



2016-17

Parent Handbook

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PARENT HANDBOOK



From the Head of School

February 2016

Dear SNHEC Families,

At the heart of good education is clear and honest communication between families and their school. This *Handbook* is designed to foster just this kind of communication. Please take the opportunity to read the *Handbook* carefully, refer to it during the year, and discuss the relevant parts with your children. Since the School serves a broad age range of children, your family may find some of the sections more applicable than others.

The *Parent Handbook* is just one part of our effort to communicate with families effectively. More timely information can be found on the School's calendar and in our weekly school newsletter publication. Making frequent use of this *Handbook* as well as these two other resources will ensure that you are fully up-to-date on school policies and events. When the need arrives, we will also send you letters through email.

I am looking forward to another wonderful school year for your family at SNHEC.

Most sincerely,

Debra Hogan

Head of School

Home of Southern NH Montessori Academy

New Hampshire School of Applied Learning

PART I: WHAT WE STAND FOR

Mission and History

Values Statement

Diversity Statement

Academic Philosophy & Programs

MISSION AND HISTORY

Mission Statement

The mission of Southern NH Montessori Academy is to provide an educational experience for children ages 15 months through 12 years throughout southern New Hampshire, offering an enriched curriculum and intriguing environment that cultivates human potential, nurtures spontaneous curiosity and inspires a sense of wonder.

Children learn at their own pace intellectually.

Throughout an integrated curriculum, concentration is given to educating the “whole child”. All facets of the child’s being, including the intellectual, physical, emotional, social and creative aspects are emphasized with a concentration of hands-on and experiential learning.

Each child’s education is guided by individualized learning plans.

Southern NH Education Campus shepherds the character development of each child promoting independence, respect for oneself and others and self-expression.

The mission of the NH School of Applied Learning is to establish and cultivate a Middle School learning community which challenges traditional assumptions about the educational process by:

- Creating a student-centered environment where students have choices make decisions, accept responsibility, and work cooperatively.
- Allowing students to experience acceptance and criticism in a supportive environment.
- Involving students in powerful learning experiences that include applied learning projects and community service specifically designed to support the cognitive motivational and social needs of adolescents in a dynamic community environment rich with real-world learning; The NH School of Applied Learning encourages students to become motivated learners collaborative problem solvers, and active participants in their community.

School History

In 2008 a group of dedicated individuals formed a Design Team. This team consisted of parents, teachers, Montessorians and educators. Born from a love of furthering a Montessori environment, Southern NH Montessori Academy opened its doors in the fall of 2009 and welcomed children in Kindergarten and Lower Elementary. From the beginning, the School was characterized by active parent and teacher participation. The founders, like true Montessorians, learned by doing, and through their shared experience shaped not only a school, but a community. The perseverance of the founders and the cooperative spirit that they engendered in those who followed them continue at the School today.

Amid the laughter of children and the proud smiles of parents and teachers, the program expanded in 2010 with the addition of Early Childhood. Finding that our growing numbers necessitated more space, we added an Early Childhood wing in 2011.

2012 witnessed the addition of Upper Elementary grades with renovations completed for their own classroom space in the fall of 2013.

The fall of 2014 ushered in the addition of a Toddler Program and the addition of a second Early Childhood program.

We have remained true to our belief in and dedication to the philosophy established by Dr. Maria Montessori. We believe that through education, through our work with children, there is much that we can do individually and collectively to bring humanity to a deeper understanding, a higher well-being and a greater spirituality. As we care for children today, we plan for tomorrow. Effective 2015, we proudly offer Middle School education, The NH School of Applied Learning, broadening alternative school offerings to the greater Londonderry community.

2017 is slated to diversify our educational programs even further expanding our Toddler program and adding Community Parent Education programs.

VALUES STATEMENT: A Foundation for Peace

Southern NH Montessori Academy is a community of children and adults united by Dr. Maria Montessori's vision of peace through education. In an atmosphere of freedom and responsibility, we work toward our human potential. We are dedicated to creating a sustainable future for the planet and all who inhabit it. We strive to develop and support the following values:

Work

"A child can only develop by means of experience in his environment. We call such experience work." -Dr. Maria Montessori

- Inspire the joy of learning through discovery and exploration
- Invite curiosity, creativity, and imagination in all areas of work
- Nurture risk taking and initiative
- Experience reverence, awe, wonder, and respect for life

Independence

"Individual activity is the one factor that stimulates and produces development, and this is not more true for the little ones of preschool age than it is for the junior, middle, and upper school children." -Dr. Maria Montessori

- Respect the right to persist in chosen work without interruption
- Respect the right to direct oneself and to act with ever greater sureness, ability, and self-confidence
- Speak and write clearly and confidently

Interdependence

"The stars, Earth, stones, all kinds of life form a whole relation with each other, and so close is this relation that we cannot understand a stone without some understanding of the great sun!" -Dr. Maria Montessori

- Be courteous, caring, and respectful of others
- Use peaceful and cooperative skills to resolve conflict
- Acknowledge and celebrate the different ways humans meet the same physical and spiritual needs
- Respect the cycles of the Earth and recognize our ecological and moral responsibility to the world

Applied Learning

"Applied Learning" refers to learning to apply thinking skills and learning to learn. At the NH School of Applied Learning, Applied Learning is exercised through experiential, hand-on, active learning which integrates deep academic and rigorous content in problems and projects, which connect school and life.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

At Southern NH Education Campus, we strive to reflect the larger world in our student body and our faculty and staff. Through our curriculum, cultural programs, and engagement with our community and other similar institutions, we seek for our students to engage with people whose life experiences are substantially different from their own. We recognize that building a diverse school requires an ongoing commitment of time, energy and resources on the parts of our administration, staff and our families.

Diversity, like peace through education, is part of the fabric of the Montessori philosophy as Dr. Montessori's teaching transcended borders and social barriers. Through our curriculum, we work to acknowledge and explore differences among us and in the world. We want our students to understand and value differences in culture and styles of learning and to be aware of and move past prejudices, creating an environment where each child and family feels safe and accepted.

We aim to create a diverse yet inclusive community who welcomes everyone regardless of differences of gender, race, religion, family structure, socioeconomic level, culture, age, sexual orientation, language and learning style. As an organization we work to provide our staff, students, and families with the tools and language to support this varied community and to address conflict when issues arise around differences the children see around them. In the end, we desire the years our students spend at SNHEC to help them emerge equipped to thrive in a rapidly changing world with open hearts, open minds, a sense of their own value, and a commitment to effect positive change.

ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAMS

Philosophy

In keeping with the Montessori method, SNHEC endeavors to create a carefully prepared classroom environment that fully engages each child in a developmentally appropriate way. The prepared environment, which consists of furnishings and learning materials that are designed to lead each child from concrete concepts to abstract and in-depth understanding, is one of two key components of the Montessori Method. The other is the Montessori teacher, a knowledgeable, sensitive, and rigorously trained adult who prepares the environment each day and serves as a guide to the children.

The term “guide” extends from Maria Montessori’s belief that “education is not something that a leader does, but a natural process spontaneously carried out by the human being.” The child holds the pattern for his or her development within, and the teacher, through observation and experimentation within the prepared environment, provides the experiences that the child requires for growth and development.

The academic program at SNHMA is a carefully designed continuum based on Maria Montessori’s Four Planes of Development theory and the home-like, family-based model of peer interaction that she put forth. Each classroom is organized in a cross-age, mixed gender grouping of children based on the four planes of development. Over several years, each child is carefully prepared to transition successfully (academically and socially) to the next level. Adhering to the Four Planes of Development, growth is outlined as follows

First Plane Age 0 – 6 Early Childhood:

Characterized by individual creation of the person, by an absorbent mind where the child is truly absorbing the environment.

Second Plane Age 6 – 12 Childhood:

Characterized by reasoning with imagination this plane is referred to as Construction of the Intelligence.

Third Plane Age 12 – 18 Adolescence:

Characterized by self concern and self assessment, this plane is labeled Construction of Social Self

Fourth Plane Age 18 – 24 and Beyond – Adulthood (Construction of Self Understanding):

Characterized by construction of the spiritual, conscious discernment of right and wrong, seeking to know one’s own place within the world, and Financial Independence – “I can get it myself”.

Academic Programs

Brief descriptions of classes by age grouping follow. The Parents Information Night in late August will help parents learn about specific daily practices in their own children’s classrooms. We also encourage parents to attend the many parent education opportunities offered throughout the year to learn more about the Montessori method and specific curriculum goals. Finally, please take advantage of our library’s extensive collection of Montessori publications.

The Toddler Program (15 months – 3 years) provides a hands-on environment where the child is encouraged to take care of not only himself, but the larger world we live in as well. To enhance Cognitive Skills, the toddler is able to explore books and perform various jobs that ultimately increase the ability to concentrate and work independently while creating the basis for learning. Fine motor skills are heightened through practical life activities such as pouring, sorting, etc. while Gross motor skills are supported through physical activities such as rhythm/music movement and outdoor play. As toddler language blossoms, sandpaper letters support learning the phonetics of the alphabet, while stories, finger plays, singing and spontaneous conversation encourages both social and language skills. Through carefully crafted math, science and art opportunities, the toddler day will be a vibrant, busy opportunity.

