

**Parent Handbook Addendum for
Montessori Enrichment**

**Director of Montessori Enrichment:
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RMS Montessori Enrichment Before and After Care Operations Information

Rationale and Philosophy *Care Beyond the Classroom* Extended Day Programs are an important service to the Richmond Montessori School community, providing care for our students after regular school hours. A welcoming atmosphere, coupled with the guidance of our nurturing staff, provides the structure for each child's care, guidance and safety. We offer a fascinating world complete with special activities, games, socialization, puzzles, art, music and so much more.

In its approach to care, the Montessori Enrichment program strives to be a true extension of each child's experience as a Montessori student, offering respect for the child while encouraging independence, creativity and natural curiosity.

Licensing Information

Richmond Montessori School's Montessori Enrichment Program (before and after school care, the summer camp program) is licensed to operate by the Department of Social Services (DSS). We are required to comply with the Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers, as well as the Code of the Commonwealth of Virginia, which applies to child day centers. The program is subject to announced and unannounced visits by the licensing inspector assigned to monitor our program. Annual fire and health inspections are also required.

Toddler Classrooms, while fully accredited by the American Montessori Society and the Virginia Association of Independent Schools, are also accountable to the obligations and standards of the Licensure from DSS.

The Virginia Department of Social Services State License is displayed in each licensed space. Our most recent inspection is also posted; additional records of compliance with licensing requirements are available upon request.

Hours

The Montessori Enrichment Program is open from **8:10 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.** The current school year calendar is mailed to all RMS families noting holidays and other days that Montessori Enrichment and/or the school is closed.

General Information and Schedules

Montessori Enrichment program staff report to the Director of Montessori Enrichment, who reports to the Head of School. Montessori Enrichment uses the same behavior expectations for students as the school (e.g. respectful behavior toward people and materials, control of body and voice, completion of activity cycle/restoration of materials, etc.).

If your child does not have an excused absence from school, they will not be allowed to attend Montessori Enrichment on that day.

Extra Clothing

Please provide a set of season-appropriate extra clothing and masks for each Montessori Enrichment classroom. Each item of clothing and the bag should be labeled. Please launder and return extra clothes promptly, if used.

Sleeping Bags

The Montessori Enrichment program will provide a labeled rest mat for each child. Children must bring their own labeled blanket or child-size sleeping bag that opens on three sides. Because we store sleeping bags in individual cubbies, they should be small in size; *please do not send an adult size bag.*

Montessori Enrichment staff send sleeping bags home for laundering on Friday, or the last day of the week that school is open. Please return the clean sleeping bags the following school day. As you go through morning drop-off, a carpool volunteer will help to make sure that sleeping bags are placed in one of two yellow rolling bins located at the entrance to the school. (If your child comes to Early Arrival, please bring the sleeping bag then.) If your child's sleeping bag is sent home as the result of an accident, please return it the following school day.

Toileting Policy: Montessori Enrichment Guidelines

For the purposes of participation in the Richmond Montessori School Montessori Enrichment program, the same standards defined for admissions apply.

Montessori Enrichment students must be toilet trained and have the ability to use the bathroom independently. The only exception is for toddlers (age 18 months through 2 years) who participate in the nap group of Montessori Enrichment or the Toddler extended day

program and who are not toilet trained. Only these students may wear pull-ups.

When accidents are habitual (more than 3 - 4 times in one week), the child is not considered ready to participate in the Montessori Enrichment program. If a student is having consistent toileting difficulties, the school reserves the right to set an earlier pick-up time than the time originally contracted upon enrollment. This policy applies to Primary and school age students.

Children must be toilet trained to participate in Holiday Package or summer camp.

Lunch

Children staying for Nap or Rest eat lunch at school, and should bring lunch in a container labeled with their name. Send a nutritious lunch, we will not warm-up food this school year. Small items that are a choking hazard such as grapes and hot dogs should be cut properly (into small bite size pieces). We encourage children to eat at least one half of their main course before other lunch items, and to send home any uneaten food so that parents are aware of what their child is eating. We encourage children to eat independently.

Nap or Rest? Whether a child is a napper or a rester depends on his/her sleeping habits. Toddlers and 3- year-olds start on the nap roster. Children in the nap group who do not fall asleep are encouraged to rest their bodies, and may be allowed to engage in a quiet activity like looking at a book. If a child consistently does not sleep, he/she may be moved to the rest group with the parent's consent as long as space is available.

