



WALDEN GREEN MONTESSORI FAMILY HANDBOOK



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Vision: Love of learning, Freedom to fly.

Mission: Walden Green Montessori strives to educate and develop our students to prepare them for the world beyond our doors. We do this through child-centered activities that:

- *Develop curiosity, creativity and character*
- *Foster independence and social responsibility within a community framework*
- *Inspire the love of learning independently and collaboratively*
- *Highlight global justice, fairness, and peace*

Values:

Compassion - Open and committed to understanding and supporting one another

The Walden Green Montessori school community believes in a sense of openness and commitment to understanding one another. Through this understanding, we are able to instill a sense of empathy for others' perspectives and support one another by giving freely of ourselves.

Curiosity - Inquisitive beyond established frameworks

An inquisitive nature drives exploration beyond established frameworks of understanding and builds a deeper understanding of the world around us.

Creativity - Originality and fostering of ideas

Our value of curiosity sparks originality and inspires the innovation of ideas. We encourage our community to foster ideas beyond established frameworks.

Inclusive - Share and receive towards understanding

The Walden Green Our community is best when it involves a variety of perspectives. Though it is not always easy to meld ideas and visions to a common understanding, we hold true to the idea that it is in the best interest of all of us to share and receive willingly to provide a sense of clarity and a richer understanding.

Integrity - Open, honest, and accountable

At Walden Green, we hold all stakeholders to the highest level of character and accountability. We believe in ethical behavior and we will strive to make our values self evident and attractive to students.

Liberty, Order & The Prepared Environment

The Montessori philosophy asserts that a child will only achieve an intrinsic sense of order when environmental boundaries are well defined and choices are given within those boundaries. Children inherently desire the liberty to act on their environment and to make choices concerning the structure of their day. Walden Green classrooms are multi-ability environments. Within this carefully prepared environment, children become at ease with their own abilities and are encouraged to be self motivated and aspire to their human potential.

Montessori believed that children construct knowledge within themselves. To this end, skills and materials are introduced and the child's imagination and interest lead to further exploration. Children work at their own skill and ability level regardless of age or grade. It is the teachers charge to create the environment and ensure that a child progresses through the curriculum.

Our classrooms are a place of beauty and order that physically embody the Montessori Method and the Walden Green curriculum. Work, equipment and materials are arranged in a logical sequence to foster harmony between skill levels and subject matter. Children are given choices throughout the day and are exposed to a variety of work and social situations. The prepared environment is an inviting place of wonder and excitement.

Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori was Italy's first woman physician. Born in 1870, Montessori earned degrees in engineering and medicine. In 1907, she was urged to open a child care facility for children in the San Lorenzo Quarter, a poverty stricken area of Rome. The parents of these children were forced to work long hours and the children were left to care for themselves. Montessori took on the challenge of creating an environment to meet the needs of these children and their families.

The facility and furniture were rustic but she brought with her materials that we now recognize as sensorial and practical life materials. She cautioned the teacher to allow the children to work without interruption. Montessori stated that, "Little by little they began to work with concentration and the transformation they underwent was noticeable. Their personalities grew and strange though it may seem, they showed extraordinary understanding, activity, vivacity and confidence. They were happy and joyous."

Montessori's observations of those children gave birth to what is known as the Montessori Method. Upon her initial discoveries Montessori noted, "You must realize that what happened was something so great and so stirring that its importance could never be sufficiently recognized. It is not possible that it came from my method because my method did not yet exist. This is the clearest proof that it was a revelation that emanated from the children themselves."

As word spread about what happened with the street children of San Lorenzo, Montessori continued to study the child, design materials to aid the student in all areas of the curriculum and to document her findings. Schools began to spring up in Europe, India, and the United States and eventually around the globe. Today there are over 8,000 Montessori schools world wide and over 5,000 in the United States.

Montessori Philosophy

The philosophy that Dr. Montessori developed is based on the notion that all children have within them potential to learn. To fully embrace those potentials, children need purposeful activities and freedom to explore their environment. Children develop and think differently than adults; they aren't simply adults in a child's body. Montessori believed that it is human nature to create, work, concentrate and explore the world. She also believed that children need a safe haven and a rich environment to satisfy these needs and ultimately develop a sense of order, self-discipline and inner joy. Montessori stated that, "A child's work is to create the person she/he will become."

