Parent & Student

Handbook School Year

2026-2027

HUDSON COUNTRY

MONTESSORI SCHOOL

44A Shelter Rock Road, Danbury, Connecticut 06810

www.hudsoncountry.org

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WELCOME

Dear Parents:

Hudson Country Montessori School is a school where children blossom! We seek to inspire a passion for excellence and to nurture curiosity, creativity and imagination. Our goal is not only to give students knowledge, but to prepare them with thinking and leadership skills needed to succeed in the ever evolving workforce of tomorrow. Our former students have gone off to become very successful in high school, college and in their careers. But more importantly, they are filled with self-confidence and doing things

that are important to them. At the same time they are mindful of their responsibility to protect the environment and to have compassion for others less fortunate.

We know that this goes beyond the scope of traditional education, but then, Hudson is a rather unusual school.

We work hard to create a sense of community and extended family at Hudson. In most cases, children and their parents make lifetime friends at Hudson. In this booklet, you will read about the many activities we have scheduled to create this sense of community at Hudson and we hope you will get involved and participate. We also believe that your child's success in school is related to our partnership with you, the parent. We strive for open lines of communication and invite you to ask any questions at any time. We also hope you will join us at the many informative events designed to help our children through their many developmental stages. Welcome again to Hudson!

Mark F. Meyer

Head of School

BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE MONTESSORI APPROACH

The most favorable time for a child to learn is when he/she wants to do it himself/herself. –Maria Montessori

THE MONTESSORI CLASSROOM:

Montessori classrooms are bright, warm, and inviting. They are filled with plants, animals, art, music, books, and interest centers filled with intriguing learning material, fascinating mathematical models, maps, charts, fossils, historical artifacts, computers and scientific apparatus.

You will not find rows of desks in our classrooms. Students are typically found scattered around the classroom, working alone or in small groups. They tend to become so involved in their work that we cannot help but be tremendously impressed with a sense of calm and concentration.

It may take a moment to spot the teachers within the classrooms. They can be found working with one or two children at a time, advising, presenting a new lesson, or quietly observing the class at work. In her research, Dr. Montessori noted specific characteristics associated with the child's interest and abilities at each stage of development. Rather than fight the laws of nature, Montessori suggested that we "follow

the child" and allow our children to show us how to facilitate the development of their human potential. Her focus on the "whole child" led Montessori to develop a very different sort of school from the traditional adult-centered classroom. The Montessori classroom is not the domain of the adults in charge, it is a carefully prepared environment designed to facilitate the development of the children. This is a true community of children. They move freely within the rooms, selecting work that captures their interest. When they are hungry, they prepare their own snack and drink. When something spills, they help each other carefully clean things up. It is clear to even the casual observer that this environment belongs to the children.

The Montessori Classroom is commonly referred to as a prepared environment. This expression reflects the care and attention that is given to creating a learning environment that supports each child with stimulating and challenging materials according to their greatest interests and capabilities.

RESPECT, INTELLIGENCE AND INDEPENDENCE:

We know that young children are full and complete individuals in their own right. They deserve to be treated with the full and sincere respect that we would extend to their parents. Respect breeds respect and learning is facilitated in an environment of mutual respect.

Dr. Montessori believed that intelligence can be increased by exposure to a broad array of experiences early in a child's life. The nature of the Montessori experience is to provide children with a stream of developmentally appropriate experiences that unlock the greatest potential in every child. Because these experiences are individualized to the child's interest, children are more engaged and committed to their own cognitive development.

By allowing children to develop a meaningful degree of independence and self-discipline, Montessori sets a pattern for a lifetime of good work habits, a sense of responsibility as well as positive guidance. Students are taught to take pride in doing things for themselves carefully and well.

TEACHING CHILDREN TO THINK FOR THEMSELVES:

The program is designed to help each student discover and develop his/her own talents. We know that no two students will learn at the same pace, nor will they share the same interests at the same time. Therefore, we strive to be flexible and creative in addressing each student as a unique individual.

Rather than present students with "better answers," Montessori teachers ask students "better questions." They lead students to think and to discover the answers for themselves. Learning becomes its own reward, and the habit of successfully finding answers fuels a child's desire to discover even more.

SOCIALIZATION, COLLABORATION, FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND INDEPENDENTLY CHOSEN WORK:

Montessori children are free to move about so they can work alone, with others or with the teachers during the work period. They may select any activity and work as long as they wish, driven by their innate curiosity .

At various points during the day, the students work together in groups for specific lessons, recreation, and "specials" such as Gym, Music, Art, Drama (elementary and older students) and Spanish.

In an atmosphere where children learn at their own pace and compete only against themselves, they

learn not to be afraid of making mistakes. They quickly find that few things in life come easily and they can try again without fear of embarrassment. Before a child is allowed to advance to more challenging work they must demonstrate proficiency in earlier lessons. By removing the punitive aspects of school and enhancing the experiential aspects of learning, our students enjoy learning and as a result, they become fully engaged in their own education.

Through the Montessori Method each child gains the self-esteem and self-awareness that leads them towards personal peace. With this, the child is then able to reach out to others in constructive, collaborative and ultimately peaceful ways.

INTEGRATED MONTESSORI CURRICULUM:

The Montessori curriculum uses an integrated, thematic approach that ties the separate disciplines of the curriculum together. We also integrate components of the traditional curriculums such as CT Early Learning and Development Standards, DOTS, Common Core Standards and the Connecticut / New York Curriculum Outline K-12 to best meet the needs of all our children. Program quality is based on reflection and information gathered by staff, family, surveys, and accreditation sources.

Literature, the arts, history, social issues, political science, economics, science and the study of technology all complement one another. The same is true in our science curriculum, weaving principles of physics, chemistry, the earth sciences, botany, and zoology together from the preschool years and up, with far greater emphasis on the sciences in general than is common in most American elementary curriculums.

Our mathematics curriculum follows a European model of unified mathematics through which students are introduced to concepts in algebra, geometry, mathematical logic, and statistics . Hudson acknowledges that Professional Development is a crucial part of maintaining a higher level of education and quality of care. Hudson teachers are expected to and are encouraged to be lifelong learners. Each teacher has their own professional growth plan to help track their professional development.

TYPICAL CLASS SIZE:

Our school-age classrooms (Elementary and Middle School) typically have twenty to twenty-five students with one professionally trained teacher and an assistant.

Our Primary classrooms (three years old to Kindergarten) typically have twenty to twenty-four students with two professionally trained teachers.

Our Toddler classrooms typically have eighteen to twenty one students with two professionally trained Montessori teachers and one assistant teacher. Both classrooms are unusually large by normal standards. We use larger environments to provide a greater variety of engaging materials, including an indoor climber that research has identified as essential for optimal brain development in young children.

Our infant suite consists of three rooms that typically serve the needs of 16 infants. One room is for sleeping and the other two rooms are used to separate the more mobile "waddlers" from the less mobile infants. The infant and waddler suite is staffed with two professionally trained Montessori teachers and five to eight support staff.