Schedule: Toddlers Lunch/Nap

Your toddler student will eat lunch and nap in their own classroom. We encourage independence as well as grace and courtesy. The children eat lunch peacefully and use the bathroom before settling down for nap. We keep the lights off and soft music playing – and the children typically fall right asleep after their active morning. Children are permitted to bring one stuffed animal to help them get comfortable and fall asleep. Pacifiers are not permitted.

At about 2:10 p.m., we awaken the children. They use the bathroom, help put things away, and enjoy some outdoor play. At 3:00 p.m. children leaving go to carpool; children staying for extended day transition and have snack.

***Lunch/nap staff in Lavell Brown's classroom:
Dana Jacoby, Lavell Brown, Kathleen Williams***

***Lunch/nap staff in Jessica Richards's classroom:
Abby Heintzelman, Becca Rosas, Jessica Richards***

Primary lunch/nap/rest

Location: Classrooms in the HOUSE

Schedule: Primary Lunch/ Nap

All Primary Lunch/Nap and Extended Day groups are located in the **HOUSE** on South Campus

Your Primary student will eat lunch and nap in the House with their morning cohort. Groups are intentionally very small to allow for social distancing.

We encourage independence as well as grace and courtesy. The children eat a lunch peacefully, use the bathroom, and settle down for nap. We keep the lights off and soft music playing – and the children typically fall right asleep after their active morning.

At about 1:30 p.m., we awaken the 4 year olds, who quietly complete the wake up routine. At 2:00 p.m., we awaken the 3 year olds. They use the bathroom, help put things away, and enjoy some outdoor play. Each child will have their own tote of art supplies and a work rug, and the rooms are set up with engaging works and activities.

At 3:00 p.m. we take the children leaving for the day to the gym for carpool. Children staying for extended day remain in their same cohort space.

**Lunch/Nap Staff for the Gupta/Prior lunch-nap cohort:
Sarah Wills**

**Lunch/Nap Staff for the Sutton/Bailey lunch-nap cohort:
Rachael Filla**

**Lunch/Nap Staff for the Barbour cohort:
Hannah Hassouna**

Schedule: Primary Falcon Club

We appreciate your patience as we have worked on a plan to continue this popular program in the safest way possible.

Although Falcon Club will be structured a little differently this year, your child will reap the same rewards. Each Falcon Club member will stay in their *own classroom* for lunch followed by an early afternoon Montessori work cycle with their classroom teacher and assistant.

At 1:30, they will move to the Parsons Hall gym or outdoors with primary assistants Marshie Boswell and Emily Thompson for the Montessori extensions that Falcon Club is known and loved for. The gym will be split into three spaces for the cohorts, and the groups will practice social distancing to the greatest extent possible.

Students will explore art, science, reading, physical activity, the outdoor classroom and all of the wonderful components of the Falcon Club curriculum.

Children remaining for extended day after 3:00 p.m. will transition to the house, where they will continue with their same cohort for the rest of the afternoon. Those leaving will stay in the gym for carpool

The 3:05 p.m. Carpool is coordinated from the main school building. Children from nap and rest are escorted to Parsons Hall or to their extended day location.

**Extended Day Schedules- 3:05
to 6:00 p.m.**

Schedule: Toddler - 3:05 to 5:00 p.m. Location: Jessica Richard's Toddler classroom

The toddler group will use Jessica Richard's classroom and continue their day in a familiar environment. Outdoor play, gardening, nature study, and special projects are planned for fun and learning.

Staff:

Becca Rosas, Rachael Filla

Different this year:

- Please **send an afternoon snack** for your child from home. We will avoid serving food or doing food works to minimize transmission of COVID-19.
- **Pick up procedures have changed**
 - Call extension 21 once you are in the RMS parking lot.
 - Your child will be ready to depart when you come to **the second door on the patio** as you approach the office on South Campus to collect them (without entering the building). Please let us know if you are uncertain about which door to come to.
 - Staff will document your child's departure time and who picked them up on the roster.
 - If there is no answer on the extension, **DO NOT LEAVE A MESSAGE**; please go to the pick up door – there will be a note on the door where to find them. We will be using outdoor spaces as much as possible!
 - Please make sure that **ANYONE** who might pick your child up knows this procedure and is included on your approved pick up list.
 - Be sure anyone picking up has a picture ID with them.
 - As always, show your caring and concern for staff by wearing a mask and arriving on time for your child to depart **BEFORE** we close at 5:00 p.m.