The Early Childhood Program (3-6 years) engages the absorbent mind of the child through self-selected work and constructive activity, both in the prepared environment of the indoor classroom and outdoors, where children are encouraged to explore the natural world. Materials in the classroom are divided into curricular areas that assist the child in the development of concentration, coordination of mind and body, independence, order, and self-discipline. Practical life exercises encourage small- and large-muscle development and reinforce the concepts of order and sequence. Sensorial materials develop the child's ability to make finite discriminations through the use of the five senses. The language curriculum balances a strong phonics approach with a method that allows creative writing through dictation, invented spelling, and literary appreciation. The mathematics curriculum includes the manipulation of materials that are sequenced with concrete experiences leading to more abstract discoveries.

The Kindergarten Program (5-6 years) is the culmination of the child's two previous years of work in Early Childhood. Maria Montessori recognized two tendencies in the kindergartner: the extension of consciousness through activities performed on the environment and the perfection of those abilities that already exist. By remaining at school for a full day, kindergartners are able to consolidate and internalize skills by teaching them to younger students in the morning, challenging themselves with more difficult work throughout the day, they receive creative writing and formal handwriting activities in the afternoon along with enhancing opportunities for physical education. Kindergarten children take full advantage of the benefits of multi-age grouping, developing strong friendships with peers, playing a leadership role in the classroom, gaining self-confidence, and mastering the academic and social skills that are necessary for a successful transition to elementary levels.

The Elementary Program (6-12 years) builds on the characteristics of children this age, who are engaged in thinking, perceiving, and learning about the interconnectedness of things and in pursuing a newfound interest in social relationships. Languages and the arts are recognized as a means of communicating ideas and fulfilling fundamental human needs. Reading, writing, mathematics, geometry, and science are tools within the child's own culture that unlock new insights. Geography, history, botany, and zoology are presented in ways that give meaning and appreciation to the great order of the universe. The elementary curriculum is based on five major stories and several minor ones that provide children with a vision of the universe from the "Big Bang" through the present. Each story sparks imagination and curiosity and is accompanied by charts, timelines, illustrations, artifacts, scientific experiments, literature studies, and independent research. There is time built in to each day allowing children to go outside and explore and exercise large muscles through free play.

NH School of Applied Learning (12-14 years)

At NHSAL, we've designed our school specifically for the adolescent, creating an environment in which their learning is student-driven based upon their interests and passions. By guiding students to develop their own passions and interests, they are inspired to care about their learning and draw parallels to their

world. At NSHAL, we embrace a modern approach to learning where students embark upon discovery by “doing”. When students use their hands and when they are creating they are engaged. When they can see, touch, show, explain and use physical results of their efforts, they know they’ve accomplished something of value. Students are in the driver seat, allowing them to learn the self confidence, research skills, interpersonal facility and hands-on aptitude that will serve them not only into the next phases of their academic endeavors, but in life in general. In addition to promoting deeper learning of academic concepts, Applied Learning encourages new ways of thinking and behaving.

Homework Policy

Turning work in on time is an important skill that will carry students into their adulthood. Setting clear and high expectations helps to facilitate these skills. I expect that students will work hard independently and will come to me if they have any questions, we've scheduled Advisory Time to ensure that students have dedicated consult time. I also expect that their assignments are completed on time, in balance with other activities and obligations in their lives. For many of your adolescents, homework is brand new and for others it is not; in either case, it is not always a favorite activity.

Our policy at NHSAL is: for any late or missed work, students are required to complete their assignments. Work will be accepted until *four days* after it is due. *After the **fifth day, the work will no longer be accepted and will receive a ZERO***. If work is completed late (or missed) three times in a trimester, a note will be sent home to the student's parents apprising them of the situation. If tardy/missed assignments continue, it will require a formal consult with myself, student and parents (and if necessary the Head of School) to develop a plan to ensure timely completion. My goal is to not have this happen for anyone. We appreciate your assistance to support your student in making sure all work is completed on time.

Special Programs

Elementary Latin allows children to explore and learn Latin as early as possible to increase English vocabulary. Additionally, the study of Latin improves the understanding of English grammar and is key to all modern languages.

The Art Program relates to our whole school philosophy of education through engagement with the inner life of the child through hands-on experiential learning. The major goal of our creative projects is to connect with the inner self and express that self with confidence. Art is integrated into the daily curriculum of all programs. Through small group instruction, all students are presented with formal lessons on a weekly basis. Activities are developed to encourage artistic, creative expression both in and out of the Art classroom.

The Music Program aims to provide students with expressive skills, developing a love of music that will last them a lifetime. Listening experiences from Gregorian Chants to Jazz encouraged students to become active listeners and so come to appreciate many styles of music. As precursors to reading and writing music, students develop their singing voices and rhythmic movement skills, as well as an understanding of the elements of music and how composers use them to create beautiful music. Music

notation is introduced at the lower elementary level and expanded upon through the grades. Students have opportunity to explore songs and instruments from around the world.

The Spanish Program encourages each child to approach language individually, creatively, and confidently. The program incorporates Montessori philosophy by promoting self-expression and channeling each child's natural curiosity toward the learning of the Spanish language. Songs, stories, and traditions, calendar study, simple sentences, and vocabulary are supplemented by books on the global influence of Spanish culture.

The Physical Education Program is based on the philosophy of developing strong minds and strong bodies. Activities are focused on skill building, teamwork, coordination, and goal setting in a non-competitive atmosphere. Communication, cooperation, and trust are key objectives at all levels of the physical education program. Early Childhood students engage in a curriculum focused on developing gross motor skills, learning to wait for a turn, sharing, following directions, and cooperation. Elementary students begin playing more complex, non-elimination games.

The Library houses a collection and provides services designed to support classroom work, school curriculum, and the independent reading needs and interests of our students. Elementary students use the library to conduct research to support classroom work and to select independent reading materials.

The Community Service Program allows students of all ages to perform service both inside and outside of school throughout the year. Activities range from simple tasks performed by individual students on a daily basis to class- and school-wide projects that require initiative and planning. All programs are involved in the fall event, Stories for a Cause; baking breads, applesauce, making soup. The Elementary students engage in community service activities that more closely connect with their curriculum.

The Technology Program

At SNHEC we embrace the use of technology believing digital tools positively help to solidify knowledge. Increasingly, however, technology is becoming part of every aspect of our lives and has begun to blur many boundaries of social interaction. People often forget general rules of common courtesy and it has been reported that overuse of digital devices is influencing the ability to recognize human expression with our younger generations. With this in mind, we would like to help foster and develop the social skills of our students. At SNHEC social events, our policy for parents and students, is to leave digital devices stored. If anyone needs to phone, text, email etc. (excepting camera/video use) please remove yourself to a more private location. Thank You.

After School at the Academy

"The Muses of Childhood" - Extended Learning Opportunities Program The Muses in Greek and Roman mythology are the goddess of the inspiration of literature, science and the arts and were regarded as the sources of knowledge. Each day we explore a pillar from the uses pantheon. Hands-on creatively-rich and "developmentally-scaffolded" these opportunities will engage your child's imagination as well as broaden their exposure to some of the lesser explored Arts and Sciences of the school day.

Daily programs are available for ALL SNHMA Early Childhood, Kindergarten and Elementary students. The theatre program is extended to Middle School students as well.

Part II: Key Procedures & Policies

Arrival & Dismissal

General Policies & Procedures

Grievance Policy

Health Policies & Procedures

Code Of Behavior & Discipline

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Daily Schedule

Toddler Children should be escorted into their classroom by a parent/guardian between 8:30am-8:45am

Early Childhood Children should arrive and settle in between 8:00am-8:15am

Elementary Students should arrive and settle in between 8:15am and 8:25am

Middle School Students should arrive between 8:00-8:15am

Toddler Mornings	8:45am-11:30am
Toddler Full Day	8:45am- 2:45pm
Early Childhood Mornings	8:15am-11:45am
Early Childhood/Kindergarten Full Day	8:15am- 3:00pm
Elementary (Lower and Upper)	8:30am- 3:15pm
Middle School	8:15am- 3:00pm
Before Care (all age levels)	7:30am- 8:00am
After-School Program	3:15pm- 5:00pm

Promptness in the Morning

Toddler: We kindly ask that all toddlers be escorted to the lobby of the Toddler classroom to be signed in and greeted by their teacher between 8:30am and 8:45am.

Early Childhood: Children should arrive between 8:00am and 8:15am. This arrival time allows children to go to their cubbies, put away their belongings, change footwear, and engage in morning discussions with classmates. Teachers will greet children until 8:15; at which time the class routines will be fully underway.

Elementary: Children should arrive between 8:15am and 8:25am. This arrival time allows children to go to their cubbies, put away their belongings, change footwear, and get themselves ready for the day. Teachers will greet children until 8:30am; at which time the class routines will be fully underway.

Middle School: Students should arrive between 8:00-8:15 am. This arrival time allows students to go to their lockers, begin organizing their day, visit with friends, and confer with lead teacher. Class schedule begins promptly at 8:15am.