A<u>ll class placements are determined by the child's social, emotional and academic readiness rather than chronological age.</u>

THE PURPOSE & BENEFIT OF MULTI-AGE CLASSES:

Montessori classes encompass a three-year age span. Students not only learn "with" each other, but "from" each other. Younger students benefit from the daily stimulation of older role models who they desire to emulate. This includes infants learning from waddlers. Older students benefit from enhanced self-esteem and the development of leadership skills while testing the depth of their own knowledge. Some parents worry that having younger children in the same class as older ones will leave someone shortchanged. However, the concept for the multi-age groupings was actually modeled after the family. In most families, children are of different ages and yet none of them are shortchanged. In fact, Montessori educated children typically work at a grade level that is one to two years ahead of children trained in traditional school settings.

In the Montessori community, we believe there are benefits to being the youngest, oldest and middle child. In our multi-age classrooms every child will experience what it is like to have different roles in the classroom structure. The benefit to younger children in a class comes from mentoring and care they receive from the older children and the drive to emulate their older, more competent child role models. The benefit of being an older child comes from the responsibility of mentoring and leading the younger children as they are assigned various rotating leadership roles. Much research has been done on the impact of birth order and numerous studies demonstrate that leaders tend to be oldest children. (It is worth noting that seventy percent of US Presidents were oldest children.) The multi-age classroom also benefits from a stronger sense of community where all students feel safe and where they have a sense of purpose. Since most of the children in each class are returning students from the prior year, the teacher knows most of the children and their parents on the first day of school. In addition, the returning children know the teacher, the classroom rules and classroom culture and they help the teacher onboard the new students. By virtually eliminating the learning curve at the start of the school year, learning begins from day one, making multiage classrooms significantly more efficient for teaching/learning.

MONTESSORI MATERIALS – A ROAD FROM THE CONCRETE TO THE ABSTRACT: Dr. Montessori noted that children learn most readily from concrete experience and direct interaction with people and things in their environment. This led Montessori to develop concrete learning tools, which have become known as "Montessori Materials". We hope you attend our bi yearly parent education presentation called; "The Journey" which is an overview of the Journey a child takes from the Infant Room through Middle School. Throughout the Journey you will experience, first hand, how the Montessori materials promote a deep understanding of concepts that traditional education typically teaches by rote memorization.

ADMINISTRATION MATTERS

THE OFFICE:

The administrative office handles the school's overall business affairs, correspondence, and telephone calls. Please call with any questions or concerns you may have.

Formal financial business office hours are from 8:30am – 3:00pm, Monday through Friday. However, there will also be an administrative person in the building from 8:00-5:00pm who will be able to assist you.

Telephone: (203) 744-8088

Facsimile: (203) 748-3403

E-mail: Info@hudsoncountry.org

Web Address: www.hudsoncountry.org

24 HOUR EMERGENCY CONTACT:

If you need/want to speak with someone outside of school hours you may contact Mark Meyer (203-512-1536) or Megin Meyer (203-512-3508) on their cell phones. Mark & Megin Meyer hope that you will call if you need immediate verbal communication or if you need to report something of an urgent confidential nature.

If you need to speak with Mark or Megin Meyer on a non-emergency basis, you can leave a message with the office (203) 744-8088 or email us at: markmeyer@hudsoncountry.org or megin@hudsoncountry.org.

SNOW DAYS/EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS:

We have instituted a "School Calendar" that includes up to 180 days of school that loosely follow the vacation schedule of the Danbury Public School District. Hudson does not follow Danbury Public School with respect to emergency school closings.

The Internet is usually the best source of information about school closings, delays and early dismissal. If you have added your name to the school's email list you will receive an email as soon as the emergency closing decision has been made.

Email Blast

An Email Blast will be sent when a decision has been made on any delay or closing of the school for weather related reasons. Please make sure the front office has your correct and updated email address

information.

School Wide Text Message

A message from the Parent Procare App will be also sent with information on school closings or delays.

Oversight of the Facility

When the Head of School and / or Director is out of the office or school, oversight of the school , staff and facility will be overseen by the level Coordinators.

Note: While it may be safe for some of our families and staff to come to school during inclement weather it will not be safe for every family or staff member to come to school. Therefore, when weather is bad, you will need to make your own decision about whether it is safe for your family to come to school. If you do not think it is safe for you to bring your child to school for any reason, you should not come to school.

• School-age students who do not report to school on a school day according to the Hudson School Calendar will be marked absent for attendance. However, if Danbury Public Schools are closed on that day, the absence will be considered an "excused absence".

PROFESSIONAL DAYS:

Professional development is the strategy Hudson uses to ensure that our educators continue to strengthen their practice throughout their career. The most effective professional development engages teams of teachers to focus on the needs of their students. They learn and problem solve together in order to ensure all students achieve success.

In order to evolve our curriculum and educational programs, our teachers will spend several days each year in professional workshops and seminars. Although this professional development is expensive for the school and may be inconvenient for you when closed, it is an essential investment in the teacher's continuing education and of great benefit to your child.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT:

The School is founded on a partnership of students, parents, faculty and administration that work together as a community. Families are encouraged to get involved with school activities and to participate on one of the many parent committees/councils. Families are also welcomed and encouraged to visit the classrooms.

If joining a warm and welcoming community is not reason enough for you to get involved in school events, please consider the research that correlates student success in school with parental involvement. We hope to see you at many parent events!

SCHOOL SESSIONS (summer hours are slightly different)

Days Open -Monday - Friday

Months: September -June – School Year

Months: June -August – Camp Session

Early Session 7:00am – 9:00am

Half Day AM 9:00am – 12:00pm

Half Day PM 12:00pm – 3:00pm
Full Day 9:00am – 3:00pm
Late Session I 3:00pm – 4:55pm
Late Session II 4:55pm – 5:30pm

CONFERENCES, EVALUATIONS AND REPORTS:

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled during the late fall, mid-winter and a third optional conference is scheduled in the spring. Additional conferences can be scheduled at any time during the year. Progress reports are prepared three times during the school year.

Please let us know of any changes in your home situation that might affect your child in school. A visiting grandparent or sick pet in the home can affect your child's behavior and mood. It will help the teacher work with your child if he/she understands the circumstances.

All student medical records, academic records and testing results are kept on file for 5 years.

STANDARDIZED TESTING:

Working closely with your children on individualized learning plans is normal in the Montessori classroom. We do not need a test or assessment to tell us how your child is progressing. However, assessments/tests help us ensure that our own evolving curriculum remains richer than the traditional school curriculum and it gives us the opportunity to expose your child to test taking and test taking strategies.

The School administers both the MAP assessment tool for younger students and the ERB for older students.

• MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) is a widely used computer based adaptive assessment tool developed by the non-profit Northwest Evaluation Association. The assessment is administered three times per year. The curriculum test questions were designed by Professors at Columbia Teachers College and the software was designed at MIT. The test is "adaptive" in the sense that algorithms change the test questions for each student depending on his/her answers in order to assess exactly what a student does and does not understand about each subject. Since no two children will take the same test, these tests cannot be normed. However, the assessment does provide useful insight into your child's developing skills with a comprehensive parent report that you will receive at conference time.