Through her scientific method of study, Montessori discovered that small children, 0-6 year olds have a propensity to concentrate intently on certain elements of their environment. They seek certain activities and repeat a process over and over. She called these times the "sensitive periods." Adults need to provide opportunities in the environment during these sensitive periods to accommodate the child during this optimum learning time. The child, during this period, she said had an "absorbent mind."

Dr. Montessori's philosophy is also supported by her discovery of the Planes of Development. She found a progression of human development and characteristics that fit into four age categories: 0-6, 6-12, 12-18 and 18-24. Each plane reflects a particular growth phase and has a unique set of characteristics that relate to learning and child development. Montessori teachers are aware of these developmental stages and classroom environments are set up accordingly.

The Montessori Method

The Montessori Method of education flows from the philosophy. Students work in an environment especially prepared for their stage of development. Children are involved in a variety of self-directed activities and many subjects are interwoven, not taught in isolation. The materials and equipment are adapted to the developmental level of the child, moving from the concrete to the abstract stages. The Montessori equipment allows for the teaching of complex skills and ideas with a concrete or hands-on instructional approach. As Montessori stated, "Only practical work and experience lead the young to maturity." She went on to assert that, "the hands are the instruments of man's intelligence."

Children move freely about the classroom environment working individually or in small groups. Seldom are all the students studying the same thing at the same time. The work tends to be autodidactic, that is self-correcting and much of the teaching comes from the children. Our student grouping has up to two grade levels in a class and three ages. Students choose and complete tasks during 1-3 hour "work cycles" with individual and small group lessons given by the teacher.

Most classrooms have one teacher and an assistant. At Walden Green, our child/adult ratio is 15:1. As educators, we believe as Montessori believed that, “the secret of good teaching is to regard the child’s intelligence as a fertile field in which seeds may be sown, to grow under the heat of flaming imagination.”

Curriculum

Walden Green’s curriculum is based on the Montessori Method. The Montessori Method contains a philosophy of education, the psychology of the child, developmentally appropriate instructional practices and a curriculum rich in integrated subject matter. The classroom environment is created to physically embody the curriculum and deliver content with an interactive, multi-sensory instructional approach. The curriculum is also aligned with state standards and is regularly revised to more closely represent the current needs of children. For the curriculum scope and sequence, visit www.waldengreen.org.

Field Trips

Field trips are an integral part of a child’s experience at Walden Green. Field trips provide students with exposure to the world and an opportunity to expand their natural curiosity and drive to explore. Montessori spoke of what she termed the “going out” process becoming increasingly important for the elementary age child and a necessity for the adolescent.

Each child must have a current signed field trip permission slip in the office. All students should wear field trip attire on all field trips unless otherwise informed. Field trips may involve a fee. To ensure an enjoyable and safe experience for all, parent volunteers/drivers must adhere to Walden Green’s Chaperone Guidelines (available at school office).

Character Education

Character education is an important element of a Montessori classroom. The Practical Life lessons teach care of the environment, serving one another and other life skills. Grace and Courtesy lessons encourage speaking politely, being helpful and considerate and how to settle disagreements peacefully. Montessori believed these skills were equally as important as academics. Montessori declared that, “If we could say, ‘We are respectful and courteous in our dealing with children, we treat them as we should like to be treated ourselves,’ we should have mastered a great educational principle and be setting an example of good education.”

Notable Montessori Alumni

Some notable Montessori alumni include: Jeff Bezos (financial analyst & founder of Amazon.com), Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy, Anne Frank, Julia Child, T. Berry Brazelton (noted pediatrician & author), Katharine Graham (former owner & editor of the New York Times), George Clooney, Helen Hunt, Sergey Brin & Larry Page (founders of Google), Jimmy Wales (founder of Wikipedia), Prince William and Prince Harry, Gabriel Garcia Marquez (Nobel Prize Winner for Literature), Peter Drucker (management guru).

Other notable individuals with a Montessori connection include: Alexander Graham Bell (helped established the first Montessori class in Canada and one of the first in the United States), Eric Erickson (anthropologist & author had a Montessori certificate), Jean Piaget (noted Swiss psychologist made his first observations of children in a Montessori school), Mister Rogers (television personality & strong supporter of Montessori education) and Thomas Edison (helped found a Montessori school).