Please be prompt in arriving each morning. While we encourage timely arrival for each child, promptness impacts everyone. When a child arrives late, he or she misses morning greeting, possibly group circle, the

introduction of new materials, and most significantly, enters a classroom that is already buzzing with activity. One child's late arrival also detracts from the experience of the other children in the class; when a teacher helps settle a late child individually, time is taken away from the other children during what is the best instructional time of the day.

The School tracks tardiness and records it on each child's progress reports and in the permanent record. *When a child is late more than twice in any calendar month, or more than nine times during the school year, parents may be asked to meet with Administration.*

Promptness at Dismissal

Children are dismissed by class under the supervision of their teachers to ensure that each child reaches his or her pick-up vehicle safely. We allot a 15 minute window for dismissal, with the intention of giving ample time to accommodate for routine delays. If a parent or caregiver arrives past dismissal time, the student will be brought to the Front Office greeted by a faculty member, and properly supervised until the parent or caregiver arrives. Parents will be assessed a fee of \$1.00 per each minute late to be paid at the time of pick up.

To dismiss your toddler, please enter the lobby of the Toddler classroom to sign out your child and wait for the teacher to greet you.

In Case of Occasional Lateness:

Toddlers: Children who arrive after 8:45am should proceed directly to the Front Office.

Early Childhood: Children who arrive after 8:15 should proceed directly to the Front Office. A child arriving after 8:15am will need to be signed in at the Front Office by a parent/caregiver.

Elementary (Lower and Upper) and Middle School: Students in the Elementary programs are considered late if arriving after 8:30am and Middle School students after 8:15am..

For any student arriving after 8:30am: **No child will be permitted to join programs until 9:00am.** To uphold our Montessori environment, we are intentional to not interrupt the morning meeting/group time. Our doors will be locked promptly at 8:30 and we will accept late arrivals at 9:00am.

Before Care

If your student will regularly arrive at school before 8:00am, please register for Before Care. Please sign your child in at the Front Office where he/she will be greeted by the Before Care teacher. EC children will be escorted to their classroom; LE and UE students will be released to their classroom at 8:00am. Parents will be billed monthly for this service. Before Care is available from 7:30am-8:00am each day.

After Care

If parents know that their child will require after-school care on a regular basis, they should register for After Care. With 48 hours advance notice, we will endeavor to accommodate additional children on an occasional basis. Parents must call the School Office to inquire about available spaces. Monthly and/or Trimester preregistration is required and paid for in advance.

Inclement Weather, Delay of School, and Close of School

To learn if the school is closed or delayed due to bad weather:

- Check the SNHMA website Home Page (www.snhma.org) an NHSAL (www.nhsal.org)
- Check the SNHMA and NHSAL Facebook Page
- Check New England Cable News www.necn.com
- TV channel 9 (WMUR) or www.wmur.com
- Turn your radio to 95.7 (WZID) or www.wzid.com

Every effort will be made to make the decision to close school will be made by 6:00am. Because our students live in many different communities throughout the southern New Hampshire, parents must exercise their final judgment about the safety of traveling on roads. The highest priority is always the safety, health, and well-being of our students, families and staff.

Authorization to Transport Your Child

Parents must provide the School with a list of people authorized to pick up their child. No child will be dismissed to anyone other than the parents or guardians without written permission. This rule is designed for your child's protection. To avoid both frustration and inconvenience, please provide the School with an accurate list of people authorized to pick up your child at dismissal. Any alternate pickup or individual whom we do not know, will be asked to present a picture ID at dismissal.

Parking Lot and Traffic Flow

Drop-off and pick-up times are busy and potentially dangerous. Please drive slowly and observe established traffic patterns. In the School parking lot, pedestrians have the right-of-way at all times, and drivers should take care to defer to anyone, especially children, walking in the parking lot. When children are present, we ask that you refrain from using your cell phone in the school parking lot. **The safety of our children depends on all drivers driving slowly and being vigilant.**

Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

Toddler:

As you approach the school parking lot from Commons Drive, take a right at the mailboxes, the school building will be on your left hand side. Please park your vehicle and walk your child into the lobby of the Toddler classroom where you will sign your child in and confirm their arrival.

Early Childhood/Kindergarten and Lower Elementary:

As you approach the school parking lot from Commons Drive, take a right at the mailboxes, the school building will be on your left hand side. Stop at the Front Entrance (putting your vehicle in Park) where your child will be greeted and escorted to the respective entrance for arrivals. At dismissal, your child will be escorted to your vehicle. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to secure the child properly in the vehicle.

If you choose to park, escort your child to the proper entrance and be sure to check-in with your child's teacher to confirm their arrival. For dismissals, wait to the left of the Front Entrance and your child will be escorted to you, when all vehicle dismissals are complete. To minimize traffic congestion, we encourage that you refrain from parking adjacent to the building.

To maximize our staggered arrival windows, Early Childhood families are encouraged to target a time frame between 8:00-8:10am and Lower Elementary families should refrain from entering the drop off line prior to 8:15am.

Upper Elementary and Middle School:

Our Upper Elementary and Middle School students are dropped off in front of Unit 27 ramp. Students will walk to the sidewalk through the Unit 27 entrance and into the respective classrooms. Likewise, students will be dismissed from the Unit 27 entrance as their families arrive in the pickup line by the ramp.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

School Calendar

The full school calendar can be found online at www.snhma.org and www.nhsal.org. Click on "VIEW THE CALENDAR" at the top of the page. This calendar is kept fully up-to-date and is the single best place to go to learn about events for your child's class as well as for parents.

Attendance

Daily attendance is necessary for thorough understanding of subject areas and continuity of program. While absence due to illness is not only understandable but also advisable, absence for other reasons is discouraged. Please respect the School calendar and your child's educational process by honoring arrival and dismissal times and by not extending vacations.

Attendance is reported on progress reports and on your child's permanent record. Attendance is taken each day. From a safety perspective, we ask that in the event your child will be late or absent from school, that you call or email SNHEC (admin@snhec.org) so that we have record from you when and if we can expect your child. In the event we have not heard from you before 9:00am, we will make every attempt to reach you to receive confirmation of your child's attendance status for that day. If your child arrives late or leaves early, please sign him/her out in the Front Office.

Our school policy takes into account individual situations, such as health issues, but in general, once a student misses more than 10 days of school without approval from the Head of School, that student could be placed on academic probation. **Should more days be missed from this point forward, the result could be retention.** Three tardy occurrences will equate to a school absence. Should your child be absent three (3) consecutive days due to illness, we require a doctor's note reflecting the nature of the illness and authorization to return to school. We kindly ask that should your child be ill with a communicable illness that you communicate this to SNHEC so that we may exercise any necessary precautions.

Promptness at Arrivals and Dismissals (please see page 14)

Lunch

All full-day students bring their own lunches. In alignment with our prohibiting commercialization at SNHEC, this applies to your child's lunchbox and accessories as well. We ask that parents provide a well-balanced meal that minimizes salt, sugar and additives such as artificial colors and flavorings. **Soft drinks, candy, and sugared food items are prohibited.** Fresh fruits, vegetables, and unprocessed foods are encouraged. Good health, proper nutrition, and food preparation are a part of our practical life curriculum at all levels of program. Heating of food items is not available; we encourage these items to be brought in an insulated thermos.

SNHEC Milk Program

The nutritional value of calcium in our daily diet is well known, yet, packing milk in lunches can be challenging. As a result, we offer a family-style milk program offered on a monthly basis for children to enjoy and benefit from having milk with their lunch for a minimal fee.

Snacks

Toddler snack is provided and consists of fruits and vegetables. These items are prepared by staff and shared family-style helping children to develop self help skills and graces; courtesy of sharing mealtime together.

In Early Childhood, snack is offered each day during the morning through our *Community Snack Program*. Each day, children bring a single serving of a fruit or vegetable item (apples, orange, banana, tomato, cucumber, pepper, etc). These items will be prepared by students for each class to enjoy throughout the morning. Food preparation and practical life skills are a part of our curriculum.

In the Elementary programs, each child brings a personal snack from home, adhering to school policy restricting soft drinks, candy and sugary food items, instead encouraging fresh fruits, vegetables and unprocessed foods. As students progress to the Upper Elementary and Middle School grades, snack becomes more individualized with students eating as necessary.

Any student remaining for After School programs is encouraged to bring a second snack for the latter portion of the day.

Peanut Policy

Should the need arise, a Peanut Allergy plan can be implemented between staff and the child's family to create a safe environment for all students. The child's health and well-being are held as the highest priority in establishing allergy protocol within the classroom.

Dress and Footwear

At SNHEC, though we do not require uniforms, we do require consistency in color of clothing and exclusion of commercialized items. Colors for tops should be: white, yellow, or blue. Colors for bottoms should be: navy, or tan/khaki. Middle School students can add "green" tops or bottoms to their attire choice. Jeans are not permitted. It is encouraged that children wearing skirts, dresses or jumpers wear vanity shorts. Style of clothing is unlimited: collars, collarless, short sleeve, long sleeve, no sleeve, shorts, skorts, pants (no jeans), dresses, jumpers, skirts, etc. When clothing is deemed repeatedly out of uniform, verbal contact will be made with the parent to discuss the issue. Should it continue following verbal conversation, we will contact the parent to bring in appropriate attire.

