Child

Parent

Teacher

Parent Handbook for XUMLS
2014 – 2015

XAVIER UNIVERSITY MONTESSORI LAB SCHOOL
3800 Victory Parkway
Cincinnati, Ohio 45207-6331

Head of School: Rosemary Quaranta, 513/745-3402
Montessori Department Office, 745-3424
“THE CHILD IS BOTH A HOPE AND A PROMISE FOR MANKIND.”
Maria Montessori

MONTESSORI APPROACH TO EDUCATION

The programs and practices of the Xavier University Montessori Lab School are founded on the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, a pioneer educator, physician, and scientist, of child development. Working in the first half of the 20th century, Dr. Montessori underscored the importance of children’s early experiences. She developed a philosophy and approach to education, which aims to develop each child’s full range of abilities and talents while simultaneously celebrating his or her uniqueness and cultural background. The goal of Montessori education is the development of autonomous, caring, empathic, responsive and responsible humans.

The philosophy of Montessori education is founded on respect for the child. This method of education nurtures and cultivates the unique qualities each child possesses through engaging, meaningful, multi-sensory lessons, activities, and materials. Embedded in Montessori are teaching practices, which include inquiry, wonderment, discovery, and joy; children are engaged learners constructing their knowledge and apply it in their lives.

Specific educational practices common to Montessori programs include multi-age groupings, beautiful and carefully designed learning environments, emphasis on teacher observation and research, a focus on the development of the “whole child,” child selection of materials from within an appropriate range, and consistent social and behavioral guidelines and expectations.

In all aspects of learning, children move at their own pace, repeating activities until a sense of inner mastery moves them on to the next level of difficulty. A rich array of hands-on materials is offered, engaging the child in learning on many levels. Teachers prepare the learning environment, provide lessons to individuals and small groups, and diligently observe each child’s progress, assessing skill, understanding, and readiness for new challenges.

The American Montessori Society (AMS) has been the mainstay for Montessori education in the US since its inception in 1960. AMS has created national standards to help ensure the integrity of Montessori education; as an organization, it is helping to incorporate the Montessori approach into the framework of American education. The Xavier University Montessori Lab School has been a fully affiliated School member of AMS since 1968. As a part of this membership, we are regularly visited and evaluated by professional Montessori consultants.

SCHOOL HISTORY

Xavier University Montessori Lab School was established in 1966 as a demonstration project to reflect the philosophy and teaching methods of the Montessori Teacher Education Program at Xavier University. The directive of the Lab School was to serve as a venue for pre service teachers, provide an interactive learning environment for Xavier undergraduate and graduate students, as well as providing an observation facility that would service the awareness of
Montessori education to a broader community. A grant from the Carnegie Foundation provided money for the development of the Lab School. In 1968, the Joseph Building was constructed and two preprimary Montessori classes moved into the child-scaled ground floor environment. In 1974, Ms. Martha McDermott, who traveled to Bergamo, Italy to train and receive American Montessori International (AMI) Elementary certification, initiated an elementary level class.

The Montessori Lab School serves as model of best practice in Montessori Education and works in partnership with other University programs such as Science, Occupational Therapy, Modern Languages, Nursing, Psychology, Project SEARCH, Music, Sports Management, and Special Education to facilitate field experiences and classroom observations. In kind, the students of the Lab School benefit from the expertise and commitment given to our school including Spanish lessons, cultural presentations, individualized lessons, and teacher assistance.

Head Teachers in the Lab School are credentialed by the American Montessori Society (AMS) and state licensed. All Head Teachers hold Master Degrees in Education and serve as Clinical Faculty members of Xavier University.

Xavier University and the Xavier University Montessori Lab School are academic communities committed to equal opportunity for all persons regardless of age, race, religion, handicap, or national origin. The American Montessori Society as well as the State of Ohio accredits the Lab School.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Xavier University Montessori Lab School is to educate children from many cultures and diverse communities. Our responsibility is to be a demonstration lab school to reflect the philosophy and methods of the Montessori Teacher Education Program at Xavier University. It is our purpose to develop the whole child by observing, documenting, and assessing children in their learning environment and developing a rich curriculum based on the information collected.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Xavier University Montessori Institute is comprised of 4 multi-aged classrooms and Extended Care room: two Early Childhood classrooms (3 – 5 years old), one Lower Elementary classroom (6 – 9 years old) and one Upper Elementary classroom (9 – 12 years old). The Early Childhood classes are held from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, Monday through Friday. Kindergarten children participate in an afternoon enrichment program Monday through Thursday extending until 3:00 p.m. The Lower and Upper Elementary classes are in session from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. All classrooms begin in mid August and extend through early June. There is a “phase in” process for new 3-year-old students that starts with an hour and a half class and builds up to a 3-hour work cycle to facilitate a smooth transition. Extended day options are available before school (8 a.m. to 9 a.m.) and after school (noon until 5:30 p.m.).

Xavier University Montessori Lab School is licensed by the Ohio Department of Education - Division of Early Childhood Education. The license is posted in the lab school hallway in the
Joseph Building on the University campus. The school is an affiliate member of the American Montessori Society.