Assessment

Even though standardized tests will never be able to assess the whole-child, we value the data received from the M-STEP and NWEA MAP Growth assessments. At Walden Green, we carefully analyze the data to help prepare our Montessori environments and utilize it to ensure optimal learning experiences. We also use the data for our intervention programs and Child Study process.

School Day

School starts at 8:20 AM. The classrooms are open to students at 8:12 AM. Students arriving before 8:12 AM will wait outside until the front doors open at 8:12. Classes are dismissed at 3:35 PM.

Extended Day Clubs

The Extended Day Clubs are designed for before and after school hours. Before school hours are from 7:30 AM to 8:12 AM. After school hours are from 3:45 PM to 5:30 PM. Families interested in using the program must fill out an application and payment agreement, which can be obtained in the school office.

Visitors

All visitors must check into the office upon arrival at the school. This includes parent volunteers and parents who visit the school frequently. Visitors are required to sign in and out of the building and/or grounds. Upon signing in you will receive either a parent badge or a visitor badge to identify your self when in the building. Upon leaving the building all visitors must sign out and return their badge. If a visitor is in the building without a badge the staff will direct the visitor or parent to the office.

For approval to enter the building, please ring the buzzer. Because we care deeply about the safety of our students and staff, we ask that all parents/visitors remain in the front entryway. Visitors are allowed in the building if...

- *they have a scheduled meeting with a Walden Green staff member*
- *they are on the "approved volunteer list" with a completed background check*

Visitors must be respectful of the learning environment at all times. (i.e. attentive, supportive, no cellphones/devices). Teachers determine the specific need for volunteers in their classroom.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

School begins promptly at 8:20 A.M. Please drop off students between 8:12 - 8:25 AM. in the front of the school. Arriving later than 8:30 AM is considered tardy. Late arrival is not only disruptive to the classroom, but causes the child arriving late to feel out of sync and unprepared for the day. It is extremely important for children to experience a positive beginning to their school day. Being on time helps to insure a good start to the day. Students arriving after 8:30 AM are required to go to the office to get a pass before entering the classroom.

The school day ends at 3:35 PM. To assist with the car line during dismissal, students are released from class between 3:25-3:45 PM and wait along the front sidewalk for pickup. Pulling a child from school early is a disruption to the learning process and the classroom structure. If pulling a student for early dismissal, please do so before 3:00 PM and with a valid reason.

Please see the Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedures Handout for more information.

Release of Students

No student will be allowed to leave Walden Green prior to dismissal time without a written request signed by: the parent/guardian, a person whose signature is on file in the Walden Green office, or the parent/guardian who comes to the Walden Green office to request the student's release. No student will be released to a person other than the custodial parent(s) or guardian without written permission signed by the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

Please use the following guidelines to aide in the safe and orderly release and dismissal of all Walden Green students:

- ▶ *All parents will drive up and pickup students in the dismissal line or stand/wait by the cones at the front of the line.*
- ▶ *Please make car pool arrangements before your child arrives at school. Make your child aware of the person who will be picking them up.*

- *Send a written notice with your child to be given to the teacher.*
- *Make the designated person aware he/she will be asked for identification.*
- *If this change occurs after school begins, notify your child's teacher and the office giving a full description of the driver and the make of his/her vehicle.*

Emergencies

If, in an emergency, you are unable to pick up your child on time, please call the front desk (616-842-4523). If an emergency arises during the school day and your child must leave school, contact the front desk. You must sign your child out at the office whenever taking him/her out of the building before dismissal time.

Phone Calls & After School Arrangements

Students may not receive phone calls at school. Calls to the school concerning after school arrangements are not considered emergencies and will not be handled by the Walden Green staff. Please plan ahead and make after school arrangements before the start of the school day.

Daily Attendance

Please call or email the school office by 9:00 AM if your student is going to be late or absent. Your child receives maximum benefit when he/she is in regular attendance and arrives at school on time. There is a direct correlation between consistent attendance and success in school. Students are required to be in attendance each school day unless sickness prevents them from attending. In that case, a parent should supply a doctor's note to excuse an illness related absence.

Attendance records are recorded each day and become part of your child's cumulative school records. Late arrivals or tardies are also documented. It is imperative to your child's education that they arrive on time each day.

Vacations are an important part of family life but we ask that you make every effort to schedule trips around the school schedule. When children miss a week of school, there is significant adjustment as they reenter the classroom environment. Even though much of our instruction is individualized, many large group lessons, student projects and activities occur that are difficult to duplicate. Please contact the school office and your child's teacher as soon as possible if your child will be absent due to family vacations.

