may sit. You may move your chair around in order to see different areas, but we ask that you remain seated, rather than hovering over the children at adult level.
- We ask that you focus on watching and listening rather than conversing with the children or involving yourself in the children's activities, so that you can spend your time seeing what school is really like. The children will most likely be very interested in finding out who you are and why you are there. Please just simply and briefly answer their questions, let them know you are there to see what they do at school, and that you would like to watch them do their work.
- Some things to watch for are the ways the children interact with each other, the adults and the classroom materials, the ways that independence and self-direction are encouraged, and the kinds of things your child is interested in. You may learn something new about your own child's skills and interests in the process!

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Conferences are scheduled twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. On conference days school is closed and the teachers are available to meet individually with parents to discuss their child's progress. Please check the school calendar and watch for sign up sheets as conference time approaches. Additional conferences can be scheduled directly with your child's teacher. Progress reports will be available at the conferences. One additional report will be provided mid-year after the winter holidays.

Parent Nights: Parent nights are scheduled several times a year to discuss parenting topics and Montessori curriculum. These are informal events that usually begin with a short presentation by a teacher and end with plenty of time for discussion and sharing amongst parents.

Parent Organization: Our Parent Organization was founded by parents motivated to show more visible support to the teaching staff at the school. The parents sponsor fund raising activities for classroom materials, staff training opportunities, and staff appreciation. Please watch for notices announcing dates and times of parent meetings and get involved. Attendance at the parent meetings counts toward Parent Participation hours.

See My Work Mornings: Periodically throughout the school year, parents are invited into the classroom for opportunities to see the student's work and for special events.

School-Wide Social Events: These are great opportunities for parents to get to know their child's friends and families. Please check the school calendar and listserv announcements for dates, places, and times.

Volunteering: There are many opportunities inside and outside the classroom for helping out. Please speak to your child's teacher to find out how you can help. We also schedule parent workdays for larger projects. Check the communication kiosk and school listserv for more information. If you have any project ideas, please let us know.

Parent Agreement

I/we understand the goals, mission and education philosophy of Khalsa Montessori School. I/we understand that the profile of the student who will excel in this Montessori environment is one who can work independently, take responsibility for his/her work, demonstrate internal control and respect him/herself, other students and the adults in the environment. I/we agree to encourage and support my/our child in developing these skills.

I/we understand that students and families at Khalsa Montessori School are expected to respect and support our policies designated to promote a positive, life affirming holistic educational environment. I/we have read and understand the Student Discipline, Dress Code and Dietary Policies, and agree to support the spirit as well as the letter of these policies.

I understand that the school's motto is, "Parents, teachers and administration in partnership for our children" and that the school asks all parents to volunteer in areas of their choice such as field trips, classroom events, work days, material making, parent evenings, fund raising and KCO. I/we agree to participate in my/our child's education.

I/we understand that my child's success at school depends on consistent attendance and agree to ensure that my child arrives on time and attends daily. I/we understand that the school reserves the right to consider attendance as a factor in promotion decisions.

I/we understand the importance of regular communication and agree to carefully read the school policies, newsletter, other notices sent home and to attend parent programs. I/we agree to maintain open communication with school administration and staff and will take responsibility for sharing my/our ideas, questions, suggestions and concerns when appropriate and with whom it will be the most effective.

Volunteering at Khalsa Montessori School

We appreciate your interest in supporting the work of Khalsa Montessori School and your commitment to helping children. Khalsa Montessori School is a community of faculty, families and friends who are working together to create a positive, nurturing environment to support learning and personal growth. We realize that by helping children learn, we ourselves are learning from each other and growing as individuals and as a community. Volunteers like you make Khalsa Montessori School a vibrant community. We welcome your participation and value your contribution. We invite you to keep us informed about your experience volunteering at Khalsa Montessori School and welcome your ideas and feedback. Please use the feedback form (available in the office) to let us know what's on your mind.

Volunteer Opportunities

Opportunities to volunteer at Khalsa Montessori School include:

- classroom help
- office help
- Parent group-- KCO (River) and PTO (Camden)-- committees and projects such as fundraisers, spring carnival and pizza day.
- science fair
- Spanish program
- field trips and guest speakers
- outdoor environment
- repairs and maintenance
- other special projects

How to Volunteer

1. Get volunteer information from the office or a KCO or PTO. Let them know the project or the kinds of projects where you would like to volunteer.
2. Some volunteers will be asked to provide an Arizona Department of Public Safety clearance card. If you already have a card, please provide your card and we will make a photocopy. If you do not already have a card you will need to be fingerprinted. All necessary paperwork is in the office. There is currently a \$69.00 DPS application fee.