The laws and rules as set forth by the Ohio Department of Education are available in the Montessori Lab School Office. The Lab School's licensing record, including compliance report forms and evaluation forms from the health, building, and fire departments are available upon request from the Montessori Department office.

The State of Ohio Department of Early Childhood Education and the State of Ohio Department of Education have issued a license for the Xavier University Montessori Lab School to The Department of Education - Early Childhood Division. Any person may report any suspected preschool violation by calling the State of Ohio Department of Early Childhood Education at 614/466-0224 to report a suspected violation by the Lab School. The Lab School is required to report any suspicions of child abuse to the Children's Protective Services Agency.

Xavier University Montessori Lab School is licensed to serve no more than 24 Early Childhood students and 32 Elementary aged children per classroom.

**SCHOOL BUSINESS**

School correspondence and telephone calls may be directed to the Office of Rosemary Quaranta, located on the second floor of Joseph Building, Room 214, 513/745-3402, or the Lab School Office, Room 201 in the Joseph Building 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. 513/745-3404 or 745-3424.

**ADMISSIONS**

The Xavier University Montessori Lab School admits students of any sex, religion, race, color, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, race, color, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship/loans/fee waivers, extended care program and extracurricular activities.

Prospective families are required to tour the Lab School prior to submitting an application. A $25.00 non-refundable application fee is required at the time of application. An application form may be obtained on our web site (vhttp://www.xavier.edu/montessori-Lab-school), after a tour or by calling the front office. You can sign up for tours on line at our web site. You must be 3 by September 30 to enter the Early Childhood classroom.

Each prospective pupil is required to visit the Lab School for a scheduled “classroom visit” with his or her parent(s) or guardian(s). Class visits are scheduled March through May for enrollment the following year. There are four goals of these visits:

- To welcome and observe the child and learn about his/her personal interests and learning style.
- To give the child the opportunity to visit and therefore to gain comfort in the environment.
- To explain school procedures and routines to prospective parents and to answer general questions.
• To give parents and teachers an opportunity to discuss the needs of the child and the ability of the school to meet these needs.

The re-enrollment process for currently enrolled children begins in February; at this time, a XUMLS contract and FACTS tuition contract is sent to all currently enrolled families. Those families wishing to re-enroll sign and return the required forms and contracts. With the return of the signed contract is a required non-refundable $500 (per child) deposit that ensures a secured placement for the child for the following school year. This deposit is applied to the full tuition amount.

TUITION

Tuition for the 2014-2015 academic school year is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Tuition Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood (3-4)</td>
<td>$4,484.00/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten (5 yr. olds)</td>
<td>$5,232.00/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary I (6-9)</td>
<td>$4,950.00/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary II (9-12)</td>
<td>$6,444.00/year</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Xavier University Lab School utilizes the services for managing tuition through Tuition Management Systems known as FACTS. The contract for Tuition Management Systems accompanies the contract for student enrollment. Currently there are several options for tuition payment: annually, semi-annually, and 10 installments. All payments begin in July for the upcoming school year, they may be scheduled for the 5th or 20th of each month. If you have questions regarding tuition please contact: FACTS tuition management systems at 800-624-7092. Additionally, you may contact the Lab School office, at 513/745-3404 or 745-3424.

Activity Fee – In addition to tuition, there is an activity fee for each student. ($75 for Early Childhood and $200 for Elementary).

Please refer to your tuition contract for further information about the conditions concerning the contract.

TUITION ASSISTANCE INFORMATION:

The Montessori Lab School offers financial assistance with tuition in the form of limited scholarship monies to families that apply. Tuition Assistance is being reviewed by a third party with details to follow for academic year for 2015-2016.

CHILDCARE

Childcare is available each school day from 8:00-9:00 a.m. and Noon-5:30 p.m. The program is licensed by the Ohio Department of Education-The Early Childhood Division and is directed by a Childcare Coordinator. The Childcare Coordinator, must be a college graduate at minimum, and is assisted in his/her staff by college students currently enrolled in Xavier University. The children remain on the university premises for this program and are provided a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities. Parents are asked to pre-select their childcare hours and payment plan, which is processed through FACTS; this practice enables us to anticipate staffing
needs and therefore offer quality care. Questions regarding childcare may be directed to the Extended Care Coordinator at 513/745-1075.

**SCHOOL DIRECTORY**

Directory of the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of parents and/or guardians of children attending the Montessori Lab School are available early in the school year. The rosters will not include the name, address, or telephone number of any parent who requests that this information be withheld.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation is the responsibility of the parent. Parents wishing to form car pools may do so. Please complete the "Transportation Arrangement Form" and provide in writing any and all changes or variations that may occur during the school year, this may include play dates, etc. As changes occur, please inform the Lab School in writing. Variances to the transportation arrangements given to the school will be verified by the classroom teachers and if the person is new to the list, will require ID before picking up the child.

In the interest and safety of all children, we request children stay belted in car seats upon arrival and safely buckled upon exit from the school.

**ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Upon arrival in the morning, Early Childhood and Elementary children are delivered to the designated area in the circular driveway at the rear of the Joseph Building. Cars should arrive between 8:40 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. Upon arrival, children are greeted at the car door by a teacher or teacher assistant and escorted to the their classroom. Please stay in your car and put your car in park. Staff will open the door closest to the child, unbuckle your child (elementary students can unbuckle themselves) and help them out of the car. Please encourage children to keep their seat belts on until a staff member opens the car door. After we close the car door and are safely on the sidewalk, you are welcome to continue out of the driveway. In order to expedite morning carline refrain from teacher or parent interactions. Please put communication to teachers in writing and give to whichever teacher opens your car door and correspondence will be given to your child’s teacher. Please remember to turn your cell phone off during arrivals.

Children are dismissed from the back classroom doors. A staff member escorts the child to his/her car, opens the door, and buckles the child in securely (Elementary children can buckle themselves in). Please stay in the car to expedite dismissal and if there is any delay in the dismissal process, please pull up next to the shed so that traffic flow is not blocked. In order to expedite afternoon carline refrain from teacher or parent interactions. Please put communication to teachers in writing and give to whichever teacher opens your car door and correspondence will be given to your child’s teacher. Please remember to turn your cell phone off during dismissals.
The safety of the children is our most important concern. When entering the circular driveway, proceed very slowly. Because children may be present in the outdoor environment, please do not open the gates if they are closed and do not get out of line or try to pass another car.

All children utilizing extended childcare in the a.m. must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or dismissed to a parent/guardian. Upon dismissal, please proceed to the lower level and ring the doorbell where an extended car staff will open the door. Also, a parent/guardian must sign out their child with the extended care staff.

Careful preparation of the environment is an important aspect of a Montessori teacher’s responsibility. Teachers spend time before class planning and preparing the environment and materials. It is essential that they have this time before the children arrive.

Teachers spend time after dismissal discussing each child’s progress, cleaning and preparing the classrooms, and recording observations. It is essential that they are free at this time to prepare for the following day. Therefore, any child who is not picked up within five minutes following dismissal (or later than 3:20) will be taken to childcare, and the parents will be charged on an hourly basis at the drop in rate. It is also important to call the office to let them know you will be late.

**TARDINESS**

School begins at 9:00 a.m. Gates are closed and teachers are no longer available for morning arrival since it is essential for them to be in the classroom at this time. If you arrive after 9:00 a.m. your child is considered tardy. On those rare occasions, you must park, put your parking pass in your window, and bring your child to the front entrance of Joseph building where a XU staff member will walk your child to their classes. Teachers are not allowed to answer the classroom door since their responsibility is with the class after 9:00 a.m. Please keep in mind that it is difficult for children to arrive late since they have missed the morning routine.

**ABSENCES**

If a student is absent, parents are expected to telephone the front desk or e-mail the Head Teacher by 8:30 a.m.. If the school does not receive a phone call, XUMLS Staff will call to confirm the absence. Additionally, a note should accompany your child once he/she returns to school stating the reason he/she was absent. If there is a physician’s verification that your child has a communicable disease (e.g., chicken pox, strep throat), the school is to be informed immediately so that other parents can be notified.

**COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS**

If you have information to relay to the teachers, please send a note with your child instead of verbal communication in car line. Phone messages can be left on their phone extension or email addresses. Teachers do not have access to their cell phone or emails during the day. Teachers will check their emails before and after school. If you need an immediate response, please call the Lab School Office at 745-3404.
WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

The Lab School will be sending out an electronic weekly newsletter with announcements and updates from each classroom. Please be sure to take the time to read your newsletter so you are abreast of what is happening in your child’s class as well as our school community.

DISMISSAL POLICY

Children will be released from the Xavier University Montessori Lab School only to their parents or guardian. **Written permission** is required if arrangements are made to have someone else pick up your child. The names of persons who are permitted to pick up your child should also be listed in the Transportation Arrangement Form. Presentation of an I.D. will be required upon pick up.

CLOTHING

The child constructs his/her mind through active physical involvement or work -- thus, he/she should be dressed for work, play and weather!

Clothing should be comfortable and provide appropriate protection whatever the weather conditions are, since children go outside whenever possible. Rain boots are necessary fall, winter and spring. During the cold weather, your child will need: insulated boots, winter jacket, waterproof mittens/gloves and a warm hat. To facilitate independence, self-confidence, and success, the clothing should be manageable for the child. Please be sure all items are labeled.

Early Childhood children need an extra set of **LABELED** clothes, including underwear, shirt, pants and socks, to be kept on hand at school in case of a spill or an accident. Please send to school the first day in a zip lock bag with your child’s name on the outside. All students are required to wear indoor shoes in the classrooms, which will remain at school. These indoor shoes should be non-commercial, have a non skid, rubber sole, are easy for students to put on independently, and are comfortable for daily work. Additional outdoor footwear may be worn to school and will be changed when the children go outdoors. All shoes must be supportive for indoor and outdoor work and play; flip flops, Crocs, and other less supportive shoes are strongly discouraged due to safety.