Absences above ten days are considered excessive. Students who exceed ten absences during the year will be referred to the attendance committee. Excessive absenteeism can result in possible retention and will be addressed by the attendance committee and principal.

Student Attendance Protocol

- *Families of a student with "Tier 3 Chronic Attendance" will be notified at the beginning each month*
- *20 absences = Begin "Extra Work Time" as needed**
- *25 absences = Dean of Students emails family to review attendance action plan, possible ISD referral**
- *30 absences = Dean of Students emails family to review attendance action plan, possible ISD referral**
- *20 tardies = Teacher notifies Dean, then Dean emails family*
- *25 tardies = Teacher notifies Dean, then Dean emails family, begin "Extra Work Time" as needed**
- *30 tardies = Teacher notifies Dean, then Dean emails family, reviews attendance action plan**
- *35 tardies = Teacher notifies Dean, then Dean emails family, reviews attendance action plan**

* *if 2nd-8th grade teacher presents educational concern and/or there has been a history of absenteeism*

Note: A 2nd-8th grade student with ≥ 30 absences will not attend "end of the year" field trips

* *"Extra Work Time" instead of non-core content (for example: no outdoor ed, no all school sing, no electives, no committees)*

Communication from School

Communication between home and school is vitally important. The Walden staff encourages close cooperation and open communication between school and home. Part of being a Walden parent is keeping up on the school's activities and your child's classroom. We will make every effort to communicate to you the activities in the classroom and school community. Parents can stay informed by using the following resources provided by Walden Green:

- ▶ *The Walden Weekly (Principal's Newsletter)*
- ▶ Website: waldengreen.org.
- ▶ *Emails from the teachers and the office.*
- ▶ *Flyers and Announcements of upcoming events.*
- ▶ *School Work including drawings, math, writing and other items your child brings home.*

School Closing & Severe Weather

In the event of inclement weather or an emergency, the Walden Green staff will make every effort to keep all children safe. The following procedures apply to such events:

- ▶ *Civil Defense Procedure: When an official notice of impending danger provides an ample warning period, all Walden Green students will be sent home. Parents will be made aware of such a decision through radio and television announcements. In the event that there is an insufficient warning period to allow students to reach their homes safely, students will remain at the Walden Green building under the supervision of the Walden staff.*
- ▶ *Severe Weather Procedure: In the event of a tornado or severe thunderstorm watch or warning, students will remain at Walden Green under the care of the Walden staff. All possible steps will be taken to ensure the safety of all persons in the Walden Green building. Parents may exercise the option of removing their child from school with proper notice and following all applicable procedures.*
- ▶ *School Closing Procedure: At times, the winter month's extreme weather conditions make travel difficult. In making the decision to close school, Walden Green takes travel conditions and the status of other area schools into consideration. In the event that there is a school closing, for winter conditions or any other reason, Walden Green will communicate the closing to you via WOODTV8, WZZM13, and the Remind App.*

Conferences

Formal conferences are scheduled twice each academic year. It is a time set aside to share your child's successes and challenges. Conferences are not a time to solve a particular problem. Separate meetings to problem solve are always an option. Conferences provide an opportunity to evaluate a child's progress, present some examples of work and talk about future goals. All parents are required to attend conferences. If the times made available do not fit your schedule, please contact the classroom teacher for possible alternatives. Conference dates can be found on the school calendar. Individual conferences are scheduled by your child's classroom teacher.

Communication with Teachers

When you need to communicate with the classroom teacher, please email or call. Teachers are not available just before school begins, during the school day or dismissal. They are, however, happy to meet with you after school at a time that is mutually convenient.

Communication with Second Families

When parents are divorced, the school will make every effort to keep communication open with both parents. We will need addresses, including email and phone numbers for each parent. We strongly encourage both parents to attend conferences and all other family gatherings at the school.

Concern and Question Resolution

Parents/caregivers with classroom-related concerns/questions should first discuss the matter with their child's teacher. Connecting via phone or meeting face-to-face can be a quick and concise way to address specific questions and clear-up potential misunderstandings. If the matter is not resolved with the classroom teacher, then parents/caregivers may reach out to administration. Walden Green teachers appreciate this "chain of communication" so they have the opportunity to address concerns/questions - rather than being bypassed. In most situations, teachers respond to emails within 2 school days. For significant and/or urgent situations, parents should email or call school administration. Issues concerning school policy and all other concerns or questions should be addressed by the school director. If the issue cannot be resolved it will be presented to the Walden Green Board of Directors by the school director.