Schedule: Carousel Club

Thank you for enrolling your child in Carousel Club. The staff have developed a program that allows for outdoor fun as much as possible and that includes creative indoor works that can be done individually! We are providing meaningful activities and choices, and each student will have their own tote of art supplies. Every month there is a theme with special activities including art, gardening, nature study, and games – just to name a few!

We are keeping the children in their classroom cohorts.

- The Mitra/Robinson cohort students will be in the Art Studio.
Staff: Jeffrey Bigman
Extension: 33

- The O’Shea/Altizer cohort students will be in the CEED downstairs in the same building on south campus.
Staff: Shannon Ciucci
Extension: 32

How to find the building with the art studio and CEED:

As you face the main office on south campus, go to your **left** on the sidewalk in front of the school and **down** the steps. The Art Studio/CEED building is directly **on your left**. There is an exterior stairway to the Art Studio, and the CEED door faces the plaza.

Different this year:

- Please **send an afternoon snack** for your child from home. We will avoid serving food or doing food works to minimize transmission of COVID-19.
- **Pick up procedures have changed**
 - Call the extension listed for your child’s group once you are in the RMS parking lot.
 - Your child will be ready to depart when you come to their door to collect them (without entering the building).
 - Staff will document your child’s departure time and who picked them up on the roster.
 - If there is no answer on the extension, DO NOT LEAVE A MESSAGE; please go to the assigned door for their group – there will be a note on the door where to find them. We will be using outdoor spaces as much as possible!
 - Please make sure that ANYONE who might pick your child up knows this procedure and is on your approved pick up list.
 - Be sure anyone picking up has a picture ID with them.
 - As always, show your caring and concern for staff by wearing a mask and arriving in time for your child to depart BEFORE we close at 6:00 p.m.

Schedule: HUB – Location: Middle School and the instructional classroom on North Campus.

Thank you for enrolling your child in the Hub. Our staff has created age appropriate activities and choices for our oldest students. Once they have finished their homework assignments, there will be special planned activities, individualized projects, and free choice works to engage them, and each student will have their own tote of art supplies.

Middle School

Staff: Shanthi Wickramasinghe

Location: Middle School classroom

Extension: 69

Door: Lower level entrance of the Performing Arts Center

Upper Elementary

Staff: Trisha Potter

Location: Auxiliary classroom in the instruction building

Extension: 66

Door: Exterior door on patio; second class from the circle

Different this year:

- Hub will be held on **north campus**
- Hub students will remain in **classroom cohorts**; Middle School together; Upper Elementary together.
- Please **send an afternoon snack** for your child from home. We will avoid serving food or doing cooking to minimize transmission of COVID-19.
- **Pick up procedures have changed**
 - Call the extension listed for your child's group once you are in the RMS parking lot.
 - Your child will be ready to depart when you come to their door to collect them (without entering the building).
 - Staff will document your child's departure time and who picked them up on the roster.
 - If there is no answer on the extension, DO NOT LEAVE A MESSAGE; please go to the assigned door for their group – there will be a note on the door where to find them. We will be using outdoor spaces as much as possible!
 - Please make sure that ANYONE who might pick your child up knows this procedure and is on your approved pick up list.
 - Be sure anyone picking up has a picture ID with them.
 - As always, show your caring and concern for staff by wearing a mask and arriving in time for your child to depart BEFORE we close at 6:00 p.m.

6:00 p.m. Montessori Enrichment closes. Late pickup fees apply.

Departures and Late Fees

RMS policy dictates that, if children leave at any time other than carpool, they must be signed out upon departure. Our pick up procedures this year only allow staff to sign your child out each day.

Etiquette for Picking up your Child

- Please finish calls and put away your cell phone before pick-up.
- Keep conversations with staff short so that they can focus their attention on the children in their care.
- Wear a mask when picking up your child.

Please provide written advance notice of any change in a child's departure (i.e. time or person authorized to pick up). To ensure the child's safety, we will check identification of any person unknown to us before releasing the child into that person's care.

The one-way driveway traffic pattern applies at all times, including during Montessori Enrichment hours. **PARKING IS PROHIBITED IN THE DRIVEWAY**, as it hinders traffic as well as visibility.

LATE PARENTS

Thank you for respecting your child's need for consistency and staff members' time commitments by arriving for pick up ***before 6:00 p.m.***

Please call extension 24 or the extension of your child's program if you have an emergency and know you will be late. While we expect and are gracious for an occasional late pick up due to unforeseen difficulty or family emergency, the RMS Parent Handbook clearly states that a ***pattern of late pick-ups can result in withdrawal from extended day.***

Montessori Enrichment closes at 6:00 p.m. If you or your emergency contacts cannot be reached the Department of Social Services may be called.