FINGERPRINT CARD *REQUIRED* FOR THESE VOLUNTEERS

- You are NOT a parent or guardian of a child enrolled at Khalsa Montessori School
- You ARE a parent or guardian of a child enrolled at Khalsa Montessori School AND you will be ALONE or unsupervised while you are volunteering in a school sponsored activity on or off campus for children enrolled in any River Road private school programs, including infant/toddler, preschool, kindergarten, extended day for all ages, or summer programs. This includes field trip drivers without a staff member in their car.

FINGERPRINT CARD *NOT REQUIRED* FOR THESE VOLUNTEERS

- You ARE a parent or guardian AND you will be supervised at all times by school staff
 - You ARE a parent or guardian AND you will be supervised or unsupervised while volunteering only with Camden students or River Road elementary or middle school students in a charter school activity on or off campus.
3. Plan ahead, schedule your visit with the teacher, who will then notify the office.
 4. Before your visit, learn about school policies and procedures, what to expect, what you will need to know for your project.
 5. When you arrive, sign in at the office and get a visitor's badge.
 6. During your visit, please follow all school policies and procedures and be a role model for the children. Ask questions if there is anything that is unclear.
 7. After your visit, please use the school feedback form to share your observations and feedback with school personnel. Please respect confidentiality guidelines (below).

Parents as Volunteers

When parents volunteer at school, they show their children how much they care about education and value learning. Volunteering at school also changes the parent's role and we ask parents to be aware and take care to maintain professional boundaries when they are working at school.

1. *See all the children the same.* Parents help at school because they love their children. We understand the special parent-child bond. In the school environment it is important to be present for all the children in the group to which you are assigned. Avoid the distraction of adult conversations. When you are on campus, please respect the normal parent-teacher boundaries and follow all guidelines your child's teacher has provided for classroom visits and parent-teacher meetings.

2. *Be a role model* for Khalsa Montessori School policies, procedures and culture. When you are working at the school, we expect professional conduct. Parent volunteers are expected to support, advocate for and conduct themselves according to school guidelines. If a parent would like to discuss school policies, please complete a feedback form and arrange a meeting with a school administrator. Please do not engage in these conversations with children, staff or other parents during volunteer time.

3. *Keep an open mind, seek to understand.* Parent volunteers are given another view of the school. If you see something you do not understand, please ask a teacher or administrator. Before rushing to judgment, please get more information. When you are in the school environment you will learn more about the children and their families and you will observe children at varying levels of proficiency. This is all privileged information and is to be treated with utmost respect and care. (Please see confidentiality guidelines).

Confidentiality and Ethics

All staff of Khalsa Montessori School, including volunteers, recognize the worth and dignity of each human being and are expected to accept the responsibility to adhere to the highest ethical standards. As educators, all staff and volunteers will support student learning, will protect students from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety (physical and emotional), will not intentionally expose children to embarrassment or disparagement, will not deny benefits to any student or grant advantage to any student, will not use professional relationships for private advantage, and ***will not disclose information about students or their families obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.*** The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) also protects student privacy. In general, please refer any concerns to school personnel (authorized parties). Do not discuss student behavior or class work with a particular child's parents or any other parents. If you are sharing anecdotal information, please do not use the names of children. Before discussing your experience with anyone other than authorized parties, please consider these guiding questions:

- 1. Would I be comfortable if this information was about me or my child?*
- 2. Would this information be ok to share if the person involved was present?*
- 3. Is this the proper place to discuss this information?*
- 4. Am I an authorized party to discuss this information?*

Thank you for volunteering at Khalsa Montessori School!

Special Needs and Learning Challenges

Most learning challenges can be addressed within the individualized Montessori learning environment. Partnership between teachers, parents, and students will help ensure a successful experience for the children. When there are problems, we encourage you to communicate with your child's teacher and participate in developing and implementing strategies to help your child solve them.

Sometimes learning challenges are the result of unidentified special needs. We may refer a child to our child study team to determine if a psychological evaluation would be valuable in providing a more complete picture of his/her learning style, abilities and challenges. We will notify the child's parents in advance and they will have the opportunity to approve or decline the evaluation. The evaluation is of an academic nature and is not a therapy session.

If the school psychologist determines that a child is eligible to receive special education services, we will ask the parent's permission to write an individualized education plan (IEP) and invite the parent to participate in writing it. A parent may approve or decline the IEP. Once the IEP is written, we will schedule sessions for the child to work with our special education consultant to fulfill the requirements of the IEP. The IEP is transferable from school to school, so if your child has an IEP from another school, please let us know so we can implement it. The IEP is rewritten annually.