Dress Code and Accessories

The Walden Green staff realizes that a child's dress can be a reflection of an individual's unique spirit. However, students who fail to dress properly and not in accordance with the school policy will not be permitted to attend class. We consider the matter of individual student dress to be a responsibility of the parents of students attending school. It should be clear to all students and parents that any student dressing in such a way as to be a disturbing influence upon the normal operation of the school or dressing in a manner that creates a safety or health hazard for themselves, other students, or any school employee will not be admitted to class and may be subject to suspension from school.

Dress Code Expectations:

- Reasonable cleanliness of person and of apparel worn is expected as a matter of health.
- See through attire will not be allowed and undergarments should not be visible.
- Clothing must completely cover the chest and abdomen at all times.
- Attire with vulgar words, profanity, offensive designs, or sexual innuendos will not be allowed.
- Wearing apparel promoting the use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco will not be allowed.
- Hoods may be worn while at school (except during a lesson/presentation). Hoods should not obstruct the face or be a distraction. Students should be easily identifiable. If a hood is interfering with engagement or learning within the classroom, a student may be asked to remove the hood.
- Hats are prohibited in the building except on designated "hat days" (i.e. during School Spirit Week).
- All staff will restrict students from wearing any clothes associated with gangs and/or violence.

Appropriate Outdoor Shoes

During the school day, children spend time in the wooded area at the school. They run and play games during physical education. It is not advisable to send your child in sandals, open toe shoes or slip ons. All students need tennis shoes with rubber soles and ties for physical activity.

Indoor Shoes

In an effort to create a clean environment all students wear indoor shoes when in the building. Children remove their outside boots or shoes at the door when entering the building. Indoor shoes are placed on at the child's locker. All students must have one pair of indoor shoes to wear both inside the Walden Green building and in the Ferrysburg City Hall gym during Physical Education class.

Items from Home

In general, it is best to limit the amount of items your child carries to and from school. As much as developmentally possible a child should be responsible for packing and preparing to depart for school. Items coming to school should, for the most part, be educational items. Please refrain from sending the following items to school with your child:

- Toys. If your child would like to share, we suggest a favorite book, an item from nature, a souvenir from a trip or something he/she has made.

- ▶ *Party invitations.* You'll find addresses of Walden Green families in the family directory. Party invitations may not be passed out at school.
- ▶ *Cell phones.* If cell phones are required for students that are involved in an after school program, or for students that ride the Harbor Transit, please give prior notification to the classroom teacher. Any cell phone brought to school should be turned off and kept in the locker until the end of the school day. Walden Green will not be held responsible for lost, stolen, missing, or broken phones.

Student Conduct & Intervention

Walden Green intervenes when any level of misconduct occurs because every child in every class has the right to come to Walden Green without the fear of being disrespected as an individual or disrupted as a learner. We expect all families to support us in this vision. The mutual partnership between home and school is often the catalyst for a child's success in education. We are here to support your child with our dynamic program and personnel. We deeply appreciate your support and commitment from home.

As part of an ongoing effort to enhance the peaceful learning environment at our school, we utilize a prevention program to reduce mean and aggressive behavior and bullying. This program includes staff training, student training and parent education based on the work of Dr. Marcia McEvoy - a widely recognized expert in the field of school aggression and bullying prevention. This program trains the staff on policies and procedures for intervening consistently using a shared common language with specific consequences for aggressive behavior. Our program implements a school-wide behavior rubric system based on precise conduct standards. Specific consequences have been developed for specific kinds of aggressive behavior. Students in schools with a rubric-based approach know how discipline is handled and are clear on the expectations for behavior in a variety of school settings. The program also focuses on how to model, teach, and reinforce pro-social behaviors such as respect for others, caring and empathic behaviors, in building positive relationships with other students and staff members. The student components of the program teaches students how to both identify and effectively respond to behavior; and how to get adult help if they're proactive responses are not stopping it. Just as important, students are taught in many strategies and how to be a "good bystander" when they are watching someone getting picked on or socially isolated. Bystander training is critical and changing students' behavior and in shaping positive social norms. Our ultimate goal is to make all students feel safe and help them reach their full potential.