The late fee is \$25 for carpool ending at 3:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. closing. Payment must be made

by check to Richmond Montessori School and is due no later than the next school day.

Communications

Please use written communication or email (dmarschak@richmont.org) whenever possible. In the case of an emergency, you may contact our Director of Montessori Enrichment at 804-741-0040 extension 24, or speak to the front desk personnel at 804-741-0040. Check your child's bag daily for any notes or notices from Montessori Enrichment staff.

Please direct questions or information specific to your child's day to the Montessori Enrichment staff member in your child's group. Please understand that it's difficult to discuss major issues during pick-up times when children are in our care. Email is the best form of communication and will be answered within 24 hours. Please direct questions or concerns regarding the Montessori Enrichment program or its operations to the Director of Montessori Enrichment, Darlene Marschak at dmarschak@richmont.org.

While custodial parents have the right to enter the facility any time their child is at Montessori Enrichment, this year during COVID-19, we are not inviting parents into the classrooms.

Montessori Enrichment staff can be reached by phone at extension 24. It may be necessary to leave a voicemail while staff supervises students. Should a family emergency arise please call the main school line and leave a message with the receptionist at extension 10.

The Director of Montessori Enrichment, Darlene Marschak, can be reached via email at dmarschak@richmont.org.

Snack

During our Extended Day programs (3:00 – 6:00 p.m.) nutritious snacks are welcome. Children are welcome to bring their own snack or eat their leftover lunch.

Safety

All staff members have First Aid and CPR certification. Complete First Aid kits are located in each classroom and adjacent to the playgrounds. Sanitization stations have been placed throughout the school for extra precaution.

Montessori Enrichment staff members file accident reports with the school office; copies are sent/given to families at departure. If a child receives a serious injury as outlined in the Parent Handbook, a designated staff member will call 911 and notify a parent immediately.

Accident reports are reviewed annually to determine if there are any trends that need to be addressed for better safety.

Illness and Medication:

All students are screened before coming on campus at carpool and transitioning to Montessori Enrichment.

Parents or emergency contacts are notified if a child becomes ill, throws up, has diarrhea or has a **temperature of 100.4**; in such cases, the child must be picked up promptly.

Report your child's absence to the school office stating the reason for the absence. In the case of a contagious illness, notify the office as soon as possible by leaving a voicemail message for the school office at (804) 741-0040, extension #10. Information about your child's health and school attendance is important. The Virginia Department of Social Services has set certain guidelines regarding the attendance of children at school in the event of a contagious illness. To that end, RMS has the following policy regarding illness. Children are not to be at school if any of the following conditions exist:

- 100.4 degree or higher temperature (per D.S.S. regulation)
- rash (unless diagnosed as non-contagious by a doctor)
- discharge from ears or eyes; inflammation of eyes (unless diagnosed as non-contagious by a doctor)
- sore throat or persistent cough (unless diagnosed as non-contagious by a doctor)
- cold with green or yellow discharge from nose
- child not well enough to play or work
- vomiting, the night before or the morning of attending school
- continuous diarrhea
- other exclusionary illnesses which require office notification include: lice, pinworms, ringworm, impetigo
- In the case of lice, children can return to school 24 hours after treatment and they

must be nit free.

● Reportable contagious illnesses include:

- Adenovirus
- Chicken pox
- Head lice
- Influenza (flu)
- Impetigo
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- Pinworms
- Ringworm
- RSV
- Scarlet fever
- Strep throat
- Whooping cough
- COVID-19

If your child is to be away from school for an extended absence due to illness, notify the school in writing in advance so his/her teacher can determine a “work plan.”

Children must be fever free and without medication over the counter or Prescription for 24 HOURS BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL

If a child is not feeling well enough to attend his/her Montessori class, the child may not attend the Montessori Enrichment program.