• ERB (Educational Records Bureau) is one of the more popular tests administered by elite private school in our area. It is a classic standardized test that is taken on the computer. Experience with the ERB prepares students for other tests they will be taking like the SSAT, ISEE, PSAT, SAT etc. Individual test results are strictly confidential and we will share your child's results with you at a conference or through the mail. The results will also become part of your child's school records that are only released with your written consent. The school may publish average or aggregated results for the various age groups.

Some parents object to any form of standardized testing. Therefore, you may opt-out your child from assessment/testing by submitting a request in writing that will be included in your child's academic file to explain why there are not test results. If the parent/guardian does not want a child to be assessed/tested but the child is sent to school on a test day, the child will be invited to participate in some other activity.

CLASSROOM COMMUNICATIONS AND NOTICES:

All teachers communicate with parents are through Procare messaging, email, notes, as well as scheduled conferences. Important information, reminders, as well as a monthly Newsletter are sent via Email Blast or Procare Messaging. Please make sure the office has your correct email so you can be included in the communication.

SCHEDULE CHANGES/INTERRUPTIONS:

Vacations planned during the school year interrupt the continuity of your child's education. We strongly suggest that you time your vacations to coincide with the School vacation calendar. Information on the School Calendar is available on the school's website as well as attached to each monthly Newsletter.

Maintaining a consistent daily routine will help your child develop his/her physical and intellectual abilities to the fullest. If, however, a circumstance should arise whereby you need to extend your child's day (i.e., AM child to remain at school for the PM session), you may make arrangements through the office at least 48 hours in advance to reserve the space. In most circumstances, we are able to accommodate the need to stay longer on a day the child is already scheduled. Charges for extra services can be found on the back of Hudson's current tuition schedule.

Parents who wish to reduce their child's schedule (less hours per week), must dis-enroll their child in order to do so. Students who are dis-enrolled at any time during the school year must reapply and will be treated the same as any new, prospective student with regards to admissions and tuition. Priority is given to students who wish to enroll full time.

There will be no substitution of days due to holidays, emergency closings, force majeure, family vacations or other family situations or medical conditions that may cause a child to be absent from any of the School's programs. Students enrolled in three (3) or four (4) day programs must maintain the same schedule every week, and must include a Monday or a Friday. There is no "School Calendar" option for children enrolled fewer than five (5) days. Only Elementary/Middle School children make-up days for emergency closings when the number of emergency closings exceeds seven days. In the event of a forced school closing, the School may continue to operate through a distance learning or hybrid format. In lieu of a distance learning or hybrid format, the School may modify/extend the school calendar.

The payment due date for billing is the last day of the month prior to the billing month (eg.) billing Due Date of August 30this for the September payment.

You are allowed 1 change to your child's schedule free of charge. After that any changes will be subject to a $50.00 administrative fee.

Accounts will be assessed a $50 late fee when they are past due. Continued service may be denied when accounts are 14 days past due. Summer tuition is due and payable in advance. Note: Tuition is calculated and due on an annual basis for the school program. The monthly payment schedules are

installment plans established for the convenience of the Parents. (They are not payments for a specific month.) Regular monthly installments must be made even if your child does not attend school. Changes in your schedule are subject to an extra fee. See tuition schedule for more details.

SCHOOL PIZZA FRIDAYS PROGRAM:

Program is available for an additional charge through THE OFFICE.

PREPARING FOR SCHOOL

ENROLLMENT FORMS:

No child can be admitted to school unless all of the required forms are filled out and on file with the office. Sometimes the Health Form from your doctor gets stuck in a pile in his/her office and we never receive it. If we are missing a form, we will contact you.

PRIMARY/ELEMENTARY ORIENTATION EVENING:

During the first weeks of school an evening is set aside for a general parent orientation. The Head of School begins with a brief discussion on the purpose of a Montessori program and a summary of the school's goals for the year. The Director or Coordinator reviews basic protocols such as dress code, arrival procedures and parent involvement. After the general comments, parents follow their child's teacher to the classrooms for a specific classroom orientation. If you have two children, it is strongly suggested that each parent visit a different classroom and that you share notes later that evening.

SEPARATION:

There is no single separation strategy that works for every child. Some children have an easy time of it and that makes the parents cry. Some children struggle with separation and that is when the school and the parents need to work together to make the transition as easy as possible for your child and for you.

PREPARATION FOR SCHOOL:

There are a few things that will help with your child's transition to school for the first time. 1. Have a positive attitude. Your child will quickly pick up on any negative feelings you may have. 2. Prepare yourself to leave your child. Trust the person your child will be with. 3. Inform your child of where you are going, what you will be doing, and most importantly, that you will return to pick him/her up at dismissal time.

4. A reassurance such as, "I will be back", that can be practiced ahead of time with a sitter or a friend, can help your child better understand.

5. Upon returning, a comment such as, "I am back. I am so happy to see you." – tells your child that he/she was missed by you, as much as you have been missed by him/her. "I want to hear all about your day and how wonderful it was," tells your child your thoughts have been of him/her. ONCE AT SCHOOL:

1. Greet your child's teacher, then say goodbye cheerfully and depart.

2. If your child is apprehensive about separation, it might be best to let your child watch for a while. Our teachers will allow each child time and space to settle in.

3. Remember, some children need longer to adjust than others.

4. If the tears flow and your child is unhappy, a teacher will comfort your child with reassurances that you will return. Distraction, with a piece of classroom material or activity, may be attempted. 5. It will be the teacher's initial goal to help your child understand that one of the most important factors in coming to school is to be happy.

SAYING GOODBYE:

1. Be positive! Show your child your confidence with a warm smile, kiss and hug. Just saying "I love you! Have a great day!" tells your child that you want him/her to be happy.

2. Remember: our teachers will not compete with the parents for a child's affection. They will support

you, as the most important person in your child's life.

3. Feelings of guilt or sadness about leaving your child will result in similar feelings in your child. Your expressions of happiness and excitement for him/her will insure your child's enjoyment of every minute at school. Remember: the process of education will only begin when your child feels happy and secure.

4. All lingering concerns will quickly disappear when, upon your return, your child jumps into your arms, eager to share his/her happy experience.

5. Remember, you are always welcome to come and see what is going on in the classroom through our many windows. Stop by the office first; someone there can help you see without being seen. SCHOOL PICTURES:

School pictures are taken in the fall and to be ready in time for the Holidays. Siblings can be photographed separately and/or together.

CALENDAR:

The school calendar (as well as the Handbook) is included by links in our application and available in the monthly Newsletter. Please keep it handy and refer to it for holidays and special school events. This calendar is also available on the school's website. Please check your email and the school website for last-minute reminders / changes about the calendar.

CLASS PARENTS / VOLUNTEERS:

Each classroom has a "Class Volunteer" who has agreed to help new parents. Perhaps you have already called this parent for a reference; perhaps you will never feel the need to call him/her. In any case, if you have a question, "Class Volunteers" are prepared to assist you. Volunteers also are committed to planning and implementing events and fundraisers throughout the year.