Sometimes when a school implements this kind of program, the response from outside the school is that the school is being "too picky" or that aggressive behavior is "just kids being kids." However, the research is clear: if a school consistently addresses the small stuff, they seldom see behavior escalate into more serious forms of aggression. Our ultimate goal is to make all students feel safe and help them reach their full potential. We have a broad definition of mean teasing and other hurtful behaviors to be able to "sweat the small stuff." We know that aggressive behavior can come with the guise of "just kidding" or "we were just horsing around" types of behaviors. We also know that the recipients of this type of behavior seldom interpret it in the same benign fashion and are frequently negatively affected by it.

Maria Montessori once said, "To let the child do as he likes when he has not yet developed any powers of control is to betray the idea of freedom." Throughout her life as a pioneer in education, Maria frequently emphasized the need for boundaries amongst the freedoms bestowed upon children. As stated in our School-Family Compact, it is fundamental for the entire Walden Green community to support our Behavior Rubric guidelines ("boundaries") in order to help develop each child's sense of responsibility and accountability. All children make mistakes at some point; whether it's hurtful conduct or disruptive/off-task behavior. But at Walden Green, we view mistakes as golden opportunities to learn. To abandon these learning moments is to abandon the child. A large component of our research-based Behavior Rubric System is to engage children in a reflective process that seeks to identify some of the motivations for their particular actions. Yet our approach to addressing student conduct goes well beyond the Student Behavior Report forms that are sent home.

Illness

Please call or email the school office whenever your child is absent due to illness. Include the symptoms that your child is experiencing, as certain illnesses (flu-like, stomach virus, chicken pox, etc.) are reported to the local health department at the end of each week. Remember that our fever policy is that a student must remain fever free for 24 hours (without the use of medication) before they can return to school.

Immunizations

Students must be current with all immunizations as required by law or have an authorized waiver from the State of Michigan. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, Walden Green may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with Michigan State law. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the school office.

Emergency Medical Authorization

The Walden Green Board has established a policy that every student must have an Emergency Medical Authorization Form. This form must be completed and signed by a student's parent or guardian in order to participate in any activity off school grounds. This includes field trips and other extracurricular activities, and co-curricular activities. The Emergency Medical Authorization Form is provided at the time of enrollment and at the beginning of each school year and must be completed each year.

Use of Medications

In those circumstances where a student must take prescribed medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- ▶ *Parents/guardians should determine, with their physician's counsel whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.*
- ▶ *The Medication and OTC Medication Permission Form must be filed with the school office before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during schools hours.*
- ▶ *All medications must be registered with the school office.*
- ▶ *All medication that is brought to the school office will be properly secured.*
- ▶ *Medication may be conveyed to Walden Green directly by the parent/guardian or transported by an adult delegate at parental request. This should be arranged in advance. A two to four (2-4) week supply of medication is recommended.*
- ▶ *Medication may not be sent to Walden Green in a student's lunch box, pocket, or other means on or about his/her person, except for emergency medications for allergies and/or reactions. This must be accompanied by the medical permission form signed by parent and physician.*
- ▶ *Any unused medications, unclaimed by the parent/guardian, will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is either no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.*

The parent/guardian shall have sole responsibility to instruct their student to take the medication at the scheduled time, and the student has the responsibility for both presenting himself/herself on time and taking the prescribed medication.

A log for each prescribed medication is maintained by the school, which will note the personnel giving the medication, the date, and the time of day. This log will be maintained along with the physician's written instruction and the parent's written permission release.

Asthma Inhalers

Students, with appropriate written permission from the physician and parent/guardian, may possess and use a metered dose inhaler or dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms.

Non-Prescribed (Over-the-Counter) Medications

No staff member will be permitted to dispense non-prescribed, over-the counter (OTC) medication to any student without the written permission of the parent/guardian and the written physician's prescription or order.

OTC medication needs to be provided by parent or guardian in an unopened original container. As with Dr. prescriptions, over-the-counter (OTC) medication needs to be delivered to school personnel by the parent/guardian with the medication permission form properly filled out by both parent/guardian and physician.