Children will be participating in outside recess and nature activities throughout the year. Please send appropriate outdoor wear for all weather elements. Children will be experiencing nature in all temperatures. As a guideline the temperature dictates the time spent outside, for example, 20 degrees equals 20 minutes outside. If you would prefer to leave an extra pair of boots, raincoats, mittens, and sweaters at school, please label all items clearly.

BELONGINGS

Each child is assigned a special place to store personal belongings (i.e., work from school, indoor shoes, coats, mittens, etc.). Things of this nature should be kept **only** in his/her OWN special
place. Items of interest that relate to schoolwork (books, fossils, etc.) may be brought into class, as arranged ahead of time with the classroom teacher.

**Toys should be kept at home.** Assure your child that he/she has many different materials to work with in the classroom, and that some things are just for school and others just for home. Any toy that a child brings into the classroom will be stored in a safe place until time for dismissal. Crowns, jewelry, and dress up accessories should remain at home as well as candy and gum.

If your child is experiencing difficulty in transitioning from home to school, it is sometimes helpful in providing a picture of you or your family that can be kept close with the child or placed safely in their cubby.

**BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are a very special event in a child’s life. Their celebration at school is no exception. We encourage celebrating the day your child was born through the sharing of a simple candle lighting, group song, and wishes from the classroom community. Head teachers may also include a birthday journal for retelling the life of the child or provide an opportunity for sharing a personal memento that is significant to the child.

If you would like to honor your child’s birthday with a special memento, we are always appreciative of donations of books for our school and classroom libraries. If you would like to consider this, the teachers can suggest titles and authors.

Personal birthday invitations should only be distributed through home.

**SNOW DAYS / INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Occasionally, we need to cancel school or delay a start time due to snowy or inclement weather. When making a decision to call off school, the safety of children and their drivers is of prime consideration. If there is a change in the schedule or school is closed an announcement will be posted on Channel 12 TV by 6:30 AM under **MONTESSORI LAB SCHOOL** (we are the only Montessori Lab School in the city). We are not allowed to use the university name since it can confuse university students. Families will also be contacted via e-mail by 6:30 a.m. If at any time Xavier University is closed or on a delay, the Lab School follows the same procedure. If we have a delayed opening due to inclement weather, there will not be morning extended care. Be aware that if we have a delay, it could turn into a “school closed” situation if the weather permits.

**DISCIPLINE**

Our goal in our work with children is to help each child attain the independence and self-confidence needed to become self-disciplined, respectful and peaceful learners. To accomplish this goal, we provide a structured, ordered environment that is child oriented.
A few ground rules are necessary to assure the safety and rights of each child:

1. The right of each child to work in a classroom setting that encourages independence, concentration, cooperation, and movement supported by the Montessori philosophy and methodology.

2. The right of each child to be treated respectfully by other children and adults.

3. The right of each child to work in an environment that is carefully prepared, secure, safe, and nurturing.

The following policy directs the state required postings from the Department of Education Rules for Licensing Preschool Programs, chapter 3301-37 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

**Xavier University Montessori Lab School**

**Behavioral Management/Discipline Policy**

Members of the faculty or staff employed by Xavier University Montessori Lab School who are in charge of a child or a group of children shall be responsible for their safety and discipline. Our philosophy is structured to focus on nurturing and supporting children in their learning. The desired inner discipline is for children to understand their own behavior, take initiative and be responsible for their choices, and respect themselves and others. By practicing these techniques children will be able to internalize this positive process of thinking, interacting, and behaving.

While teachers will make every effort to encourage and support pro social behavior, challenges may present themselves in the classroom setting. Teachers will use a system of developmentally appropriate expectations and interventions. Examples are as follows:

1. **Modeling** – Teachers will model and reinforce appropriate, safe, respectful behavior.

2. **Supporting Positive Behavior** – Teachers will redirect negative behavior by directing the child toward another activity or lesson that fosters the best in the child in the effort of self-regulation.

3. **Problem Solving** – Teachers will help facilitate problem solving between children who are learning to interact in the effort of creating pro social outcomes. They will protect the children from harm and will foster the well being of each child while in attendance at school and extended care.

4. **Natural and Logical Consequences** – Whenever possible, teachers will offer the child a natural or logical consequence to their behavior.

5. **Activity Replacement** – When an activity is inappropriate for a particular child, that child will be provided with an alternative activity. Re-directing a child to another activity often is a more positive approach for the child. Problem solving should be employed and the behavior corrected without the intervention becoming a punishment.
6. **Separation From Group** – Protecting the safety of child is very important. Separation may be necessary to assist the child in regaining self-control. An adult will be present at all times with the child. Separation can be structured so that the child can rejoin the group when he or she is ready.

The following Behavior Management guidelines have been adapted from 3301-37-10 to be in compliance with the preschool licensing of the Ohio Department of Education.

**Methods of Discipline**

(1) Only nonphysical verbal discipline techniques will be used.

(2) The Teachers or Xavier University Montessori Lab School personnel are the only persons who shall institute behavior management and discipline techniques as stated above.

(3) When physical restraint is deemed necessary for the safety of a child or others, proper therapeutic hold (gently wrapping arms around a child and holding them close) will be utilized.

(4) Children will remain in an open environment at all times.