In general, students' clothing should be comfortable, allow freedom of movement, and enable the wearer to engage fully in daily outdoor activities in all but the most extreme weather conditions. We strongly suggest foul weather gear in the rain, layers of cotton or wool clothing and hats and mittens in the winter, and extra clothing for the changeable weather in fall and spring.

Toddler and Early Childhood students are required to keep a complete change of clothes at school, beginning the first day of school. Soiled clothes will be sent home for laundering and a replacement set must return to school the following day.

Slippers are required footwear in the classroom for all students. Slippers should have a sturdy sole that will protect the child's foot outdoors in the case of emergency or fire drill. Open backed, clog-type slippers, commercialized characters and slippers with big, floppy decorations are strongly discouraged.

All Full-Day students are required to have sneakers for our Physical Education Program. The sneakers may remain at school at students' cubbies. Seasonally, rain/muck boots are suggested for our "eco-mecca" hikes. "Croc-type" shoes do not offer sufficient support for outdoor play.

Clothing Considerations for Younger Children

Please encourage your child to choose clothing that he or she can easily manage. Beltless pants and those with elastic waistbands are appropriate for children under four years old. Snaps may be easier to manage than buttons and Velcro may be easier to manage than laces. Care of self and independence in toileting and dressing are curricular goals in many of our programs. Please support our effort to help your child become more self-reliant.

Clothing Considerations for Older Children

In addition to our dress code, parents should help students to use their best discretion in what clothing is and is not appropriate for school. For our oldest students, dress should be modest and in keeping with the purposes of a school (e.g., very short skirts or shorts are not appropriate). Clothing should be in good repair. Commercialized attire is not permitted. When clothing is deemed inappropriate, the classroom teacher will talk to the child or call the parent to discuss the issue.

Toileting Training for Toddlers

As the young toddler begins to establish toileting independence, we ask that parents supply diapers, wipes and extra clothing. Toileting will be an integral facet of the toddler curriculum.

Potty Training for Early Childhood

All children are expected to be potty trained when they enter our Early Childhood program. (With our youngest children, the teachers understand that occasional accidents may occur.) If a family anticipates their child may experience a problem with toileting, they are asked to talk to the teacher in advance of the opening of school. Teachers will work with the family to support the child in making the transition to independent toileting.

Cubbies/Lockers

Each student in the Toddler, EC, LE, UE and MS programs at SNHEC has a cubby/locker in his or her classroom for the safe storage of personal items such as clothing, books, lunch and backpack. When selecting your child's backpack, we ask that you adhere to SNHEC policy restricting commercialization.

Lost and Found

We strongly suggest that you label all of your child's clothing. When identified, a labeled piece of clothing can be placed back in the student's cubby/locker and returned home. Lost and found items are kept temporarily in a basket in your child's classroom. Please check this basket regularly. At the end of each season, items that are unclaimed after one week will be donated.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are landmarks to be cherished as special days for each child. Each classroom has time-honored birthday customs in place. Please check with your child's classroom teacher for details and to avoid conflicts with previously scheduled activities. We request your cooperation in sending birthday party invitations through the US mail or e-mail, not delivered at school. The only exception will be if every student in your child's class is invited to the party.

Application to Other Schools

While the program at our School is designed to serve children through Middle School, we recognize that some families may also want to consider other schools prior to this time. We view the process of "applying out" to other schools as an opportunity for the School to support you in considering these options. If you decide to pursue an application to another independent school or transfer to a public school, we ask that you make an appointment to talk with the Head of School. This meeting will serve as an opportunity for us to talk about your child and your educational choices, and for us to learn about the School from your perspective. Please call or email the School Office to set up this appointment. If you have forms from other schools for teachers to fill out, they should be brought to this meeting or dropped off at the School Office after the meeting. The teachers request that they not receive school forms directly, but rather receive them through the School Office. After the faculty has filled them out, the School Office will track the forms and ensure they are returned on time to the schools to which you are applying or transferring. Every effort will be made to compile transfer documentation in a timely manner, bearing in mind, during the summer months, this might take a bit longer.

When you are applying for your child to attend other schools, you must request in writing the release of school records to the other schools.

Confidentiality of Records and Procedures

Information contained in a child's record is privileged and confidential. The School will not distribute or release information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without the written consent of the child's parents or guardians. The School will notify the parents or guardians if a child's record is subpoenaed.

The child's record shall be available to the child's parents at reasonable times upon their written request, and the School will respond to the request promptly. Upon such request for access, the child's entire record, regardless of the physical location of its parts, shall be made available.

The child's record shall be available only to his or her teachers and the administrators of the School without parental consent. A child's records may not be duplicated nor be distributed except by authorized staff members.

Parents may request in writing that School records are released to outside parties (e.g., other schools, evaluators); the School maintains a written account in each child's record indicating to whom and when information from that record has been given. Each person disseminating or releasing to outside parties information contained in a child's record, in whole or in part, shall upon each instance of dissemination or release record the following: his or her name, signature, position, the date, the portions of the record which were disseminated or released, the purpose of such dissemination or release, and the signature of the

person authorizing the dissemination or release. Such logs shall be available to the child's parents and administrators responsible for record maintenance.

Copies of records shall be available at no cost to the parents and others authorized for their receipt.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Southern NH Education Campus places high value on grace, courtesy, respect and responsibility. As such we encourage parents/guardians and staff to develop open lines of communication with each other for the benefit of the children attending the school. We acknowledge however, that from time to time, situations may arise that are upsetting. If a parent/guardian, student, staff member or other individuals or groups are not satisfied with a school decision, policy or act; or believes that SNHEC has violated or is violating any provision of New Hampshire General Law, they should follow the process outlined in the SNHEC Grievance Policy. If after following the Grievance Policy the outcome is not sufficient, the complaint may be submitted in writing to the Commissioner of Education.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

A grievance is a complaint concerning the application of policies and procedures governing the personnel, practices or working conditions. Confidentiality concerning an employee grievance will be maintained to the extent that it is practical under the circumstances. No retaliatory or adverse action will be taken against any employee who initiates a grievance.

If a parent/guardian, student, staff member or other individuals or groups are not satisfied with a school decision, policy or act or believes that SNHEC has violated or is violating any provision of (M.G.L.c.71 Section 89 or 603 CMR 1.00) they may do the following:

1. Discuss the complaint with the staff member that has direct responsibility for the problem.
 - Within a week, take the complaint directly to the staff member involved (in the case of violation of laws or issues with school-wide policies, the Head of School would be the appropriate staff member) to resolve the problem through discussion.
 - SNHEC is committed to using open communication to work through problems and therefore, if needed, the two parties involved may request immediate mediation from the Head of School.
 - If the aggrieved person is not satisfied, within a week they must move to step 2.
2. Submit the complaint in writing to the Head of School.
 - The Head of School may speak to all parties involved and will try to resolve the issue through discussions with those people. Otherwise, within two weeks, the Head of School will give a written decision concerning the complaint, citing the reasons for the decision.

Exceptions to Procedural Steps

SNHEC recognizes that there may be certain circumstances in which it may be inappropriate to resolve a problem as prescribed above. Therefore, the following exceptions are instances where some of the steps aforementioned may be bypassed to seek a resolution by the next higher authority:

- The complaint or problem involves a known or suspected violation of the law;
- The complaint or problem is clearly not within the authority of the staff member's supervisor to resolve.
- A parent, guardian or other individuals or groups, who believe that a SNHEC has violated or is violating any state or federal law or regulation regarding education, may file a complaint directly with the Department of Education.

NOTE: The time limits mentioned above are only guidelines and are not meant to be mandatory. The time limits may be extended by mutual agreement of the parties involved.

HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Absence Due to Illness

While a child's illness can disrupt the daily routine, children who are ill must remain at home. Students must remain at home if any of the following conditions are present:

1. Fever
2. Vomiting
3. Diarrhea
4. Discharge from the eyes, nose or ears
5. Sore throat
6. Persistent cough
7. Unexplained rash
8. Contagious disease. Parents should call the school immediately if a student becomes ill with a contagious disease (such as conjunctivitis, chicken pox, fifth disease, strep throat), so that we may alert the school community and notify other parents as to risks of exposure.

A student must be free of fever without medication for 24 hours before returning to school

The School must be alerted immediately if a child has head lice and/or any nits. We do not systematically check all children for the presence of lice but will conduct a careful search of a particular child if he/she seems overtly itchy/uncomfortable. Our policy is to notify the parent of the presence of lice and a request administration of appropriate treatment prior to the child's return to school.

If your child is ill, please notify the School of his or her absence prior to 8:00am or as soon as possible.

Caring for Ill Students

Should a student become ill during the school day or arrive at School too ill to participate in the activities of the day, the child will remain in the Front Office while the School contacts the child's parents and requests that the child be taken home. If the child's parents cannot be located, the School will contact the people identified on the child's Emergency Contact Form and, again, request that the child be taken home.

Please provide the School with an accurate list of people authorized to pick up your child in the case of illness and emergency.

Expectations During Pandemic Alerts

When the School and families have been notified about an actual or potential pandemic (e.g., N1H1 Flu [Swine Flu]), the School will act promptly to remove students with symptoms from contact with other students and staff. The full cooperation and understanding of parents and guardians is expected (and appreciated).