Free services are available in the community for evaluating young children and providing services to those who qualify. For young children, information on developmental screening can be obtained from the child's doctor or the Children's Information center (800-232-1676). The Arizona Department of Economic Security offers services for children from birth to three years. Your local school district offers services for children from three years to five years. Khalsa School offers special education services to children enrolled in our public charter school, kindergarten through 8th grade.

Effective September 21, 2006, ARS 15-891 Arizona Scholarships for Pupils with Disabilities, became law. If your is receiving special education services and you are dissatisfied with your child's progress:

1. You have the opportunity to enroll your child in another public school within the district, or request an Arizona Scholarship to a qualified private school from the Arizona Department of Education.
2. You may also choose to enroll your child in an adjacent school district that has available space and that has a program that complies with the child's IEP.

Detailed information regarding this program, including a copy of the law and application form, may be obtained at the Arizona Department of Education website at: www.ade.az.gov or by calling 1-800-352-4558.

Discipline Policy

At Khalsa School, we trust in the goodness of each child. The Montessori classroom provides an environment in which children can take pride in being responsible and conscientious caretakers for each other and their world. As the children grow together and learn to function as an effective community, the adults provide the necessary limits and guidelines.

The freedoms in the Montessori classroom are not entitlements. They are rights and privileges that are connected to responsibilities. Children who misuse freedom will see it restricted in the classroom or on the playground. Independent, self-directed children are the Montessori ideal. Children who are still dependent and who require direction from adults will see more adult controls.

All behavior is an attempt to get needs met. Children sometimes choose helpful, successful strategies and sometimes choose strategies that are harmful or disruptive as they attempt to meet their needs. Discipline is a process for learning strategies for getting our own needs met while recognizing and respecting the needs of the whole community and the other individuals with whom we share our world. Positive discipline is an approach for teaching these strategies without the use of shame, blame, guilt, or physical punishment. Instead, positive discipline utilizes these learning tools:

- **The Prepared Environment.** The Montessori classroom is set up to meet the needs of the whole child. Opportunities for movement and activity, social interaction, emotional safety and support, and academic challenge are available. When needs are met, when children feel fulfilled, they are less likely to act out.
- **Clear and Consistent Expectations and Limits.** We find ways to be proactive by creating situations to bring out the best in the children. Our prepared environment includes positive expectations and a program structured to prevent many discipline problems from developing. We provide training and practice for a minimal number of consistent and logical ground rules, which the children can follow successfully. These include being careful and responsible in their actions towards themselves, each other and their environment.
- **Choices.** Although they cannot control all the events that happen in their day, the children are empowered to choose how they will respond. The choices they make will determine the outcome for themselves and others. Children are always given the opportunity to choose to stop or change a behavior that is not supporting the well-being of the community.
- **Clear and Consistent Consequences.** Children who clearly understand limits and consistent consequences are much more likely to assume responsibility for their actions. These consequences may include re-directing to another activity, calming down in a quiet area, removal from the classroom, attending a problem-solving meeting or other strategies. We believe that the most appropriate disciplinary action taken by school officials is the least extreme measure which will resolve the problem. The goal of a consequence is not to make children suffer for their mistakes, but to help them find a way to make amends, repair the damage and learn more effective strategies for meeting their needs.
- **Compassionate Communication.** We encourage empathic listening and speech. The goal of communication is to listen to each other and understand the underlying feelings and needs. It is solution-oriented conversation. Rather than dwelling on what has happened, we focus on what we need now. Empathy and understanding are helpful in preventing problems and responding to them.

When students do not participate in solving problems or problems become repetitive, we will ask for the help and support of parents. We have identified four levels, or stages, of disciplinary action:

Level I: Positive discipline strategies are applied in the classroom. The child is reminded and counseled by the teacher. The child may be asked to leave the class temporarily or go to the office.

Level II: If behavior continues or is repeated, the child or teacher will write a note or call the parents. Written communication will be signed by the parents and returned the next day.

Level III: A Parent/Teacher conference is set up. Administration may also attend. A plan of action will be written, including strategies for both home and school. Once this process has begun, there will be frequent follow-up meetings to assess progress. We may recommend outside professional intervention if progress is slow.

Level IV: The parents will be called and the child will be sent home. A parent teacher conference may be required before the student can return to school.

Implementation of these levels will vary depending of the age group, and the frequency or intensity of the behavior. (A first-time event may be considered at level IV if the student's age, intensity, or lack of cooperation requires this response.) Children who do not respond to school or outside professional intervention may require another environment to meet their needs.