(5) Children will be spoken to using respectful language with the absence of profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about him/her self or his family or other verbal abuse.

(6) Failure to eat, failure to sleep, or toileting accidents are not to be considered behavior/discipline problems and therefore no disciplinary action will be imposed.

(7) All behavior management/discipline will be administered in a positive and constructive manner to reinforce positive behavior so as not to humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.

(8) Children’s needs such as food, rest, and toilet use will be provided at all times.

(9) Separation, when used as a discipline shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child’s age and development ability and the child shall be within care of a Xavier University Montessori Lab School faculty or staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.

(10) All children will be treated with kindness and respect at all times while under the direct supervision of Xavier University Montessori Lab School faculty and staff.
In compliance with The Ohio Department of Education, this policy is an adaptation of the State of Ohio Preschool Licensing Rules Section 3301-37-10 (Behavior Management/Discipline). The original guideline rules are stated in black type. The Xavier University Montessori Lab School adaptations are in red italics. This document serves as an explanation of the adaptations for file purposes only.

(A) A preschool staff member in charge of a child or a group of children shall be responsible for their discipline.

Members of the faculty or staff employed by Xavier University Montessori Lab School who are in charge of a child or a group of children shall be responsible for their discipline.

(B) The center shall have a written discipline policy describing the center’s philosophy of discipline and the specific methods of discipline used at the center. This written policy shall be on file at the center or review. Constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques are to be used at all time and shall include such measures as redirection, separation from problem situations, talking with the child about the situation and acknowledgment of appropriate behavior.

Our philosophy is structured to focus on the respect and reverence of the child. The ultimate discipline is for children to understand their own behavior, take initiative and be responsible for their choices, while respecting themselves and one another. By practicing these techniques children will be able to internalize this positive process of thinking and behaving.

(C) The center’s actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:

(1) There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting.

Only nonphysical discipline techniques will be used.

(2) No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.

The Teacher or Xavier University Montessori Lab School personnel are the only persons who shall institute behavior management and discipline techniques as stated above.

(3) No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child be any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
When physical restraint is deemed necessary for the safety of a child or others, a proper therapeutic hold (gently wrapping arms around a child and holding them close to you) will be utilized.

(4) No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle.

*Children will remain in an open environment at all times.*

(5) No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family or other verbal abuse.

*Children will be spoken to using respectful language with the absences of profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about him/her, their respective family, or other verbal abuse.*

(6) Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.

*Failure to eat, failure to sleep, or toileting accidents are not to be considered behavior/discipline problems and therefore will not be considered a discipline issue.*

(7) Technique of discipline shall not humiliate shame or frighten a child.

*All behavior management/discipline will be used in a positive and constructive manner to reinforce positive behavior so as not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.*

(8) Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use.

(9) The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

*Separation, when used as discipline shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a Xavier University Montessori faculty or staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.*

**PARENT AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

**Parent Teacher Collaborative - PTC**

The Parent Teacher Collaborative is a vital group of parents/guardians that supports our students, teachers and families. It connects our parents through volunteer opportunities, fundraising and social events. It is our goal to help build a strong and active community of family support. Whether you are a new or returning parent, we look forward to working with you.
The Goals of the Parent Group is to:

- Promote the spirit of friendship throughout XUMLS, which nurtures our whole community.

- Strengthens our school community through fundraising events and school activities. Funds raised by the Parent Group each year are used to support the classrooms and other school needs.

- Provide practical assistance within a wide range of school activities and individual classroom needs.

Success of the Parent Teacher Collaborative is a combination of generous parental involvement, fresh ideas, and a wide range of diverse interests. Your involvement and collaborative spirit is necessary for us to achieve our goals and is an important part of maintaining a strong school community. We welcome and encourage parents to participate and thus invest in their children’s education.

Children need to experience a variety of adult role models in the areas of work, play, art, and music. We strongly encourage you to share your unique talents and enthusiasm with your child's class. Please fill out the PTC sign up sheet, which we hand out at the September Parent Night and return it so you can participate more fully in your child's world of work in school.

CONCERNS / QUESTIONS

If a parent needs assistance with concerns relating to their child, a staff member, or the school at large; he or she is encouraged to meet immediately with the staff/faculty member most directly involved. If the issue is not resolved to your satisfaction; notify the Head of School and a conference will be arranged with the parent(s) and staff member. If the problem cannot be resolved with the assistance of the Head of School, the Assistant Dean of XUMI will be asked to meet with the parent(s), Head of School, and staff member to resolve the issue at hand.

In the effort of maintaining and cultivating a positive learning environment for the children and families of the Lab School, all concerns or comments regarding the Lab School, its faculty, families, and children should remain confidential at all times. We take pride that our families and staff are advocates and caretakers of our school community.

CONFERENCES / PROGRESS REPORTS

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year: fall and early spring. Both parents are expected to attend and engage in conversation about your child’s development. A form will be sent home a week prior to ask for your specific questions or concerns regarding your child so they may be directed at that time. Additional conferences may be scheduled on request.