Medication

Most medications are now available in a time-release formula, so it is unusual for children to bring medications to school. Faculty and staff of the School are prepared to administer medications, when needed.

Both prescription and nonprescription drugs must be delivered to the teacher in the original container, accompanied by a signed Medication Authorization Form from the parents, and in the case of prescription drugs, thorough instructions from the doctor describing the patient's name, dosage, frequency with which the medication must be administered, and duration of use. **Please do not put medication (including Tylenol, Benadryl, cough drops, or vitamins) in a child's lunch box or otherwise rely on the child to deliver the medication to the teacher or self-administer medication.** Once the teacher receives the medication, it is securely stored and dispensed according to written instructions and health regulations. No medication, including Tylenol and Benadryl, will be given to students without written permission from the parents.

Health Examination & Immunization Requirements

A School Health Record must be filled out by your child's physician and returned prior to the first day of school.

NH State Law requires that documentation of the following must be provided prior to school entry:

RSA 200:32 A complete medical examination by a licensed physician, physician assistant, or advanced registered nurse practitioner before entrance into the public school system and thereafter as often as deemed necessary by the local school authority.

RSA 141-C: 20 All parents or legal guardians shall have their children who are residing in this state immunized against certain diseases.

RSA 200:38-1 All children shall be immunized prior to school entrance in accordance with RSA 141-C:20.

We do recognize that families may exercise their prerogative to limit immunizations. Exemptions for medical or religious reasons are allowed. A completed Medical or Religious Exemption form must be provided to the Front Office to keep on file.

Emergency Health Care Procedures

SNHEC staff is trained in emergency first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). When an accident or injury occurs, SNHEC staff is immediately available for consultation and/or emergency intervention.

In case of accident or sudden onset of illness at school, School staff will determine the severity of the accident or illness and determine the course of action according to Emergency Care Procedures. In the case of a medical emergency, our protocol is to call 911 and then the child's parent/guardian. If the child's parents cannot be located, the School will contact the people identified on the child's Emergency Contact Form. Should staff find it necessary to apply first aid, an Incident Report will be completed by the responding teacher(s) and a copy will be given to the parent/guardian.

In the case of a life-threatening emergency, your child will be transported directly to the nearest hospital (Parkland Hospital, Derry). An ambulance will be called to transport the child to the hospital, and at least one staff member will accompany the child while another staff member continues to attempt to notify the parents and/or emergency contact person. Staff will carry the "Emergency Information Form and Authorization/Consent to Medical Treatment" whenever someone other than a parent transports a student.

It is imperative that the emergency contact information in the office be kept up-to-date. Emergency room personnel at many hospitals no longer honor the usual blanket permission for treatment of emergency illness or trauma at school. Only lifesaving emergency care may be rendered without expressed parental consent on a specific occasion. Other medical care, necessary as it may be, requires parental consent for each individual visit to a health care facility. Therefore, a parent or guardian must be available to decide about or to give permission for the medical treatment of his/her child on any occasion that it may be needed.

Life-Threatening Food Allergies (See Peanut Policy Statement, page 17)

In order to minimize the risk of accidental exposure to foods that can cause life-threatening allergic reactions, Southern NH Montessori Academy has developed the following policy to provide a safe environment for children who are allergic to certain foods. This policy is based on the experience of many schools, including our own, and the recommendations of experts in this area of child development. The successful implementation of this policy requires that the School staff and parents work together to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

General statements:

1. The School aims to be a welcoming and safe environment for children with Life-Threatening Allergies (LTAs) of many kinds, including food allergies. The School will make accommodations for individual students consistent with the School's program.
2. Parents of LTA children bear the ultimate responsibility for deciding what their children eat. There are several different ways that they may choose to exercise this responsibility; some of these are specified below.
3. The School and parents will work to educate the child in self-management of his/her food allergy, to the maximum extent possible for his/her developmental level.
4. Teachers or other School staff have the responsibility for understanding and following the School's policies, but teachers, staff and the School cannot be responsible for outcomes when these policies are followed.

5. Classroom teachers are responsible for working with parents to adapt classroom procedures for each child's needs. These adaptations must be consistent with the School's program and are subject to review by the Head of School.

Specific Family Responsibilities

1. Notify the School of the child's allergy in advance of the school year, or as soon as the child is diagnosed.
2. Provide the School with a Food Allergy Action Plan, reviewed by the allergist that guides response in an emergency. The Food Allergy Action Plan must include a photo of said child. Since the School does not have a full-time nurse on staff, the Plan includes instructions about when to call 911.
3. Provide written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a physician, using the Food Allergy Action Plan as a guide.
4. Review with the school staff the procedures that accommodate the child's need throughout the school, including in the classroom, in common areas, in after-care programs, during school-sponsored activities.
5. Educate the child in self-management of his/her food allergy, to the maximum extent possible for his/her developmental level. Children's education includes:
 - safe and unsafe foods
 - strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe food
 - symptoms of allergic reactions
 - how and when to tell an adult s/he may be having an allergy-related problem
6. Review policies/procedures with the school staff, the child's physician, and the child (if age appropriate) after a reaction has occurred.
7. Provide and update emergency contact information.

School Responsibilities

1. Offer training and education to school staff that describes: what foods cause food allergies; how to avoid reactions; the typical symptoms of an allergic reaction; and what medications are used to control a reaction.
2. Review the health records submitted by parents and physicians.
3. Review the Food Allergy Action Plans to assure that the plan is clear, is understood by key staff, that key staff are trained as needed, and that needed materials are located in appropriate areas (and clearly labeled).
4. Designate school staff and ensure their proper training to administer medication in accordance with the state nursing laws governing the administration of emergency medications.
5. Follow federal and state laws and regulations regarding sharing medical information about the student.
6. Maintain an Individual Health Care Plan for any school student identified with a potentially life-threatening allergy in conjunction with the student's parent/guardian and primary care provider and/or allergy specialist.
7. Educate parents about any foods that may not be brought into the classroom (e.g., no products containing nuts are allowed in a room with a nut-allergic child).
8. Review and update this policy as needed.

Implementation plans

The simplest implementation plan, recommended by the School, is that any child with a LTA eats only the food that his/her family sends in. This food is labeled in a way that clearly identifies the child and will be kept in a designated area. This plan has the advantage that the child's school experience helps build the child's independence; s/he knows that food offered in public settings is never permissible. Rather than children being asked to develop school and non-school behaviors, children learn one set of behaviors applicable everywhere.

One common adaptation, often used as the child gets older: children are able to identify some categories of food, e.g., fruit and cheese, that never cause problems; and they eat these freely; other categories, e.g., baked goods, they never eat away from home but instead substitute family provided snacks. We will work with families if there are needs specific to the child or the family, in accordance with the general statements listed above.

Policy on Child Abuse and Neglect

The policy of Southern NH Education Campus concerning child abuse and neglect complies with and conforms to the New Hampshire Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Statute, relevant sections of which are as follows:

Pursuant to New Hampshire RSA 169-C:29, information by any citizen regarding the suspected abuse and neglect of a child is not confidential and must be reported to the Central Intake Unit of the child protection agency, Division of Children, Youth and Families. The law specifically states:

"Any physician, surgeon, county medical examiner, psychiatrist, resident, intern, dentist, osteopath, optometrist, chiropractor, psychologist, therapist, registered nurse, hospital personnel (engaged in admission, examination, care and treatment of persons), Christian Science practitioner, teacher, school official, school nurse, school counselor, social worker, day care worker, any other child or foster care worker, law enforcement official, priest, minister, or rabbi or any other person having reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected shall report the same in accordance with this chapter."

If a school staff member suspects that a child has been abused or neglected, he/she will make a report immediately to the Division of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). An oral report should be made to DCYF by telephone and followed within 48 hours by a written report, if so requested by DCYF. Each report shall, if known, contain:

The name and address of the child or children suspected of being neglected and/or abused.

The name of the parent or caregiver responsible for the child's welfare.

The specific information and/or observations indicating neglect or the nature and extent of the child's or children's injuries.

The identity of the person(s) suspected of being responsible for such abuse and neglect.

Any other information that might be helpful in the investigation or that may be required by DCYF. For a complete list of information to report, please refer to *Child Abuse and Neglect; Guidelines for New Hampshire Educators: Identifying and Reporting suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (Attorney General's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect – Second Edition, 2002.)*

CODE OF BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

Discipline and Montessori Education

Maria Montessori observed that true discipline is achieved through the kind of purposeful activity that one “inwardly desires and ... has a natural inclination... the kind of work that gives order to a person’s life and opens up to it infinite possibilities of growth.” Discipline in a Montessori classroom comes through the prepared environment, proper use of didactic materials, and a thorough understanding of the child’s developmental needs.