SCHOOL POLICIES

PUNCTUALITY:

It might seem odd to you that we would make an issue of being punctual because we don't think of small children as having "important" things to do that require punctuality. However, small children crave routine. A consistent and familiar routine will cause your child to be noticeably happier and generally more compliant. School is fun for your child and they don't want to miss anything. Being late to school is similar to you arriving at a movie theater 15 minutes after the movie started. It doesn't feel good to miss out. Apart from that, tardiness disrupts the classroom. The formal academic part of our program begins at 9:00am for all ages except Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary and Middle School which start at 8:30am.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL:

Upon entering and exiting the parking areas, please drive slowly (5 mph) and follow the yellow arrows. Park your car in a marked parking space. Please do not park in the fire lane along the front of the building or in the handicapped spots unless you have a permit. Always follow the arrows, when driving in the parking lot.

You will escort your child to and from the building. Children in the elementary program, or who take the school bus, may walk into the school by themselves, but must put in their code in the keypad to get inside the building.

IDLING VEHICLES:

It is illegal to leave an idling vehicle. Do not leave your vehicle running/ idling while dropping off your students, unless the vehicle needs to idle in extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperature.

VISITATION:

You are welcome to drop-in to see your child whenever you wish. But, remember, it is natural for a young child to want to go home once they see you. Therefore, if you do not plan to take your child home after your visit, please come by the office and someone will help you see your child without being seen.

Parents are invited to observe their child in their classroom any time by scheduling an appointment. There is a specific protocol for observations that will minimize your "presence" so that you can get the best understanding of daily life in the Montessori classroom. Please remember that an observation does not include engagement with other students or a teacher conference. You can specifically schedule a conference in conjunction with the observation; contact your child's teacher if you would like an observation or a conference.

TRANSPORTATION:

Parents wishing to arrange carpools may request a student list identifying parent's names and zip codes from the office to determine if other students live in their neighborhood. The school does not distribute phone numbers or addresses, except if the parent or family allows. If there is a change in your child's pick-up routine, we recommend that you remind your child where he/she is going after school and/or who is driving the carpool on that particular day.

Bussing is available from the Danbury Public School District for school age children (Kindergarten to Eighth Grade) that live in Danbury. For details, please contact Mrs. Sauls at le.danbury@hudsoncountry.org

SNOW DAYS/EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS:

It is a school policy to continue operations despite inclement weather conditions. The school, however, may open late or close early. It is our intention to open for at least six hours per day so that working parents can accomplish their most essential tasks. In the event of severe weather conditions, please follow the procedure in the Snow Days/Emergency Closings on pages 9-10. Although Hudson's "School" calendar approximates the Danbury Public school holiday schedule, it does not follow Danbury Public School emergency closings. Hudson Country Montessori School does not make-up days missed for inclement weather unless the total number of emergency closings exceeds five full days.

FORCE MAJEURE:

In the event that the School, for any length of time as a result of a casualty or other force major event, shall postpone classes for the academic year or disrupt instruction during the academic year there will be no refunds of tuition for the time. By signing the tuition and enrollment agreement, parents acknowledge the policy and, regardless of any such postponement, cancellation or disruption, agree to pay tuition according to their Tuition and Enrollment Agreement(s).

DISCRIMINATION:

In keeping with Montessori philosophy, Hudson Country Montessori School encourages diversity among the students and staff. We celebrate each person's unique individuality in many ways. The

PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION:

The individuals you identified on the Release Authorization Form are the only individuals authorized to take your child home from school each day.

If anyone other than an authorized individual is to pick up your child, you must provide prior notice in writing to the office. We must have written and dated notes for any changes in authorization. Children will not be released to an unauthorized person. Any authorized pick-up person must be prepared to present a photo ID / License upon arrival before a child will be allowed to leave with him/her. The school recognizes emergencies happen. If you request an unknown person to pick-up your child because of an emergency, the school has a protocol in place that we will explain if the need occurs.

The School opens at 7:00 am and closes at 5:30 pm (Monday through Friday except holidays). If a child is not picked up by 5:45pm and we are unable to reach the parents or the release contacts, the emergency medical contacts may be called. The child will be held at the School until contact is made. If contact is not made by 7:00pm (or within two (2) hours of an earlier closing), the police will be notified. A late fee of $1.50 per minute will be imposed after 5:30pm.

EARLY ARRIVAL/LATE PICK-UP:

There is a 15-minute grace period for early arrivals and a 5-minute grace period for late pick-ups up until 5:30pm based on your child's schedule. If you arrive earlier or pick-up later, you will be charged for the additional service at a rate of $1 per minute unless you have made prior arrangements with the office at least 48 hours in advance. Pick-up time is the time the child is picked-up from his/her classroom, not the time the parent enters the building.

If a child is enrolled in a session that ends before 5:30pm and the child is not picked up within 15 minutes of the end of that session, the child will join the subsequent session (afternoon or late session), and the parents will be billed at the rate of $1 per minute until the child is picked up.

At 5:25 pm, all children remaining at school will be taken to the late pick-up person in the front lobby area where they will read or play quietly. Late pick-up fees for pick-ups after 5:30pm are given entirely to the person on duty for late pick-ups.

A fee of $1.00 per minute will be charged for unscheduled early arrivals and late pick-ups. If you can provide the school with 48 hours advance notice of an early arrival or late pick-up, it may be possible to accommodate your request at a lower rate.

LATE DROP-OFF/EARLY PICK-UP:

Plan to drop-off and pick-up your child before the academic portion of the day begins and after it ends. If you have an emergency and you need to pick-up/drop-off your child during school hours, kindly call the office so arrangements can be made to assist you. Primary children who arrive after 9:10am and disrupt the classroom with a drop-off may stay in the front office until 9:45 am when circle time is over.

The State regulates attendance of students in grades Kindergarten and up. If your child is late for school (after 9:00am Kindergarten 8:30 am for Lower- Middle School), it will be recorded as a "tardy" on their report card. Continued late attendance will prompt a meeting with the Head of School or Director.

The school is required to report to the State when a student is tardy more than 25 times in a school

Kindergarten -8thGrade Attendance:

There are approximately 180 school days in the academic year. For school age children (children who turn 5 on or before September 1 of any school year CGS Sec.10-15c), attendance is taken daily and becomes part of the child's official school record. The State of Connecticut classifies a child with 10 absences as "chronically truant". Any student who has 4 unexcused absences from school in any one month or 10 unexcused absences from school in any school year is "Truant". Children will be excused from school when the parent provides a written note describing the following reasons for absence: personal injury or illness, death in the family, religious observance, family emergency, and school sponsored field trips, court appearances, suspension. If your child misses an excessive number of school days because of circumstances beyond your control, the State of Connecticut requires that you make arrangements to maintain the same level of academic achievement as if he/she had attended school. If

your Kindergarten or Elementary/Middle School student will be absent from school you must inform the office. If your younger child will be absent from school, we encourage you to call the office so we can inform your child's teacher.