You will receive a progress reports in the mail at the end of each semester (January and June). The Montessori curriculum is based on a three-year cycle and the progress report reflects the child’s progress through the integrated curriculum.
Observation and record keeping are important criteria in the assessment of your child’s learning; teachers will share their records on your child's progress upon your request. Incidental conferences can be scheduled any time the need arises. Please contact your child’s Head Teacher to make an appointment.

To have a clearer understanding of your child’s stages of development and his/her progress in the classroom; parents are expected to observe at least one full morning cycle (9:30-11:30) per semester. It is also preferable that an observation is made 1-2 weeks prior of the scheduled parent/teacher conferences. If your child is transitioning next year to the next level, it is essential to observe the level where your child will be before re-enrollment (example: Kindergarten parents should observe Lower Elementary and Third Grade parents should observe Upper Elementary).

**PARENT MEETINGS**

Evening parent meetings are scheduled during the year and posted on the school calendar. Parent participation is strongly encouraged. Meetings will vary and are designed to help all adults (teachers and parents) with our joint effort to assist children in their holistic development. Topics vary and often include presentations of the Montessori philosophy and curriculum; strength- based parenting techniques, parent-child communication skills, nutrition, and other pertinent subjects.

The school calendar may note mandatory parent education meetings- at least one parent/guardian member is required to attend.

**PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

As a growing school we rely deeply on parents to serve as volunteers in student enrichment activities such as library, cooking, reading with children, supporting material making, special art projects, etc. All volunteers who work with children are required to show evidence of a 1 year recent BCI and FBI passing background check as well as signing a non-conviction statement at the school office. Fingerprinting for the BCI and FBI background checks may be conducted through the office of Campus police (745-2000) or other local police agencies. Background checks may be sent to April Thomas c/o Xavier University, Hailstones Hall, Room 307, 3800 Victory Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45207. You will be asked to pick up your fingerprints from the early childhood office Hailstones Hall Room 307 and present a copy for the school’s safety and compliance book. All background checks must be on school record before volunteering.

**VISITATION POLICY AND OBSERVATION ROOM GUIDELINES**

One of the best and most delightful ways of learning about the Montessori approach to education is to observe a class in session. The Xavier Montessori Lab School invites you to observe your child and his/her class throughout the school year. The Preprimary Observation Room is open and available to parents from 9-11:30 a.m. daily. Due to restricted space (the Observation Room is used as a childcare setting during the afternoon hours), parents wishing to observe at other times are requested to make arrangements with the Head Teacher to assure no field trips or other
outside activities are taking place. Observations for the **elementary classrooms** will take place within the classrooms therefore, these observations will need to be scheduled ahead of time on the calendar outside the classroom or by calling the front office at 513/745-3404.

You will need to communicate with the Head Teacher should you want to schedule a more formalized time for your visit: i.e. special events, birthdays, etc.

In observing your child, it is important to remember that no single observation contains the complete picture of your child’s progress. Periodic observations and regular communication between home and school in conjunction with Parent-Teacher Conferences/ Reports help you to gain a full picture and to interpret what you are hearing and observing.

The following observation guidelines must be strictly adhered to at all times.

**OBSERVATION GUIDELINES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PARENTS**

1. Parents are asked to sign in and out at the front desk located in the entrance corridor of Joseph building. After receiving a visitor’s badge, the school administrative assistant or XIMU faculty will walk you to the respective observation area.
2. While observing, do not move furniture or materials.
3. Each classroom has speakers that can be turned on so you can hear.
4. For safety reasons, only children under the age of 12 months may accompany an adult in the observation room. The child must be next to the adult at all times.
5. Food and beverages are **not permitted** in the observation room.
6. Any information you gain from your observation is STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.
7. **Do not discuss children or teachers either during or after the observation.** If you have questions or concerns, please call one of the teachers. For confidentiality reasons as well as respect for the children, the teachers will only discuss your child's activities.
8. Observe quietly with NO TALKING. Voices carry through the observation glass and are also distracting to other observers.
9. Remain at least one foot from the glass. Children in the classes can see you if you get too close.
10. The light in the room must remain off, and the door to the room closed when observers are in the observation room.
11. If you are the last person to leave the observation room, please turn off the speakers, close the door and sign out at the front desk returning your visitors badge.
1. Observations take place starting in October through May.

2. Parents are asked to sign in and out at the front desk located in the entrance corridor of Joseph building. After receiving a visitor’s badge, the school administrative assistant or XIMU faculty will walk you to the respective classroom for observation.

3. Since you are observing in the classroom, you will be asked to sit quietly in a specific chair and remain in that chair during your observation.

4. Please allow your child to engage in their normal morning routine without any interruptions.

5. On your chair is a guideline to help guide your observation. Please read and make notes or questions on the page to ask the head teacher at the end of your observation. If the teacher is not available, please email her your questions and she will get back to you.

6. After observing for one hour, you will be invited to work one-on-one with your child for ½ hour.

7. After 1 ½ hours your observation will be finished.

8. Siblings may not accompany adults during observations.

9. Food and beverages are not permitted while observing.

10. Any information you gain from your observation is STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

11. Do not discuss children or teachers either during or after the observation. If you have questions or concerns, please call the Head Teachers. For confidentiality reasons as well as respect for the children, the teachers will only discuss your child's activities.