Most behavioral issues are resolved through the following techniques:

- Prepared Environment – If the prepared environment is creative, emotionally satisfying, and intellectually stimulating, children will have many opportunities for self-development and will develop self-discipline. At SNHEC, the teachers prepare the classroom environment to encourage social, emotional, and intellectual growth and provide ample opportunity for “work.” The teachers also employ several techniques that encourage the development of self-discipline including routine, clear delineation of limits, fair application of rules, consistency, open communication, encouragement of positive behavior, and logical consequences. In some classrooms this work takes place in the Peace Place – a quiet area designed for reflection, meditation, and conflict resolution.
- Modeling of Positive Behavior – The School’s teachers are gifted individuals, dedicated Montessorians, skilled observers, and well-versed in child development. All members of the staff model the type of behavior that they wish to instill in children.
- Self Esteem – Children with high self-esteem believe in their own inherent goodness and the goodness of others and are less likely to engage in negative behavior. At SNHEC, the teachers foster children’s self-esteem through demonstrating daily respect for each and every child, delineating limits and applying rules fairly.

If a student consistently disregards the rules by which the community has agreed to abide, the teacher seeks the underlying causes of the behavior, assists the student in developing an understanding of the inappropriateness of the action, and helps the child to seek constructive alternatives. If such behavior continues, then the teacher requests a meeting with the Head of School who, in consultation with others, observes the child in the classroom. Staff involved with the child will meet to evaluate the child and develop a plan for dealing with the behavior. Shortly thereafter, a meeting between the teachers, administrators, and parents is scheduled and through the home/school partnership the adults develop a plan for helping the child to change his or her behavior. Outside resources may be recommended or required. Failure to resolve the problem could result in the child having to be temporarily or permanently removed from the classroom and/or withdrawn from the School.

Biting Policy

Biting cannot and will not be tolerated. When a bite occurs, the biter is told that biting people is unacceptable behavior. If a student is biting in response to another's aggression, a measured negotiation between the children and the classroom teacher will ensue. If the biting continues and becomes a pattern of behavior, any one or more of the following measures may be taken:

- Interventions to help the child modify his or her behavior
- Conferences with the child's parents
- Evaluation by outside professionals
- Removal of the child from the classroom temporarily or permanently at the recommendation of the classroom teacher and the decision of the Head of School

We believe that the growth and development of the child must be the focus in all observations, discussions, and disciplinary actions. However, we also recognize that sometimes even the best efforts may be unsuccessful and that in order to preserve the climate of respect for others, ensure the safety of all of the children, and facilitate learning, additional measures may be required.

Bullying Policy

The School does NOT tolerate bullying.

Bullying is behavior that goes beyond the normal bounds of children's play. Some amount of teasing or physical interaction may be expected among children with appropriate correction from a teacher and/or discussion at classroom meetings are appropriate responses. However, when one child – without provocation – systematically and repeatedly hurts another child verbally, physically, or emotionally, this behavior is appropriately labeled *bullying* and is outside acceptable norms for School behavior.

Examples: when done repeatedly by one child towards another child, these activities are appropriately labeled as bullying – hitting, pushing, harsh teasing, put-downs, name-calling, threats, pranks, and spreading false rumors. Bullying can take place face-to-face or through electronic communications, e.g., via email or on social networking sites.

When a teacher is concerned that a child's behavior pattern may be considered bullying, or when an egregious incident occurs that gives a teacher a new interpretation of a child's past behavior, she will notify the Head of School. The following steps will be taken to address the issue:

- Head of School will meet with the child to underline appropriate school rules and expected behaviors.
- Head of School and teacher will meet with the child's parents to review the child's behavior and appropriate expectations. The School will support the family in resolution of this behavior, however the School may additionally request that the family enlist the support of outside resources (e.g., evaluation or therapy).
- Head of School and teacher will set consequences. These may include written apologies to the child, loss of recess time, and setting up closer supervision of the child. In extreme cases, a child may be suspended from school.
- The School will work with the child who is the target of the bullying behavior to ensure s/he is not intimidated. Parents will be contacted to inform them of the situation and the School's actions to protect their child. The family will have the support of the School's staff to help overcome the impact on the child who has been the target.

In addressing incidents of bullying, the School will respond to both the need for safety and reassurance for the child who is targeted and the need of the perpetrator to learn that his or her behavior is not acceptable.

Note: legislation was signed into New Hampshire law in July 2010 revising the statute on pupil safety and violence prevention to include harassment, intimidation, bullying, and cyberbullying this affects the way that schools respond to reports of bullying.

Other Serious Issues

SNHEC has a spirit and character which has precluded the need to delineate more serious disciplinary behaviors, such as fighting, harassment (sexual or other), bullying, possession or use of illegal drugs, tobacco, alcohol, weapons, inappropriate text or digital materials, theft, academic cheating, and destruction of property. Such offenses will be addressed immediately.

Cell Phones and Other Handheld Digital Devices

The School aims to create a community of students, teachers, and families that is cohesive and appreciative of all other members of the community. While technology has become an important communication tool in our society, it can also interfere with good interpersonal communication and therefore with our goals of being a cohesive and appreciative community. In the case of parents, cell phone use may at times also create safety concerns.

Students:

We ask families to keep students' cell phones and other handheld digital devices (e.g., personal music players and games) at home. *If it is necessary to have a cell phone or other handheld digital device at school (e.g., a cell phone to help communicate with parents after school), the device shall be turned off while on school grounds (including while on school trips) and kept out-of-sight in a child's cubby.* This prohibition of use at school includes the time at school before school starts and after school finishes for the day. Please note children who have a legitimate need to make a phone call may do so using a school phone with the permission of a teacher or staff person. Any violation of this policy may result in the device being taken away (to be returned to a parent). A second offense will necessitate a meeting between the student, the parents, and the Head of School. One exception to this policy: students in UE may be requested to bring in personal music players to use as part of their work in Music class.

Parents:

We ask parents not to use cell phones on the School grounds or School trips when children are present. In particular:

- Cell phones should not be used in the driveway or parking lot when children are present. Cell phones are distractions, and the safety of the children demands that parents not use cell phones when driving a car in our parking lot and children are present. When you arrive early for pickup and children have not yet appeared, cell phone use is permitted. When children appear, please discontinue cell phone use immediately. Similarly, parents are free to use cell phones in the parking lot after drop off when no children are present.
- Cell phones should not be used in the hallways of the school, please, no exceptions!

- Under no circumstances may drivers use cell phones (or any other distracting electronic device) while driving on a school-sponsored trip. Exception: if you need to verify directions or report a problem, please pull off the road to use your cell phone.

Computer and Internet Use Policy for Students

Computers are available for Elementary and Middle School students. Children learn the skills they need to be productive technology users in all areas of the curriculum. The School uses Apple iPad iMac computers and a wireless network.

The Internet – The Internet is a vast network, linking computers around the world. It has great potential both for use and abuse. This policy exists to help ensure that students use this valuable resource in a safe and appropriate manner. All computer use at the school and Internet access done through the School must be consistent with and in support of the School’s curricular guidelines and educational objectives.

Student Responsibility – Each student is expected to take individual responsibility for his or her appropriate use of the Internet. While all student use of the Internet is to be conducted under adult supervision, adults are not expected to monitor student use at every moment.

Internet Access is a Privilege – Internet access through the School is a privilege. School officials may revoke a student’s privilege if it is abused. Inappropriate conduct via SNHEC’s Internet access system will be subject to disciplinary action in conformity with the school’s rules and local and federal laws.

Administrators’ Access to Student Files – Uses of SNHEC’s Internet access system are not private. School authorities may examine all student computer files and records, including files on the School computers and on their own computers when brought to school. Administrators will cooperate in providing access to law enforcement authorities when required.

System Security and Resource Limits – Students are expected to follow procedures and guidelines that are given to students to protect the security of the School’s computer system and respect its resource limits, including rules regarding downloading software and files.

Network Etiquette – Students are expected to follow rules of Internet network etiquette, as well as any rules that apply to their particular classroom. These include acting respectfully towards others and using language that is not offensive.

Internet Filtering & Monitoring Practices – In order to help provide safe Internet access for all students and in accordance with the Federal Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), there is limited filtering in place designed to block inappropriate websites. However, no filtering is 100% effective. SNHEC will make all reasonable efforts to monitor the online activities of minors while using computers.

Unacceptable Uses – The following uses of SNHEC Internet access are unacceptable for students:

- Accessing, transmitting, or receiving obscene, pornographic, or illegal material.
- Accessing social networking sites such as Facebook and Snapchat and Instagram.
- Engaging in cyber-cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is taking material created by others and presenting it as if it were one’s own. School policies on cheating, cyber cheating, and/or plagiarism are applicable to students’ use of the Internet.
- Infringing copyrights, including software and information in text or visual format.

- Participating in commercial or political activities that are not directly related to the educational purposes of Southern NH Education Campus.
- Accessing chat rooms, engaging in instant messaging, or posting to bulletin board services.
- Posting or filling out forms with private or personal information about yourself or information about another person.
- Attempting to access another person's files without permission.
- Receiving or sending email from personal home accounts.
- Tampering with computer hardware or software, unauthorized entry into computers, and knowledgeable vandalism such as transferring viruses or destruction of someone else's computer files.

Unacceptable Behaviors – The following behaviors are unacceptable, using any medium at any time:

- Communicating abusive or harassing messages to others or about others.
- Distributing pictures of others without their consent. Please refer to the School's Policy on Bullying (page 25).

Disclaimer of Liability – SNHEC disclaims all liability for the content of material that a student may access on the Internet, for any damages suffered in the course of or as a result of the student's Internet use, and for any other consequences of a student's Internet use.