For more truancy information from the State of Connecticut education Department see: https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Chronic-Absence/Chronic-Absence

'DRESS CODE for ALL STUDENTS:

In the Montessori tradition, our children are encouraged to be independent; including making decisions about the clothing they wear. If our children want to wear one blue sock and one red sock that is fine with us. However, it is important to the development of self-respect/self-esteem that indoor and outdoor clothing be clean, neat and suitable to the season.

Dress Recommendations for all children Infant - Primary:

Clothing should be practical so children can move freely and sit comfortably on the floor. Tight body suits and leggings must be covered by other clothing. Mini-skirts, ripped / distressed fabric, holes, tears, bleach spots, logos, etc. and sheer or revealing clothing is not permitted. • Clothing should be practical so children can move freely and sit comfortably on the floor. • Tight bodysuits and leggings must be covered by other clothing.

• Mini-skirts, sheer or revealing clothing is not permitted.

• Outer clothing such as jackets, nylon windbreakers, hooded sweatshirts, coats and hats may not be worn in the building.

• Footwear must be worn at all times on school grounds and must allow the wearer to move quickly without losing the shoe or injuring him/herself. Footwear of any type (including sneakers) cannot have heels or soles greater than 1 inch.

• Clothing is expected to cover the torso, the midriff, and all undergarments.

• Shorts, skirts and dresses must be long enough so that they reach the fingertips when the wearer's arms are extended straight down. This includes slits in skirts and dresses.

• Label all clothing with your child's name.

• During winter months, each child will need boots, snow pants, a hat, mittens/gloves and a warm coat. If your child wears shoe boots that fit directly over socks, they will need shoes/slippers that are kept at school. (Note: for safety, all hood and waist cords should be removed from coats and jackets.) • Every child should have an extra set of clothes to change into in case they spill something on themselves.

• The following items are not allowed to be worn in the building:

1. Torn, tattered, wrinkled, or dirty clothing

2. Hats of any type

3. Sandals that do not have a back strap

4. Sunglasses

5. Pants touching the floor

Inappropriate pictures, symbols, or language, including messages about drugs, alcohol, smoking or of a derogatory sexual or racial nature

ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL DRESS CODE:

In addition to the dress recommendations for all children (see above), there is a more formal dress code for students in Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary and Middle School. Examples of appropriate clothing can be found at www.landsend.com, Target or JC Penney's online under "School Uniforms". (Clothing with the Hudson logo may be ordered from Lands End or our school store.) • Shirts must have a collar and be solid colored in polo, turtleneck or oxford styles. • Pants/skirts/shorts/collared dresses are to be navy colored in traditional chino, twill or corduroy styles.

• Gym attire is mandatory for all Lower through Middle School students. Clothing SHOULD have the school's logo and MUST follow the same color of navy. The school will have available for purchase; sweat pants, jersey style shirts, shorts, and tee-shirts for purchase. Inquire in the office for purchase. • Visible body piercings are restricted to ears (unless culturally significant). Earrings should not dangle or cause risk of being pulled or caught during daily activity including physical education. • Visible tattoos are not permitted.

• No Mohawks, spiked, hair insignia or any hairstyle that distracts the learning process for the student or fellow students.

• Visible cosmetics (face powder, eye make-up, lipstick etc.) are not permitted. Plain colored nail polish is the only exception.

• If an Elementary child comes to school more than twice in clothes that do not conform to the dress code, they will be asked to leave school and change. The third time a child comes to school who is out of compliance with the dress code, the parents will be asked to meet with the Head of school or the child will be suspended from school until compliance with the code can be achieved. Children on the Hudson Calendar do not have to follow dress code on vacation days, and days that the SCHOOL CALENDAR students do not attend school, unless otherwise noted.

TODDLER BEHAVIOR:

In the toddler program it is developmentally appropriate for behaviors such as biting, pushing, hitting, etc., however, the school does not take these behaviors lightly. These unwanted behaviors can become habitual and wide spread very quickly if they are not addressed immediately. The teachers address unwanted behavior(s) with the children immediately and an incident report is sent home to the parents of both students and the Infant/Toddler Coordinator at the end of the day. If there are multiple incidents in a short period of time the teachers and/or the Coordinator will meet with the family of the child to devise a plan to eliminate the unwanted behavior(s).

DISCIPLINE:

Montessori introduces children to the joy of learning at an early age and provides a framework in which intellectual and social discipline goes hand in hand. At Hudson, our long term goal for the children is to attain a discipline that comes from within the child; from their own understanding of a situation; their own growing ability to express their feelings – not from the authority of the adult. This is achieved in an

environment of respect for all children. In this environment, the child will respect the rights of others and develop control from within. Clear limits and classroom rules set at the beginning of the year will be reinforced consistently with positive guidance.

Children usually experience school as a safe place where they can be themselves and express their feelings. The first step to maintaining order in the classroom is to establish and teach simple rules that are easy to understand and discuss with children. Our approach to discipline is preventive rather than reactive. We maintain rules with consistency, redirect when necessary, and use positive guidance as well as "the look" when we know children understand they are not living up to behavioral expectations. Sometimes we need to have discussions about behavior and mediate conflicts, these discussions include the family input as well as the schools. Our goal is to instill in the child a healthy respect for themselves, others and their classroom environment. Please keep in mind that learning to be social is a large part of the work of a young child. As with all things, some children are very good at being social, others need more help developing those skills. One thing that is certain in any social environment involving human beings is there will be conflict. Learning to be good citizens of our classroom community is the foundation for all other learning.

Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES do our staff use spanking, hitting, slapping, pinching, shaking or striking, verbal abuse, intimidation, name calling or restriction of food or sleep as a means of disciplining children. At no time will a child be isolated in a hallway or out of sight/sound of an adult as a means of discipline. Staff members, who use insulting, humiliating or frightening means to respond to children, will be disciplined and if warranted dismissed from the school, the incident(s) may also be reported to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Public Health. If DCF or DPH determines that the incident will be investigated, the employee may be sent home pending the outcome of the investigation. If DCF "substantiated" abuse or neglect, the staff person will be terminated immediately. If DCF determines that abuse or neglect is "unsubstantiated", the incident may nevertheless reflect poor judgment or inappropriate conduct on the part of the staff person, and the individual may be disciplined up to and including termination of employment. If a student has consistent behavior issues that are developmentally inappropriate, the teacher may consult with the Level Coordinator, Director and / or the Head of School to see if we can identify a strategy to eliminate the unwanted behaviors. If the issues cannot be resolved internally, the parent(s) will be asked to come to school for a conference to discuss strategies to change/eliminate the unwanted behavior(s). If the school is not having any success with internally derived strategies, the school may request that the parents engage a psychologist to help the school identify additional strategies.

While the parents and school are waiting for an evaluation/counseling from a psychologist, the school may request that a "shadow" be hired to support the student or that the student be kept home. If the psychologist believes the student has the potential to be successful in Hudson's Montessori environment in the long term, the school may require that the child have a full-time or part-time support person(s) to help the student prepare for future success. The child's parents will be charged an additional fee to cover the cost of any individuals hired to support the child. Notwithstanding the school's desire to help students who struggle with behavioral issues, the following policy with regard to unwanted behaviors will be observed. The following chart defines the school's response to unwanted behaviors.