12. Please sign out at the front desk and return your visitors badge.

13. If you have any questions after your observation, please call or email the Head Teacher and they will be happy to follow up with you.
SAMPLE EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASS DAILY SCHEDULE

8:50 a.m. Morning arrival
9:10 a.m. Attendance
9:10-10:45 a.m. Morning work cycle for children
11:00 a.m. Group meeting
11:10 a.m. Prepare for recess/ coats/ etc.
11:15 a.m. Recess
11:40 a.m. Inside for morning dismissal/transition to extended care
11:45 a.m. Kindergarten children to lunch in classroom
11:50 a.m. Extended caregivers greet children
11:50-12:10 a.m. Carline dismissal
12:00-12:30 p.m. Kindergarten lunch
12:30-1:00 Kindergarten recess
1:00-2:35 p.m. Kindergarten work cycle/enrichment
2:30 – 2:45 p.m. Outdoor time and preparation for dismissal
2:55-3:10 Dismissal
SAMPLE LOWER and UPPER ELEMENTARY SCHEDULE

8:40 a.m. Students arrive, bathroom, wash hands
           Students begin work cycle upon arrival

9:00 a.m. Car line ends

9:00-11:15 a.m. Work time with lessons

11:30-11:45 Community gathering time

11:45-12:15 Lunch

12:15-12:45 p.m. Recess

12:45-1:00 p.m. Transition from recess to afternoon work

1:00-1:30 p.m. Whole Class Lessons

1:30-2:30 Afternoon Work Cycle

2:30-2:40 p.m. Daily jobs and collect items to go home

2:45 p.m. Prepare for dismissal

2:55-3:10 p.m. Carline

Throughout week there is: PE / Swimming, Art, Spanish, Junior Great Books
HEALTH AND SAFETY
MEDICAL EXAMS

The State of Ohio and the City of Cincinnati requires an annual medical exam for each enrolled Early Childhood student. Elementary level students must provide a record of all immunizations required by law in the State of Ohio.

Medical exam records are to be given to the Lab School secretary by August 1st of the academic school year. **State law requires that no student be admitted until these records are on file.** Additionally, as yearly exams expire throughout the course of the year, all Early Childhood students (Pre-K-K) are required to present up to date records when the new exam occurs.

SAFETY

The safety of each student is of primary concern to the Xavier Montessori Lab School faculty and staff. A teacher (or qualified adult) will be with the student at all times in a supervisory capacity. Students are greeted at the car door and guided by the teacher into the classroom. At dismissal the student is escorted to the car by a teacher or intern. The staff has immediate access to a telephone should an emergency arise. Monthly fire or tornado drills are held and a plan for safe evacuation of children is posted in the classrooms and Lab School office. Records of the drills are maintained in the Lab School office.

An incident report is completed when an accident or injury occurs that necessitates the use of first-aid procedures. One copy is given to the parents, and one copy is placed in the student's file.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips offer an opportunity for children to enrich and extend their classroom knowledge to other out of school experiences. Students who are eligible for field trips are required to have parental permission to leave the school for field trips, these permission forms are accessible through the website. A first aid kit, emergency contact information, and necessary medications will accompany a first aid trained staff member on each field trip. Each child will wear a nametag with the school's name, school address and school phone number on it.

Only Elementary and Kindergarten children will participate in offsite field trips, with the exception of on campus walks and department visits (library). The school will provide onsite presentations that are deemed age appropriate and developmentally suited.

“Going Out” experiences are individual trips arranged by the Upper Elementary students to enrich and continue the learning process outside of the classroom. Parents who participate in “Going Out” are required to show evidence of a 1 year recent BCI and FBI passing background check as well as signing a non-conviction statement at the school office.
EMERGENCIES, ACCIDENTS OR ILLNESS

In the event of an emergency, accident, or illness, the parents will be immediately notified. If either cannot be contacted, the alternate(s) contact person, provided by the parent will be contacted.

If an accident seems severe or life threatening, the life squad will be called first and the parents notified immediately thereafter. The staff will follow the statement signed by the parent concerning hospitalization or notification of the physician. All of the above information is on file in the school office; emergency contact cards are kept near the phone in each classroom.

1. Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24-hour period).
2. Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound.
3. Difficult or rapid breathing.
4. Yellowish skin or eyes.
5. Conjunctivitis.
6. Temperature of 100°F (taken by the axial method) when in combination with any other sign of illness.
7. Untreated infected skin patch(es).
8. Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool.
10. Head lice.

NUTRITION

The culture of the Lab School is to promote the physical, emotional, and spiritual well being of the students we teach. In the effort to care for students physically, we offer nutritious, healthy snacks and food for in class preparation and consumption.

Parents of preprimary and elementary children are asked to provide the class with requested, healthy snacks on a rotating basis. Each family is assigned a snack and laundry week, and will receive a detailed list of desired items on the Friday preceding their week. In food preparation and snack activities, we emphasize use of natural ingredients, free from peanut or nut traces. These items may include fresh fruits and vegetables, oats for granola making, rice milk, organic juices, etc. Students are involved daily in simple preparation of wholesome snacks as well as the opportunity to cook and bake with their peers and teachers. The purpose is to help them practice elements of good nutrition and healthy choices as well as developing skills of practical life.