Part III: Parents' Responsibilities

Partnership With Parents

Admission, Enrollment & Financial Aid

Tuition, Fees & Payment Schedules

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Maria Montessori wrote at length about the role of the parents and the family in the education of a child. Parents and teachers alike must work together in service of the child to provide an environment that corresponds to his or her developmental needs and satisfies his or her creative impulses. The support that the child needs comes in a consistent approach to learning that extends beyond home or school and into everyday living:

What's Happenin' ?

Keeping up-to-date with school events is a key parent responsibility. To help ensure that parents have access to accurate and timely information, the School uses the following modes of communications.

- SNHEC Weekly Newsletter. Parents will receive the weekly newsletter via email typically on Monday. The newsletter contains a detailed overview of the events for the coming week, a column written by the Head of School, articles by staff about their class activities and detailed information written by adjunct staff. We strongly encourage families to keep this information accessible for easy referral.
- The SNHEC online calendar is accessible from the School's website (www.snhma.org and www.nhsal.org.) and is kept fully up-to-date. Please bookmark the calendar and refer to it often.

Maintaining Effective Communication

At SNHEC, our goal is to work with parents to meet the needs of their children at each stage of their development. In order to accomplish this goal, the parents, teachers, and administrators must maintain close communication with each other. Some teachers prefer to communicate through email; some prefer a telephone conversation; and some prefer face-to-face conferences with parents. In all cases, our faculty will let you know the best way to communicate with them at Parent Information Night at the beginning of the school year.

Throughout the year, there are a number of scheduled opportunities that enable parents to participate in their child's schooling, learn more about Montessori education, and communicate with teachers. Our teachers and administrators work hard to make these events interesting, relevant, and enlightening. We encourage families to attend as many of the following events as possible.

Parents Information Night – Prior to the beginning of the school year, this is an opportunity devised to give families new to SNHEC a more in depth understanding of life within our community. In the course of this venue we will share the Vision and Mission we promote at SNHEC. Parents will be introduced to the staff, gain an understanding as to how communication is conducted, receive an overview of the school calendar and where to find such information, learn about the dress code, receive particulars of the day; arrivals and dismissals and ultimately, come to a better understanding of the both the core and enrichment curriculum.

Celebration of Learning – Conferences are scheduled into our academic calendar. During the February conference we "Celebrate Learning!" This is a student led conference, at which, the the student shares and demonstrates their learning with his/her parents. They decide on two-three work materials to share. Parents observe the child while they demonstrate the work they chose to show. Teachers will prepare and share via Montessori Compass the child's mid-year report.

Continue the Journey– Continue the Journey allows parents the opportunity to experience each Montessori environment from Early Childhood through Upper Elementary. Lead Teachers for each program will demonstrate respective Montessori materials and explain the objectives associated with these Montessori materials explaining how each level builds upon the previous level. This major event, held annually, is key to understanding the Montessori educational program offered at the School. Parents are expected to attend at least once in their first two years at the School.

A Day in the Life (Mini Day) – Typically held in the fall, this important Early Childhood and Lower Elementary event allows parents to assimilate to their child’s Montessori experience. Children will share their day, their work and their friends, fundamentally allowing parents to work side-by-side with their child to experience their day in a condensed format.

Parent Observation – We encourage all parents to spend time observing their child in the classroom. We are confident that your visits will help you learn more about your child, our classroom environments, and the Montessori experience. The School asks that your 30-minute observation be scheduled in advance. Upon your visit, observation guidelines will be provided as will a comfortable chair in the assigned classroom. Observers are asked to remain in the classroom to which they are assigned and not float to another classroom. For our younger students, these observation times are scheduled later in the year.

Written Communications About Your Child

Progress Reports

Parents often ask how students are “evaluated” - and how progress is mapped - without grades, tests, and quizzes. Each child’s progress at School is monitored daily by the teachers (through written records) and by students (through their workbooks or journals). Assessment and feedback are both constant and cumulative through self-correcting work, collaborative learning, and interaction with teachers. Elementary and Middle School students also participate in weekly, one-on-one meetings with teachers to review the current week’s work and formulate a plan for the coming week. In addition to the information exchanged through Parent/Teacher Conferences, a written assessment of a child’s development is communicated to the parents three times during the school year, fall, winter and spring.

Middle School students transition to a proficiency based grading model, whereby, on a trimester basis, they will receive both a mid-term progress report and a trimester report card. Student evaluations are reflective of both formative and summative work accomplished within the marking period. The Proficiency Scale reflects: E - Exemplary (5), PD- Proficient with Distinction (4), P - Proficient (3), AP - Approaching Proficiency (2) and EP - Evidence of Emerging Proficiency. Additionally, their evaluations include qualitative General Learning Outcomes as well: Self-Directed Learner, Community Contributor, Quality Producer, Effective Communicator, and Effective/Ethical Use of Technology.

Learning Skills Program & Special Services

Some children, during their time at SNHEC, may need services beyond what the School staff can provide. These services include tutoring, an educational (psychoneurological) evaluation, or psychological counseling (therapy). Recommendations that a child receive special services are sometimes made by the School, and when we do so, it is after careful deliberation by the teachers who know the child best and other School staff. The Head of School is always part of these deliberations. At other times, parents initiate these services, most often after discussion with the classroom teacher and/or Head of School.

The School maintains a list of individuals who specialize in these support services. The lists are based on recommendations from other school families and from School staff. These lists can be obtained from the Head of School and are intended only to give you a starting point in selecting someone with the relevant expertise. You as parents have the final responsibility for selecting the individual with whom you and your child will work. If you find evaluators, therapists, or tutors with whom you have worked successfully, please pass the names and contact information of these individuals to the Head of School, so that this information can be made available to other school families.

Other Communication Systems

Email

While many modes of communication are used at the School for communicating with families, email has become the most common way that we send information to families. For example: You will receive the *Southern NH Education Campus* weekly newsletter via e-mail. Similarly, many families are now sending e-mail messages to staff and administrators. While e-mail is a wonderful resource, we also want to point to its limitations: emotionally charged issues should be dealt with in person, and e-mail, if used at all, is best used as a prelude to a face-to-face meeting.

The School has set up e-mail addresses for each member of the faculty and administration and published in the Campus Directory. Most staff are regular users of e-mail, and a few are only occasional users; staff members will inform you about their preferences. All administrative staff are available on e-mail on a regular basis. You can expect that staff will make every attempt to respond to parent/guardian questions/concerns within 24 hours.

Student Information System

The School uses a database to maintain all our information about students and families. This database is regularly used by all members of the administration and staff for all the administrative purposes of the school, including maintaining family contact information (addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, work information, grandparent information), recording attendance, and organizing progress reports. The Student Information System has become a key School resource and is protected by appropriate levels of security.

Prior to commencement of the academic school year, we ask that families review all contact information on file to help us keep our records current.

The Southern NH Education Campus Partnership

The SNHEC Partnership involves a substantial commitment by parents and by the School to a shared goal. Parents understand this commitment as a key part of their child's education.

What is the shared goal? Parents select the School because they want their children to develop to their full potential in all respects—academically, socially, and in their values and beliefs. Parents and the School share a passionate commitment to our children becoming successful and enthusiastic learners and thoughtful, aware, and responsible human beings. This is the shared goal.

We know that our children are most likely to reach this ambitious goal when parents and the School work closely together on their behalf. This is the reason for the partnership.

What is SNHEC's role in this Partnership? SNHEC is committed to providing an excellent educational experience to each child. The School is committed to making sure that each child is known as an individual by his/her teachers. The School is committed to listening to, understanding, and responding to the family's point of view and parents' important insights into their child. Finally, the School is committed to creating events of great value to families in understanding the School's learning and teaching approach.

What is the parents' role in this Partnership? Parents are committed to developing an understanding of the School's learning and teaching approach, at their child's level and also more generally. How are reading and mathematics taught at my child's levels, and how can parents help at home? How can we encourage each child to feel in charge of his or her learning? How do we teach children to work through disagreements? How do we teach children to show respect for other people and for the earth we share? By parents and teachers sharing these fundamental approaches to each child's learning, children experience their world as unitary and consistent, which helps them develop to their fullest.

To enable parents to develop this understanding, the School schedules several key events each year. These events may change over time. The current list includes:

For all parents:

- Parent Observations
- A Day in the Life (Mini Day)
- Parent-Teacher Conferences (about your child)
- Continue the Journey (Montessori/Applied Learning overview)

For parents who are new to the School:

Parent Information Night (overview of SNHEC)

ADMISSION, ENROLLMENT, AND FINANCIAL AID

New Applicants

Southern NH Education Campus seeks to enroll curious, creative, self-motivated learners who will thrive in the prepared environment of a Montessori classroom. The admission process that these children experience is designed to educate the children and their families to both the educational philosophy and methodology used in the classroom and the values embraced by our school community. While applications are accepted throughout the year, the admission process formally begins in late-autumn for the next academic year and ends in early spring with the introduction of new students to their school, teachers, and classmates.