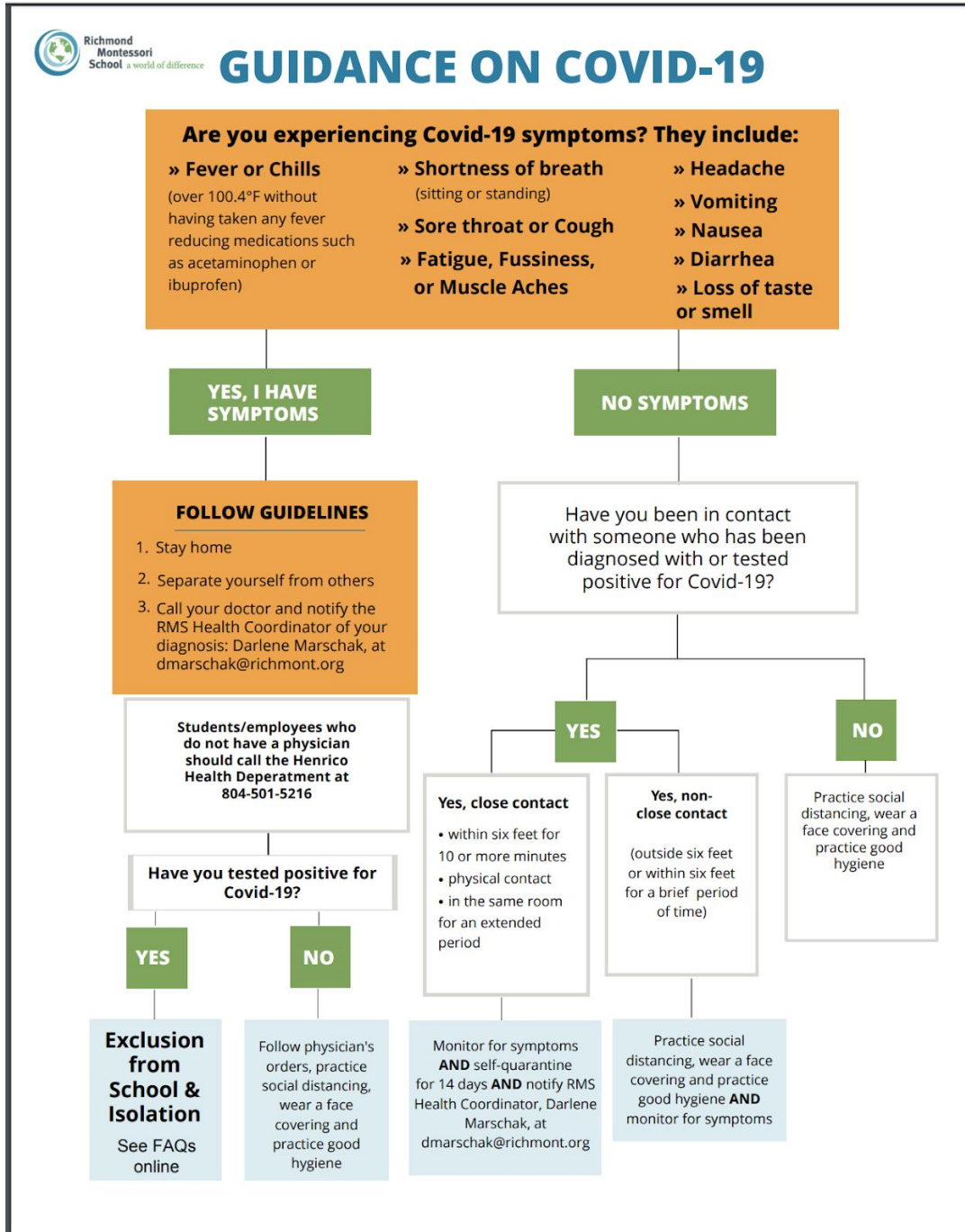
If a child needs a dose of prescription or over-the-counter medication during Montessori Enrichment hours, a parent must complete the medicine authorization form provided by Montessori Enrichment. Parents must also provide an original pharmacy container labeled with the child’s information, or the original over-the-counter container with the child’s name written on it. These medicine forms are valid for 10 days.

Parents need to have a physician sign the same authorization form if their child needs to have long-term medication on hand or for Epi pens and inhalers. The Montessori Enrichment staff checks medication lock boxes on a monthly basis for expired medications and/or authorizations.

The Montessori Enrichment staff can apply over the counter skin products such as sunscreen, insect repellent, moisturizing cream and diaper ointment if a parent completes and signs an authorization form provided by Montessori Enrichment. The product brought in for use must be

in its original container and must be labeled with the child's name. Prescription products must meet our medication requirements, as detailed above.

RMS COVID-19 Decision Tree:



Items to and from Montessori Enrichment

As in the classrooms, we welcome labeled books and cultural items. Please do not send toys, comic books, unsolicited videos or games. If any “foreign” items show up at home (marbles, puzzle pieces, etc.), please return them to Montessori Enrichment. Often the loss of only one irreplaceable piece means we must remove an activity from use.