Elementary, Extended Day, and Kindergarten students bring their own lunches. The lunches should be nutritious and manageable by the student without assistance. Please pack an ice pack in lunchbox. Milk and water is provided daily so please do not send juice boxes or soda. You need ONLY SEND a protein food, fruit and/or vegetable. We suggest items such as: eggs, cheese, chicken or other cooked meats, yogurt, raw vegetables with a dip, orange segments, applesauce, whole grain bread or crackers, bread sticks, soup in a thermos, etc. PLEASE DO NOT SEND sweets (cookies, granola bars, fruit roll ups, chips, or other snack foods). We find that these items sometimes prevent the children from eating their more nutritious foods. Our
goal is to have waste free lunches so please put a cloth napkin in their lunch box, which they will
take home every day and bring another one the following day in their lunch box. Please send
your child’s lunch in reusable containers. Microwaves are not available to children. We ask that
fast food not be delivered to your child for his/her lunch.

Please notify the school, in writing, if your child is allergic to any food. With respect to children
with allergies; the Xavier Montessori Lab School is a peanut free and nut free environment. For
the safety of the children, NO PEANUT BUTTER OR ITEMS CONTAINING NUT
TRACES are allowed in the school.

MEDICATION POLICY

The Xavier University Montessori Lab School agrees to administer medication, if the following
procedures are implemented:

I. Prescription medication must be in the original container, labeled with the child’s name,
a date, directions, and physician’s name.

II. Parent, legal guardian, or physician must fill out the proper form prepared by the Ohio
Department of Human Services. This can be obtained from the Lab School secretary,
principal, or classroom teacher.

III. No medication will be administered after the expiration date, or without explicit, written
instructions.

IV. Nonprescription medication must be labeled with the child’s name and the date. It must
be left in the original container, and the teacher must administer it according to label
directions. Parent or physician must fill out the proper form, prepared by the Ohio
Department of Human Services.

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Ohio Department of Education Preschool Seven Childcare Compliance, 2005
A staff member trained (by the Red Cross or a registered nurse) to recognize the common signs
of communicable disease, daily observes each child as she/he arrives at school.

Management of communicable disease policy – the following precautions shall be taken for children
suspected of having a communicable disease:

• The program shall immediately notify the parent or guardian of the child’s condition when a child
has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness.
• A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and
discharged to his parent or guardian:
  a) Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a twenty-four hour period);
  b) Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping
sound;
  c) Difficult or rapid breathing;
  d) Yellowish skin or eyes;
e) Conjunctivitis;
f) Temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit taken by the auxiliary method when in combination with other signs of illness;
g) Uncovered infected skin patch(es);
h) Usually dark urine and/or grey or white stool; or
i) Stiff neck;
j) Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation.

- A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated from other children. The Head Teacher will call you and you will need to make arrangements to have your child picked up at school as soon as possible. The child, while isolated at the program, shall be carefully watched for symptoms listed above as well as the following:
  a) Unusual spots or rashes:
  b) Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing;
  c) Elevated temperature;
  d) Vomiting.
- A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be cared for in a room or portion of a room not being used in the preschool program.
- A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be within sight and hearing of an adult at all times. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised.
- A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be made comfortable and provided with a cot. All linens and blankets used by the ill child shall be laundered before being used by another child. After use, the cots shall be disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent, or, if soiled with blood, feces, vomit, or other body fluids, the cots shall be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent.
- A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be observed carefully for worsening condition.
- A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be discharged to guardian.
- Each program shall have a written policy concerning the management of communicable disease. The policy shall include, at a minimum, the program’s means of training all preschool staff in signs and symptoms of illness and in hand washing and disinfection procedures.
- Procedures for isolating and discharging an ill child and policy for readmitting ill child.
- Procedures for notifying the parent or guardian immediately when a child is exhibiting signs or symptoms of illness or has been exposed to a communicable disease.
- Procedures regarding the care of a mildly ill child. “Mildly ill child” means a child who is experiencing minor common cold symptoms, but who is not exhibiting any of the symptoms specified in above paragraph of this rule or a child who does not feel well enough to participate in activities, but who is not exhibiting any of the symptoms specified above.
- Procedures for notifying all parents of enrolled children when children are exposed to a diagnosed communicable disease such as pink eye, ringworm, chicken pox, or lice.
XAVIER UNIVERSITY MONTESSORI LAB SCHOOL
3800 Victory Parkway
Cincinnati, Ohio 45207-6331

Rosemary Quaranta, 513/745-3402
Montessori Department Office, 745-3424

Xavier University Montessori Lab School Parent Handbook

To ensure that all parents have read this handbook, please sign the bottom and return it with all necessary papers before the beginning of school. Thank you.

I have read this handbook and will abide to the rules and guidelines established for the Xavier University Montessori Lab School to the best of my abilities.

____________________________________________________
Parent/Guardian Signatures: ________________________________

____________________________________________________

Date: ________________________________