We reserve the right to automatically suspend or expel a child at our discretion if we determine there is a threat to the security or safety of the school or any child or adult, or a threat to the functioning of the learning environment.

Unlawful conduct such as weapons offenses, illegal substance offenses, alcohol and tobacco offenses or other unlawful activities will result in immediate expulsion.

Please also review the following description of behavioral expectations (and, if applicable, the middle school addendum).

Positive Expectations Of Behavior

We believe that all students are capable of being positive, contributing members of the classroom and school community.

There are three basic rules in a Montessori classroom:

Respect Others

Respect Yourself

Respect Your Environment

Here are some of the suggestions our students have given for how to follow these rules and make a positive contribution.

<u>Respect Yourself</u>	<u>Respect Your Environment</u>	<u>Respect Others</u>
Set goals that are possible Take care of your responsibilities Do as you're asked Listen carefully Be calm Watch where you're going Keep your things neat Do your work Keep your appearance nice Eat healthy food Get enough sleep Stay drug-free Tell the truth Stand up for yourself Be a good friend Make peace	Keep your work area clean Keep your things neat Put things away Use materials properly Recycle Throw trash in the trashcan Be careful of the grass Do your jobs thoroughly Close doors gently Push in chairs Watch where you're going Take care of your own things Work quietly Strive for a peaceful community	Listen carefully Be tolerant of others' differences Be gentle Use a calm voice Keep your body parts to yourself Be polite to peers and adults Help others Remind others about behavior Freeze when the bell rings Let people have privacy Stop gossip Encourage others to work Compliment others Tell the truth Be a good neighbor Share Keep mean thoughts to yourself Ask nicely

PROBLEM BEHAVIORS

Sometimes a student will behave in inappropriate ways that require an immediate consequence in addition to the ongoing positive discipline. For example, a student who misbehaves on a fieldtrip will not go on the next fieldtrip. Here are some examples of inappropriate behavior:

<u>DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIORS:</u>		<u>DISRESPECTFUL AND DANGEROUS BEHAVIORS:</u>
Excessive tardies/absences Interruption of presentations Inappropriate interaction with others Use of inappropriate or foul language Invasion of privacy Abuse of property Disturbance of others Impolite interaction with others Not following school rules	Theft, damage, or vandalism of property Failure to follow directions Dishonesty, lying, cheating Homework not done Supplies/work not at school Work not completed Negligence which could result in an injury Not following dress code	Physical abuse toward an individual Verbal abuse toward an individual Deliberate violation of or failure to follow safety rules Discrimination or sexual harassment Insubordination or substantial disruption Inappropriate interaction with dangerous or prohibited substances Theft, damage, or vandalism of items

Consequences will be logical responses to the situation and may include communication between the student, teacher, parent and/or administrator. Opportunities to make amends will be encouraged when appropriate. For consequences, please see the page titled Discipline Policy.

Elementary and Middle School Dress Code

At Khalsa School, we are dedicated to creating an optimal learning environment for the students. The intention of the dress code is to establish a respectful, comfortable and relaxed learning community free of distractions and pressures related to clothing and appearance. Parent, student and staff support will allow this goal to be achieved. We encourage authentic self-expression through words, deeds and classroom work and discourage over identification with externally imposed values of self-worth through clothing.

School clothing is simple, comfortable and practical for an active learning environment. Jeans, khakis, polo shirts, button shirts, tee-shirts and closed shoes are examples of school attire. Pajamas, swimsuits, sports uniforms, cowboy boots and other items designed for specific activities unrelated to school are prohibited. The following dress code policy supports these objectives.

1. Clothing (and accessories) decorations, patterns or prints may include:
 - a. borders
 - b. trims
 - c. geometric shapes or patterns such as plaids and stripes
 - d. images from nature
 - e. Khalsa School tee shirt designs
2. Clothing (and accessories) decorations, patterns or prints may not include:
 - a. words, letters, calligraphy or numbers in any language
 - b. symbols or logos (larger than 3”x 3”)
 - c. cartoons
 - d. people or body parts
 - e. symbols or images related to violence, alcohol, tobacco, drugs or profanity
 - f. metal studs, spikes, chains, etc
 - g. writing or doodling
3. Clothing is clean and in good repair, without holes, tears, or doodles.
4. All items of clothing are non-transparent. Underwear is concealed. Items such as boxer shorts or camisoles, tank tops, and slips that do not conform to the dress code are considered underwear.
5. Shirts completely cover the shoulders, back and midriff with a moderate neckline. Shirts reach below the waistband of the lower garment.
6. Shorts, skirts and dresses that fall above the knee are long enough to avoid exposing upper thighs or under garments when standing or sitting cross-legged. Use the “rule of thumb” – clothing falls below the level of your thumb when your arms are to your side.
7. Clothing fits without being excessively baggy or tight. Pants may not be lower than the hip bone.
8. Shoes are closed at the heel or have a heel strap. Shoes increase student height by 1” or less.
9. Athletic shoes are worn for participating in sports and P.E.