Policy for Late Arrivals to Montessori Enrichment

If a child has an unexcused absence from school in the morning they may not attend Montessori Enrichment later in the day. The Director of Montessori Enrichment or the Head of School can clear exceptions.

Montessori Enrichment Drop-In Reservation

RMS has established a drop-in reservation procedure to accommodate the occasional need of families without a Montessori Enrichment contract to have care for their children beyond their contracted hours.

Advance reservations must be made and confirmed with the Director of Montessori Enrichment, Darlene Marschak. She may be reached at ext. 24 or by email at dmarschak@richmont.org.

Requests are accommodated on a space-available basis. In addition, a family must be current on their drop-in payments for any previous visits. Some families need a “regular” drop-in arrangement, certain days of the week on an ongoing basis. These reservations are good month to month. If space is filled with contracted students, drop-in arrangements are suspended.

Once a reservation is confirmed, payment can be made at the front desk or to the Director. Each \$30.00 visit is good for a block of Montessori Enrichment: Rest, Nap or Extended Day. Even if only a portion of the 3 hours is used, the entire fee is due. Likewise, the visit may not be split over two days or between two children.

Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect

Anyone may report child abuse or neglect; however under Virginia law, certain professionals including teachers or other persons employed in a public or private school are required to immediately report the concern to the local department of social services or the child abuse and neglect hotline: 1-800-552-7096.

Student Discipline

RMS does not permit under any circumstances the use of corporal punishment (including spanking or shaking) or emotional punishment (intentional public humiliation, sarcasm, unmonitored isolation or shouting) as means of modifying a child's behavior.

Please see the section on student expectations and discipline in the RMS Parent Handbook.

The Department of Social Services requires that we inform you of withdrawal and dismissal policies:

If, in the judgment of the administration of RMS, it is not in the best interests of the student or the school for continued attendance, withdrawal may be the only alternative. In such cases some or all of the following procedures will be followed:

- The Education Directors, Assistant Head of School, Head of School and any other qualified professional they select, will observe the student and assist the staff in making adaptations within the context of Montessori philosophy, to help improve the student's performance.
- The Education Director and Assistant/Head of School will meet with staff to gain their insight and to make recommendations for adaptations that may improve the student's performance.
- The Director of Montessori Enrichment, the Education Director and/or the Assistant/Head of School will meet with the student's parents to discuss their observations and the student's progress and performance.
- The school may require a comprehensive professional evaluation by an external expert within a specified time period.
- In the case of behavioral problems, the parents may be asked to keep the child home for a designated period of time or to come to school during the school day to take the child home.

● If, in the judgment of the teacher, the Education Director, the Assistant Head of School and the Head of School, the student cannot be accommodated within the realm of the school and its philosophy, the parents will be asked to withdraw the student from the school. The Head of School may offer an Enrollment Contract contingent upon reviewing the results of a professional evaluation and/or the continued evidence of progress and the demonstration of appropriate behavior for the remainder of the current school year.

Students Leaving RMS during the School Year

If parents voluntarily withdraw their child from RMS during the school year, written notification must be submitted to the Admission Office stating the child's name and last day of school. Contracts for the school year are binding.

Academic records should be requested from the Admissions Office. A parent or legal guardian must sign a "Release of Records" before records can be sent to another school. If scheduled payments on any of the family's accounts are more than 30 days in arrears, RMS will not release academic records, transcripts or teacher references to other schools, and will not permit the child to attend, re-enroll or move to a different level within RMS. If RMS cannot process a transcript request, families will be notified in writing.

After 30 days of non-payment the responsible parties will be in default; RMS may elect to have the entire annual balance immediately due. In case of default of tuition payments, suspension, expulsion and/or legal action may result.

Summer Camp Program

Montessori Enrichment coordinates the RMS Summer Camp Program. Brochures containing a detailed list of offerings are available in February on the school website.

Summer Enrichment Schedule: There is no Early Arrival during Summer Enrichment.

- 8:15-8:30 a.m. Morning Carpool
- 8:30-9:00 a.m. Morning playground time
- 9:00-11:30 a.m. Morning Camps
- 11:30 a.m. – Noon Lunch
- Noon – 3:00 p.m. Rest & Play

Noon – 3:00 p.m. Classic Camp Afternoons (swimming and camp activities)
3:00- 6:00 p.m. Extended Day