Every student at Hudson Country is expected to behave in a responsible and kind manner that demonstrates personal integrity and respect for the rights and well-being of others. All of the offenses below include harms done in person, in written or image form, via electronic media, etc. and constitute a serious lack of consideration for community standards:

• bullying and intimidation,

• hazing,

• harassment,

• abusive actions or speech, including physical violence and profanity,

• offensive or derogatory images, gestures, language, comments, or lyrics that are perceived and/or experienced as being used to humiliate, mock, or insult a person or particular group of people, • pervasive negativity about others or the school itself,

• spreading false information about other community members,

• behaviors off-campus that are disrespectful, embarrassing, or potentially damaging to Hudson and its reputation. While injury or harm can occur in interactions between any individual students or groups of students, the School is mindful of the extra impact that these forms of misconduct may have on historically marginalized groups. The School therefore examines with particular scrutiny any conduct targeting identities and groups protected under state and federal law, acknowledging that what may be tolerable in other settings may not be acceptable at School.

Discipline for Specific Incidents

Behavior	1stIntervention	2ndIntervention	3rdIntervention
Insubordination	Parent notification	Professional Inte rvention	Expulsion
Racial or other Discriminatory Slurs On campus or off. In person, in front of a group or through social media or electronically	Threatening Language/Gestures toward teachers Parent Notification	Immediate 24 hours	(Head of School Discretion) Expulsion
		Professional Interve ntion or disenrollment (Head of School Discretion)	Expulsion or disenrollment (Head of School Discretion)
Obscene, Vulgar, Abusive, Inflammatory & Threatening Language/Gestures toward oneself or other students	Parent Notification	Immediate 24 hour suspension / or disenrollment (Head of School Discretion)	Expulsion or disenrollment (Head of School Discretion)
Obscene, Vulgar Abusive, Inflammatory &	Parent notification	suspension or disenrollment	
Intentionally striking/hurting oneself, other students or teacher			notification Counseling /Expulsion XXX
Parent notification Expulsion XXX	Criminal Mischief Parent		

Educational Process Parent notification

Parent Pick-up for day Expulsion

Disruption of notification

Immediate 24 hour suspension

Expulsion

Unsuitable Attire

Parent physically Expulsion

Leaving school without permission

Parent notification

Immediate 24 hour suspension

Expulsion

Fighting / verbally or physically

Expulsion

Weapons/Facsimile Or Fireworks possession

Expulsion

Weapons/Facsimile Or Fireworks possession

Parent notification Im mediate 24 hour suspensio n

Expulsion

False Fire Alarm Elementary age and older

False Fire Alarm Elementary age and older

Bomb Threat Expulsion

Bomb Threat notification an d Immediate 24 hour suspension or disenrollment (Head of School Discretion)

Controlled Substances, Alcohol, Tobacco and Paraphernalia

Using, Selling, Possession of Controlled Substances, Alcohol, Tobacco and Paraphernalia

Expulsion

Using, Selling, Possession of

Parent

Assault Immediate 24 hours suspensi on or disenrollmen t (Head of School Discreti on)

Expulsion

Preschool Biting, Hitting, Intentional Hurting, Spitting on Students

Parent notification or disenrollment (Head of School Discretion)

Professional Intervention / Possibly parent paid for “shadow”

Professional Interve ntion (typically after 3-5 incidents depending on severity/ intent and time frame) Possibly parent paid for “shadow”

Preschool Biting, Hitting, Intentional Hurting, Spitting on Teachers

Expulsion

	School until behavior ceases (after 3-5 additional incidents depending on severity / intent and time frame) or	disenrollment (Head of School Discretion)
Removal from	School Discreti	
Assault Immediate 24 hours suspensi		
on or disenrollmen	on) Expulsion	
t (Head of		
	Media or Electronically Parent Notification or disenrollment (Head of School Discretion)	Expulsion
Sexual Harassment – includes first /second party or bystander through Live / Social	Professional Interve ntion or disenrollment (Head of School Discretion)	

EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS:

Parents are expected to model civility, grace, compassion and respect for others when they enter the school environment. They are to understand and accept the school's values and mission statement.

Questions, comments, debates, and the expression of different points of view are welcome on campus so long as they are presented with courtesy and allow for different points of view. The school has the right to refuse a parent entry into the school due to unruly behavior, threats to others, or others feeling unwanted harm; physically or emotional.
These policies comply with federal and state civil rights laws.

ELECTRONICS:

Student's in grades K-8, will not be permitted to display, turn on, or use a cellular telephone, or other electronic device on school property during the school day. The use of mobile telephones or any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in classrooms, hallways, or restroom areas while at school or at school-related or school-sponsored events. If a student is found using any telecommunication device, it may be confiscated by a teacher or administrator of the school. The school is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic device. If an elementary student uses their cell phone for any non-emergency reason, the teacher or person in charge will collect the phone and give it to them at the end of the day. Parents will be notified by the teacher.

DISENROLLMENT FROM SCHOOL:

The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) agree to accept the rules, policies, procedures, mission and other requirements of the School as noted in the Parent/Student Handbook and other school notices. The School reserves the right to dismiss any student who does not meet the academic and/or behavioral standards of the School or whose family chooses not to meet the academic and/or behavioral standards of the School. In the event the Student and/or Parent(s)/Guardian(s) does not meet the academic and/or behavioral standards of the School, the Head of School, Director or Education Director in his/her sole discretion, may discipline the Student or require the Student's withdrawal. The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) agree that any decision with regard to student discipline for violation of school rules, policies, mission and procedures shall be final and that any such decision does not relieve the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of his/her/their tuition obligations. Both the parents and the school have the right to terminate the Enrollment and Tuition agreement for any reason according to the procedures described in the Enrollment and Tuition agreement.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION / SCHOOL/ FAMILIES:

Hudson supports voluntary resolution of conflicts, problems, and concerns between two parties regardless of their positions or roles (i.e., parent, teacher) in the school.

Hudson firmly believes most issues can be handled quickly and appropriately to everyone's satisfaction.

Parents and teachers may disagree about classwork, curriculum, teaching style, assignments or how peer relationships are managed. In these situations, it is important for all parties to keep in mind that the teacher and the parent are both committed to the student's welfare (although they may have different approaches and end goals for the same student).

When conflicts arise, please follow the policy below.

1) Communication: talk to your child's teacher about the situation or concern. Going to the class teacher before assuming what you heard was true or from a credible source may clarify the situation before it gets out of hand.

2) If you are not satisfied with the response from the teacher, make an appointment with the level coordinator. If you are unsure of who your level coordinator is, the front office can help you. 3) If a satisfactory resolution is not found with the coordinator then you can make an appointment with the Director of School.