Nutrition

We are becoming increasingly aware that there is a direct correlation between good nutrition and healthy bodies and minds. In a study done for Whitby School, Vicki Kobliner MS RD states, "Numerous studies show that well-nourished students tend to be better students, while poorly nourished students do less well academically and on standardized tests. Pervasive poor eating habits and suboptimal nutrition of children who eat a Standard American Diet (SAD) present a challenge to meeting educational and academic goals." She cites highly processed, sugary, low nutrient fast or "junk" foods which fill the body with excess empty calories as a barrier to learning. "Children are also more negatively impacted by the chemicals and additives in foods than adults, because the toxins become more concentrated on a pound for pound basis." The results are fatigue, difficulty with concentration, reoccurring headaches and/or a vague sense of not feeling well. Avoiding processed flours, sugars, additives and chemicals can make all the difference.

Lunch is an important part of the school day. It's a very relaxed social time and an opportunity for grace and courtesy. We ask that each child bring a paper or cloth napkin every day, one on which the lunch will be placed. With younger children, preparing food in small, easy to handle servings is suggested. Make sure the lunch box is labeled and includes a cool pack. A wide mouth thermos is great for soup or leftovers.

Please exclude the following from your child's lunches and snacks:

- ▶ *Highly sugared foods (candy, gum, chocolate/granola bars, sugary cereal, fruit snacks, Go-Gurt, cookies, etc.)*
- ▶ *Highly processed foods (fast food, snack chips such as Doritos/Cheetos, Cheez-Its, Pop Tarts, white bread, etc.)*
- ▶ *Soda of any kind and sweetened drinks (Kool-Aid, Capri Sun, Gatorade, Sunny Delight, chocolate milk, etc.)*
- ▶ *"Juice" that isn't 100% juice (many students drink water)*
- ▶ *Foods with excessive additives and preservatives (Lunchables, Twinkies, Kid Cuisine, etc.)*
- ▶ *Food items difficult to open or use*

It has been our experience that a lunch high in protein with limited additives and natural sugars (i.e. fruit) helps create a calm, focused child.

CMU's List of Uses of Student Directory Information Policy

Section 1136(6) of the Revised School Code, MCL 380.1136(6), requires the Central Michigan University Board of Trustees, as a public school academy authorizing body, to prepare a list of uses or instances the University commonly discloses regarding a student's directory information. "Directory information" means information contained in a student's education record that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Even though the University does not maintain student K-12 educational records or student directory information for any student attending the public school academies that the University Board authorizes, the law requires a public school academy's authorizing body to disclose to you a list of uses or instances the University may commonly disclose your student's directory information. In addition, the law gives you the opportunity to elect not to have your student's directory information disclosed for 1 or more of these uses or instances.

List of Uses

The University does not maintain K-12 student directory information for public school academies that are authorized by University Board. From time to time, however, the University may receive student directory information from the schools that it authorizes. For example, the University may receive certain student directory information from your school and display that information on the Center's website or in publicly available materials prepared by the Center about certain happenings, events and achievements at your school. Your school may also disclose directory information from the educational records of a student. Directory information can include the following types of information:

- ▶ *Student's name, address and telephone number;*
- ▶ *Names of student's parents;*
- ▶ *Student's date and place of birth;*
- ▶ *Student's class designation (i.e. 1st grade, 8th grade, etc.);*
- ▶ *Student's extra-curricular participation;*
- ▶ *Student's achievement awards or honors;*
- ▶ *Student's weight and height if a member of an athletic team;*
- ▶ *Student's photograph;*
- ▶ *Previous educational institutions attended by the student;*
- ▶ *Student's dates of attendance;*
- ▶ *Name of school student currently attends;*
- ▶ *Student's electronic mail address;*
- ▶ *Student projects, artwork, web pages, and photographic or video images created by the school or students in conjunction with school sponsored activities may be used for information and/or instructional purposes including, but not limited to, video and audio playback, internet and print publication, and cable television transmission.*

Public school academies may disclose any of the above without prior written consent unless the school is notified to the contrary by you in writing. Each school maintains a list of student names whose parent/legal guardian (or the student if 18 years of age or an emancipated minor) has requested that disclosure be refused. The Center requests that each school authorized by the University Board review these lists and advise the Center of students that are excluded from directory information disclosures. Any student who is excluded from directory information disclosure at the school, will automatically be excluded by the Center.

How to Request Refusal of Your Student's Directory Information

Any parent or legal guardian (or student if 18 years of age or an emancipated minor) is also entitled to separately refuse disclosure of student directory information noted above by sending the an opt out form to The Center, EHS 200, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859 or by electronic mail to: info@thecenterforcharters.org. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact the Center at 989-774-2100. You may request an opt out form from the Walden Green Montessori office.