10. Faces are free of makeup. Your face is beautiful without it. Hats and other head coverings are for outdoor wear only, regardless of your gender or hairstyle. Exemptions for religious purposes may be requested from the administration.
11. Clothing or accessories that become a distraction or disturbance in the learning environment are not allowed. Clothing or accessories that can be used as weapons, such as chains and spikes, are not allowed. We reserve the right to prohibit accessories or fads that we consider inappropriate for school at any time.
12. Obviously artificial hair colors, body piercing (other than ears), exposed tattoos do not belong in our school setting.

All students are expected to adhere to this dress code policy. Failure to comply with the dress code will be considered a disciplinary matter. Parental support is requested. Parents may be called to provide a change of clothing if needed. ***The school reserves the right to make final decisions regarding dress code policy compliance.***

(3/06)

Student Computer Use Policy

The specific purpose of computer use at Khalsa Montessori School is to support student achievement through the use of technology, which may differ from patterns of personal computer use at home. Students may be allowed use of computer equipment for a variety of educational purposes. Examples are applications relevant to class assignments such as word processing, making spreadsheets, researching information online, creating graphics, portfolios, accessing the Khalsa Montessori School website, or using computer-based teaching tools.

We hope, with the following guidelines, to encourage students to use the equipment responsibly.

- I understand that computer use is a privilege. I will show respect for all computer related equipment.
- I understand that I am responsible for each individual session of computer equipment use.
- I will use equipment only after I have been given specific instruction on such use.
- I will refrain from tampering with or modifying any computer parts or programs.
- I will keep water or any other liquid or food away from any computer-related equipment.
- I will not type or display any word(s) that are not allowed to be spoken in the classroom or draw or display any pictures on the computer that my teacher would not allow me to draw or show in the classroom.
- I understand that a “virus” could be spread to the school’s computer equipment by inserting outside drives or discs into the computers. I will only store school related material on my flash drive.
- If the computer “acts up”, I will immediately stop my work and notify an adult. I will not attempt to fix any malfunction myself.
- I will not access or tamper with any files, folders, or programs that do not belong to me, nor will I delete or “drag” to the recycle bin any such file, folder or program.
- I can “save” work in progress in my personal folder or flash drive. Any work “saved” at any other location may be discarded.
- I understand that personal recreational use of computer equipment is not allowed.
- I understand that downloading from the Internet, visiting advertising sites or clicking on advertising links is prohibited. If I access a website for my specific approved purpose which requires a download in order to continue my research, I will notify my teacher and get approval before proceeding.
- I will use e-mail at school only if it is related to a school assignment and am required to obtain a teacher’s permission.
- I understand that all e-mails and work I do on the computer cannot be considered private and may be accessed by staff at any time.
- I agree never to provide information about myself or about anyone else to anyone online that could be considered as helping to personally identify someone. Such information is to be considered confidential at all times. This would include information such as name or nickname, address, phone number, school or other personal information about my family or about anyone else’s family. Also, I will never give anyone a description of my personal appearance or that of anyone else (for example I will never tell someone that I have brown hair and wear glasses). I will remember that almost anyone I contact using computer

equipment is a stranger to me and that it isn't smart to share personal information with strangers, no matter how nice they may seem.

- I am aware that copying other people's words or illustrations is unacceptable behavior. Copying information (whether from the internet a CD-ROM, a book, or from another student) and using even part of it to turn in to my teacher as my own creation is against the law and is called plagiarism.
- I will always leave the computer and computer area in appropriate condition for the next student's use.
- I will respect the school community online whether I am working on a computer or a media device on campus or off campus. I understand that the school reserves the right to take disciplinary action for any inappropriate activity involving or targeting the school or school community members (teachers, students or parents). Online activity includes email, chat lines, and social networks, instant messaging, text messaging, and twitter.
- I will notify the school if I become aware of inappropriate online activity involving or targeting the school or school community members.
- Teachers and staff are able to access all documents on students' accounts. Internet searches, internet downloads, browsing history and printing history can be monitored by the staff for inappropriate usage.

My student and I have carefully read and understand this computer use policy. We will assume responsibility for any damage or loss to computer equipment, media, or programs caused by misuse. We understand that our student computer use depends on cooperation with these policies. Violation of computer use policies will result in a loss of computer privileges and may invoke additional disciplinary action.

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