4) The below would be the next steps if there is no resolution from either party. Ultimately, the school must run without interruption

a) If a resolution is not established within a reasonable amount of time, the parties shall raise the concern with the Head of School unless the concern involves the Head of School (see below). b) The

two conflicting parties shall define "reasonable amount of time".
c) At no time shall the timeframe be extended without mutual consent of both parties. d) If the parties cannot agree on a timeframe, they are required to bring the conflict to the Head of School for the purpose of establishing the timeframe for resolution.
e) In doing so, the Head of School, or his/her designated representative, shall then mediate the conflict, ensure timelines are followed, and ensure the conflict is resolved.
5) If the concern is with the Head of School and no resolution has been established from bringing the concern to the Head of School, the person in conflict with the Head of School may take the concern to the board member. The board, in regular or executive session, shall review any conflict(s) brought before it as requested and as permitted by law. The board shall do one or all of the following:
a. Remand the conflict back to the Head of School, with a directive to find a reasonable and quick resolution.
b. Remand the conflict back to the two parties, with the Head of School mediating the conflict. c. Mediate the conflict and render a decision to resolve the conflict.
d. If any conflict involves individual safety, a threat to the preservation or security of the school facilities, or a direct or blatant violation of school policies or procedures, the board shall be notified immediately by the school Head of School, school personnel, or member.

PARENT PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING SCHOOL:

Parent(s)/guardian(s) agree to accept the rules, policies, procedures, mission and other requirements of the School as noted in the Parent/Student Handbook, other school notices, the law, and the rules of common courtesy. The school reserves the right to exclude from school activities and school grounds family members who do not meet the behavioral standards of the school.

SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN:

Special Needs is a very broad term that includes students with exceptional abilities as well as disabilities. Hudson is able to serve a broad spectrum of students with special needs because of the individualized method of education. However, in order for two teachers to individualize the education for twenty or more students, students from age three must begin to demonstrate self discipline, self-reliance, self-control and be able to work independently, with peers and in small groups. Children who are unable to learn with increasing levels of independence as they get older will not benefit from the Montessori learning environment.
Students who enroll in school who have an IFSP are directed to the Director of the school who explains the procedure of transitioning from IFSP to an IEP. All persons involved with the new student will attend a meeting to address the special needs and abilities of the student. Hudson uses "When Your Child Turns Three: Moving from an IFSP to an IEP or IIIP" curriculum.
https://www.pacer.org/parent/php/PHPc119.pdf

Dr. Montessori developed her method of education first by working with disabled children and then later adapting the method for children without special needs. Therefore, Montessori can be a better fit than traditional education for many students. While Hudson has enjoyed success working with children that struggle with school work, most (not all) special needs students at Hudson tend to be "gifted".

Most Hudson students enter the school at an age where a special needs diagnosis is premature. And, because every child's learning path is individualized and includes multi-sensory learning, many special needs are not noticeable until the teacher notices something uncharacteristic about the child's development.

Under the direction of the Danbury Public School Special Education Department, Hudson has a formal "Child Study Team" program to identify and address developmental/learning issues and special needs. Using the program, Hudson works closely with Danbury Public Schools to provide testing to our students. If we think your child needs professional support we will invite you to initiate the Child Study Team process for your child and you will be actively involved in the process. If you suspect your child may have needs that we have not yet identified please discuss your concerns with your teacher or the Director.

The school does not receive fees for referrals. The school typically works through resources provided by the public schools which are often free to Hudson students or through professionals selected by parents. The school makes referrals upon request.

PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS:

School personnel are not qualified or allowed by law to recommend that a child use psychotropic drugs (e.g. Ritalin, Concerta). They may recommend that a child be evaluated privately or through a public school system and they may, with parental consent, consult with medical practitioners who have evaluated the child. Questions about this policy should be directed to the Head of School.

MULTI HAZARDS / FIRE DRILLS / LOCK DOWN DRILLS:

The school is usually visited once per year by the Danbury Fire Department for a lesson on fire safety. Emergency building evacuations are conducted eight times per year as required by the Fire Code. In the winter, we are required to evacuate the building without our coats to reinforce the lesson that no fire alarm should ever be treated as a "drill" and that life is more important than comfort. Although we try to pick the best weather day each month, it gets difficult in January and February. However, by the time really cold weather comes, the children are quite proficient at evacuating and fire drills are relatively short. Fire drill dates and lockdown dates and times are logged in the front office and are available to parents to view if desired. Students who need additional physical support are matched with a staff member to help assist them during fire drills, evacuations, lock-downs -hard and soft, shelter in place and weather-related emergencies. Medical assistance is done by a staff member in the classroom who is CPR /First Aid and Medication Administration Trained.

Lockdown Drills are performed four times per year as required by law.

Whenever we conduct a Lockdown drill, parents will be notified by school email or message after the fact.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Our goal is to support the whole child -- academically, socially, physically and emotionally. The most significant part of evaluating a child's progress is personal communication between the parents and the school. If at any time, you have a question or concern that needs to be voiced, please contact your child's teacher or the Level Coordinator/Head of School / Director. Although many of our Assistant Teachers are Montessori trained and have a degree in Early Childhood Education, our Head/Co Teachers are best able to answer your questions about your child's development and progress. Each Primary and Elementary classroom has a file or mailbox on or near the classroom entrance. Teachers will respond to the messages on a daily basis.

If you have an emergency and need to speak to someone over the weekend or after hours please call Mark or Megin Meyer at (203) 512-1536 or (203)-512-3508.

HUDSON DOES REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT:

The School, as an organization, and each school employee, individually, is trained in the prevention and detection of child abuse/neglect and is required by the State of CT to report it. Failure to report suspected child abuse/neglect within 12 hours is punishable by revocation of the school's license, accreditation, severe monetary fines and prison sentences to those individuals who knew, but did not report. Staff who report abuse/neglect are protected by law from discrimination or retaliation for reporting School policy. The HCMS policy for reporting abuse/neglect complies with guidelines prepared by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). www.ct.gov/dcf/site/default.asp. The DCF hotline to report abuse is 800-842-2288.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS:

All information regarding your child is considered privileged and confidential. Except as otherwise required by law, information will not be released without parental consent. All enrolled students have a secure file with all information on health, registration information, as well as confidential materials and documents. These files are confidential but are available immediately to the parent or legal guardian, administrator and teaching staff of each child and the regulatory authorities.

CHANGES IN POLICY OR PROCEDURES:

All policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are subject to change without notice, though 30 days' notice is provided if practical.

DAILY LIVING AT HUDSON

CELEBRATIONS:

Celebrations are an important focus of all classes during the course of the school year. In keeping with the Montessori philosophy, we focus on what can be learned rather than the commercial aspects of holidays. Parents are invited to attend some of these celebrations:

• Harvest Festival:

This is our traditional Fall Celebration. This is a wonderful time to meet the other children and parents in your child's class. We continue the tradition of celebrating the harvest with food, games and joyful activities.

• International Week:

All school families are invited to share food and stories from their culture so that children of all cultures can celebrate the diverse nature of our school community. All presentations are factual rather than ideological and focus on the joyful aspects of different cultures. We invite children,

parents and staff to come to school in clothing representative of their native countries. We also ask families to bring in different foods from their native countries to share with classmates.