Equal Educational Opportunity

It is the policy of Walden Green Montessori to provide an equal educational opportunity for all students.

Any person who believes that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin while at Walden Green or a Walden Green sponsored activity should immediately contact the school director.

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedures as described by board policy. Any student making a complaint or participating in a Walden Green investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The school director can provide additional information equal access to education opportunity.

Individuals with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but also to all individuals who have access to Walden Green's programs and facilities. A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parental involvement in this procedure is important and is required by Federal (IDEA) and State law. Contact the school director to inquire about evaluation procedures and special education programs.

Student Records

Walden Green Montessori maintains many student records, including both directory information and confidential information. Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for-profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent/guardian. Parents/guardians may refuse to allow Walden Green to disclose any or all of such "directory information" upon written notification to the school office. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release, you may consult the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which can be found in the school office.

Parents/guardians have the right to request that their student's directory information not be released to military recruiters without prior written consent. Forms for this purpose are found at the Walden Green's main office.

Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by (FERPA) and Michigan law. Except in limited circumstances as specifically defined in state and federal law, Walden Green is prohibited from releasing confidential educational records to any outside individual or organization without the prior written consent of the parents/guardians, or the adult student, as well as those individuals who have matriculated and entered a post-secondary education institution at any age. Such "confidential records" include test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary records, and communications with family and outside service providers.

Students and parents/guardians have the right to review and receive copies of all education records. Costs for copies of records may be charged to the parent/guardian. To review a student's records, please provide a written notice, identifying the requested records, to the school office. You will be given an appointment with the appropriate person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

Parents/guardians and adult students have the right to amend a student's record when they believe that any of the information contained in the record is inaccurate or misleading or is in violation of the student's privacy. A parent/guardian or adult student must request the amendment of a student record in writing

and, if the request is denied, the parent/guardian or adult student will be informed of their right to a hearing on the matter.

Individuals have a right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they believe that the school has violated FERPA.

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as part of Walden Green's program or curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor or, if an emancipated minor; his/her parents/guardian) to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning the following:

- A. *Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his/her parents/guardian;*
- B. *Mental or psychological problems of the student or his/her family;*
- C. *Sexual behavior or attitudes;*
- D. *Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;*
- E. *Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;*
- F. *Legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;*
- G. *Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents/guardians; or*
- H. *Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or to receive financial assistance under such a program).*

Consistent with the PPRA and Walden Green Board policy, the school director shall ensure that procedures are established whereby parents/guardians may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

Further, upon request, parents/guardians have the right to inspect a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by Walden Green to the student. The parent/guardian will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the school director.

The school will provide notice directly to parent/guardians of student enrolled in Walden Green of the substantive content of this policy, at least annually at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in this policy. In addition, the Director is directed to notify the parent/guardian of the student in Walden Green, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

- A. *Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of markets or for selling that information or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose; and*
- B. *The administration of any survey by a third party that contains one or more of the items described in A through H above.*

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents/guardians and/or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with the following:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW 20202-4605
Washington, D.C.
www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco

Information inquiries may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office via the following email address:

FERPA@ED.Gov
PPRA@ED.Gov

Integrated Pest Management

Advisory To Parents. Walden Green Montessori uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to control pests. IPM is a pest management system that uses all suitable techniques in a total pest management system with the intent of preventing pests from reaching unacceptable levels or to reduce an existing population to an acceptable level. Pest management techniques emphasize pest exclusion and biological controls. However, as with most pest control programs, chemical controls

may also be utilized. Walden Green's approach to pest control has always been to use chemical-free removal methods, if possible.

You have the right to be informed prior to any application of an insecticide, fungicide or herbicide made to the school grounds or building. In certain emergencies, such as an infestation or stinging insects, pesticides may be applied without prior notice to prevent injury to students, but you will be notified following any such application. If you need prior notification, please complete the information below and submit to the office. Contact the Walden Green office if you have any additional questions at (616)842-4523 x101.

Asbestos Management Plan

The Walden Green school facilities do not contain asbestos. If you wish to view The Management Plan it is available in the administrative office or call 842-4523 x101.

Annual Education Review

The Annual Education Review Letter is posted yearly on the website at www.waldengreen.org under the Required Reports Link on the Home Page.