Interested families should follow the steps outlined below throughout the admission process:

- SNHEC offers the public an opportunity to tour its facilities and explore its campus at open houses scheduled throughout the admission season.
- Interested families must call the Administrative Office at (603) 818-8613 to request a tour, schedule an in-classroom observation, and arrange a meeting with the Head of School. The in-classroom observation is highly encouraged as part of the admission process. After the tour and in-classroom observation, the family meets with the Head of School, who will talk with the family about their goals and expectations and answer any question the family may have about the classroom learning environment, the staff, the School curriculum, or the admission process.
- Parents or guardians submit a completed application with a non-refundable fee on behalf of the child applicant. A decision to apply for admission to the School is an indication of the family's willingness to embrace the SNHEC philosophy and methodology that was witnessed during the tour and in-classroom observation and discussed with the Head of School. It is a statement of intent. This is a one-time fee at the time of initial application.
- When the School receives the application and non-refundable fee, the Admission staff opens an application file for the child, requests additional information from the family as necessary, invites the child applicant to visit the School if appropriate, and serves the family as a point of contact and facilitator throughout the admission process. The purpose of a child applicant visit or a student interview is to gain more information about the family and the child and to determine the child's readiness for a particular kind of classroom experience. It is an opportunity to discuss attitudes and values and determine whether there is a "good fit" between home and school.
- All applicants are notified of the decisions by early March and if accepted, an Enrollment Contract is e-mailed with the notification. Each family has 30 days to respond and enroll by signing and returning the Enrollment Contract and paying the tuition deposit. If the contract is not returned within 10 days, the School cannot guarantee that an accepted child will be enrolled. Note: the School will adjust the dates and times for "late" applicants.
- A child is considered enrolled only when the Enrollment Contract is signed and returned and a non-refundable tuition deposit is paid to the School.

SNHEC is a nonsectarian school that does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, creed, religion, national origin, cultural heritage, age, sex, marital status, or sexual orientation in the administration of either its admission or employment policies or procedures. However, in its effort to

create the most positive educational environment, relatively even distribution of boys, girls, and ages is critical to the success of each three-year developmental cycle in which the students are grouped. The School thus reserves the right to select children for admission to the School on the basis of their age, gender, and/or current grade level.

Re-Enrollment Procedures

An Enrollment Contract and Tuition and Fees Schedule, will be emailed to current students and their families in mid-January. If there is any question regarding the status of a student's opportunity for re-enrollment, the School will notify the family in lieu of an Enrollment Contract.

Current families should follow the steps outlined below in the re-enrollment process. Exact dates are set in the School Calendar:

- The Enrollment Contract is mailed to current families on or about January 15.
- Each family must re-enroll by signing and returning the Enrollment Contract and paying the non-refundable tuition deposit. All enrollment contracts are due and tuition deposits payable by early February.
- After the February date, the admission process is open to all applicants, and the School cannot guarantee that a current student will be re-enrolled. A child is considered re-enrolled only when the Enrollment Contract is signed and returned and a non-refundable tuition deposit is paid to the School. If you have questions or concerns about family circumstances or issues particular to your child that may make your child's return uncertain, please speak with the Head of School as soon as the concerns are known to you. Exceptions may be made on a case-by case basis.
- Finally, acceptance of the Enrollment Contract is predicated on the successful completion of the year in progress and full payment of the current year's tuition and fees. If a child should fail to complete such work successfully, or not meet expectations set forth in this *Handbook*, or his or her parents' payment of the current year's tuition and fees is not made in full, the School reserves the right to terminate the contract and refund the tuition deposit.

Financial Aid Policy

SNHEC grants financial aid to students who have been admitted to the School and have demonstrated a need for assistance in paying the costs associated with a SNHEC education. The Financial Aid Program seeks to ensure that once enrolled, a student need not withdraw for financial reasons. Financial aid takes the form of tuition reduction rather than full tuition grants or scholarships. When a family has a demonstrated need for assistance and completes the application process in a timely manner, financial aid is available on a limited basis.

Interested families must contact the Administrative Office to request a financial aid application. Once received, the completed forms are to be submitted for evaluation by late January/early February for tuition assistance for the next academic year. All applications for assistance are held in strict confidence. Applicants will be informed of their status by early April. Financial aid awards are not negotiable. Families receiving financial aid must reapply for this assistance each year.

TUITION, FEES, AND PAYMENT SCHEDULES

Enrollment

A completed Tuition and Enrollment Contract together with the appropriate Tuition Deposit must be received by February 15, to reserve a space for your child at Southern NH Education Campus during the upcoming academic year if your child is currently enrolled at SNHEC and intending to return to the School in the fall.

Tuition Payment Plan

The School offers three tuition payment plans as outlined below.

1. Single Payment Plan – Payment of 100% of tuition on or before June 1 qualifying for a 3% tuition discount.
2. Two Payment Plan – The first Payment is comprised of 50% of tuition and the second payment is comprised of 50% of tuition paid, on or before December 1, qualifying for a 1% tuition discount.
3. Monthly Payment Plan – Ten equal monthly payments each of 10% of the total of tuition with the first payment due August 1 and the last April 1.

PLEASE NOTE: Families selecting, but not meeting, the payment schedule of either the Single or Two Payment Plan will be automatically moved from the Single to the Two Payment Plan – or from the Two to the Ten Payment Plan. Also, a late fee of \$45 will be assessed on unpaid balances after the payment due dates.

In case of a check being returned for insufficient funds, a \$35 fee will be assessed for each occurrence.

Non-refundability of Tuition Deposit and Tuition Fees

The Tuition Deposit and the annual Tuition and Fees are non-refundable. If a student is absent, withdrawn, or dismissed from the School for any reason whatsoever, the obligation to pay annual tuition and fees shall continue as though the student were enrolled and in attendance for the entire academic year.

Non-transferability of Tuition Deposit, Tuition and Fees

The Tuition Deposit and the annual tuition fees are not transferable and will not be applied to another child's tuition, summer camp fees, or annual fund obligations and the like.

Student Accounts in Arrears

It is the policy of the school that all tuitions and fees must be paid in full by May 1; and at least 50% of tuition and fees must be paid by December 1. Families whose tuition and fees are not paid by these dates will be asked to keep their child home until appropriate payment is made. Exception to this policy may only be made by the Head of School. The School may refuse to sign a contract with a parent and/or a legal guardian whose payments of tuition and fees are in arrears from a previous school year. The School will release a student's record only when the student's account is paid in full. The School may also terminate student enrollment when there is a failure to pay tuition and fees.

Withdrawal and Late Entrance Policies

Pro rata allowance will be made if the student is accepted after the first four weeks of school, but no reduction or credit will be granted if the student is withdrawn.

Mandatory Withdrawal or Termination Policy

When students are enrolled at SNHEC, it is expressly and implicitly understood that both the student and his or her parents agree to support and abide by rules and regulations outlined in the Enrollment Contract, this *Parent Handbook*, and/or other communications to families of children enrolled at the School.

If school rules are continuously violated, the student repeatedly engages in disruptive behavior, or he/she suffers such serious academic problems that the School believes that it is unable and/or inadequately staffed to meet the needs of the student, or if at any time the student's presence in the School poses a threat or a danger to the safety and security of others or a student's influence is considered a harmful presence in School, the School reserves the right to require withdrawal.

Also, the School, in consultation with a physician and/or psychologist, reserves the right to request withdrawal of a student for medical or psychological reasons.

Finally, as said above, the student may be required to withdraw from SNHEC for the failure of his or her family to pay the contracted tuition and fees in a timely manner.

PART IV: PARENTS' SUPPORT FOR SOUTHERN NH MONTESSORI ACADEMY

Volunteerism & Community Service

VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

From our earliest days, the livelihood and success of SNHEC has been closely linked to a strong spirit of volunteerism among our parents. Throughout the year there are numerous opportunities for parents to contribute their talents to benefit our children and our School and to become more involved in SNHEC-based community outreach programs.

SNHEC Ambassadors

SNHEC ambassadors are needed for the Open House events during the year and to correspond with prospective parents and discuss their personal experiences with our school.

SNHEC Parent Teacher Organization (P.T.O.)

The P.T.O. is an active organization of parents, teachers and administration who support the School through fundraising and volunteerism. The mission of the P.T.O is to foster a spirit of cooperation and involvement within our community.

All parents of children currently enrolled at the School and current staff are members of the P.T.O. Monthly meetings are held throughout the school year, and we encourage parents to attend.

The P.T.O. is instrumental in organizing and implementing vital programs and events during the year and welcomes parent volunteers.

Volunteer Co-op

As part of the SNHEC community we ask that you volunteer 15 hours of your time over the course of the school year. All volunteer hours should be approved and logged. As a School, we reserve the right to ask for up to \$250.00 per family in lieu of volunteer hours to be paid to the SNHEC Scholarship Fund.

Activities: P.T.O, Read with Me, Read to Me, Open House Ambassadors, Scholarship Committee, School Social Events, Field Trip Chaperone/Driver, Laminating, Painting, After-school Program Assistance, etc.

Southern NH Education Campus

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www.nhsal.org

Non-Discriminatory Statement

Southern NH Education Campus is a nonsectarian school that does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, creed, religion, national origin, cultural heritage, age, sex, marital status, or sexual orientation in the administration of either its admission or employment policies or procedures