• Thanksgiving Feast:

Celebrating the Harvest of 1621, all children three years old join together in the gymnasium for this special feast. Each class prepares and brings one ingredient for our friendship salad -- a multi-fruit dessert salad.

• Celebrations of Lights:

Though Dr. Montessori is best known as an educator, she was a fierce advocate for world peace, women's rights and child rights. She believed world peace was achievable in the next generation if we could teach children to celebrate (not just tolerate) cultural and religious differences of their friends. The purpose of the Celebrations of Light performance is to demonstrate to children that nearly all cultures and religions have some aspect of light as a centerpiece of their primary celebration. And, once we understand what the celebrations are all about we discover that we have nothing to fear from each other. All mankind shares universal "basic needs' ' and peace with our neighbors is the foundation for all our other needs. By embracing the joyful aspects of multicultural events, we hope to minimize our perceived differences as we discover common themes. We also provide perspective and respect for different points of view and beliefs. This celebration is planned and orchestrated by the Middle School students.

• African American History Month/Black History Month:

Hudson has attracted a culturally/racially/religiously diverse population of families for whom diversity is important. Rather than focus on a particular race or culture during a particular month, we focus on the important accomplishments of role models from all races/cultures/religions/genders on an on-going basis.

• Valentine's Day:

This is a chance to share themes of love with family and friends through giving and receiving Valentines.

• Passover, Easter, Diwali & Ramadan:

The retelling of the stories of these holidays can be done with cultural activities, food and other child centered projects. While the history and the essential beliefs behind the celebration are necessary to understand the holiday, proselytizing is not permitted. Please help us celebrate these and other celebrations/holidays that are important to your family by asking your teacher how you can contribute to our multicultural lessons.

• Earth Day / Earth Week, Arbor Day and International Day of Peace:

This celebration of the coming of spring is intended to encourage awareness of each individual's responsibility to the earth, nature and future generations. In addition to lessons taught in the classroom, each year we gather as a school community and plant a new tree on our campus.

• End of the Year Program:

This program is designed to encourage creative and dramatic self expression. Classes will present a performance/ concert for the parents at the end of the school year.

• Birthdays:

In the Montessori classroom we celebrate many things in an educational context; birthdays are no exception. Birthday celebrations vary considerably by grade so it is best to ask your teacher how to prepare for your child's birthday.

Sometimes parents want to do something extra for a birthday during school hours. If you are so inclined, please discuss your ideas with your child's teacher. Whatever you bring to school should be educational in nature, and it should be something that your child will be enthused about and that he/she wants to share with friends. Examples of things that parents have brought in the past are small exotic zoo animals, musicians, farm animals, and science programs.

The school does not allow entertainment type activities such as magicians, clowns and characters during school hours. And, the school does not allow party hats, napkins, balloons, favors, tablecloths and other party paraphernalia at celebrations. Please do not ask your child's teacher to break the rules. The school does not accept deliveries (gifts, flowers, balloons, singing telegrams, food, candy etc.) for children enrolled at Hudson.

Children with summer birthdays may make arrangements with the child's teacher to celebrate their birthday during the last few weeks of school.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS:

There are many special Hudson events and activities for school families. These events are listed on the calendar that is on the school website. In addition, parents can find information about specific events and activities in the newsletters, through email blasts, on the whiteboards in the front lobby, messages, and the notes sent home with the children.

CLASS PARENT VOLUNTEERS:

"Class Parent Volunteer(s)" serve multiple important functions at HCMS. First, class parents are a resource to prospective families and families that are new to our community or to the classroom. Second, the class parents are a resource to their classroom teachers and support them in a variety of ways. Third, the class parent group collectively coordinates a number of "special events". Finally, the class parent group is a resource to the school when it acts as a "Parent Advisory Board". In this capacity the Class Parent Team advises administration in the development, modification or removal of policies and procedures, If you would like to join the class parent group, please advise your classroom teacher.

GRANDPARENT/FRIEND VISITING DAY:

Grandparents (or special friends) are invited to share a morning in the classroom with the students.

FAMILY VISITING DAY:

We offer two days of visits for parents to share a morning in the classroom with the students. It is a day of great pride for the children who can't wait to show you all the wonderful things they can do. Typically, one parent comes one day and someone else comes the other day.

THE JOURNEY:

This is a special program designed to give parents a mini Montessori experience. The program derives its name from the journey participants take from the simplicity of sensory experiences in the infant room to the complexity of advanced mathematics in the upper elementary classroom. The event culminates with a discussion and light snacks. The program is widely regarded as a very moving experience that helps parents understand why Montessori children are passionate and joyful scholars. Enrollment in the program is limited. This program is presented every few years.

EYE TO THE FUTURE / The Next Level:

All parents are welcome to attend this program, however, it is specifically designed for parents of children who are graduating from one level to the next (e.g. Toddler to Primary; Primary to Lower Elementary; Lower to Upper Elementary and Upper Elementary to Middle School). The program begins with an overview slide presentation that demonstrates how Montessori education is sequential and cumulative and why Montessori students are intellectually competent, self-starting, learners. Presentations specific to each level follow in the classrooms provide parents with a sense for how the broader Montessori concept lead to advanced learning at each level.

COFFEE /CHAT WITH THE HEAD OF SCHOOL:

Coffee with the Head of School and the Director is scheduled in the fall to provide parents an informal forum to meet the Head of School. We open the meeting with a brief state of the school message and then open the discussion to topics of interest to the group. We welcome you to come with your ideas, your concerns or just to listen.

PARENT EDUCATION NIGHT:

We offer a number of Parent Education nights to give you the most current information on education and brain research. These nights are designed to give you the information you need, when you need it so that you can use the latest parenting and educational advice at home with your child. This night also addresses assisting families with adult education programs and job training within the area. The meeting always ends with a discussion forum so that parents can ask questions and share their ideas. We encourage all parents to attend these nights to strengthen the parent/school/child relationship/ partnership.

LITERACY NIGHT:

Literacy night is a fun filled evening of literacy, learning and crafts. It is a great time to meet the other parents in your child's classroom. We also offer applications for Danbury Library cards that evening and encourage all participants to get one so that you can participate in other literacy events at Danbury Public Library.

AN EXTRA CHANGE OF CLOTHES TO KEEP AT SCHOOL:

All students (regardless of age) should keep an extra change of clothing at school. Please include underwear, socks, pants/shorts, shirt, skirt and blouse or a dress. Please send these items in a small plastic bag with the child's name printed on the outside. Even if your child no longer has "accidents", he/she might get wet as a result of rain, snow, a spill during lunch/snack or during a science experiment. Children feel better if they can change out of wet or soiled clothing.

INFANT ROOM SHOE REMOVAL:

Our youngest students spend part of their day on their bellies with their face quite close to the floor. And, even when they graduate to their hands and knees, they have a lot more contact with the floor than we do. To keep the floor as clean as possible, please remove your shoes before entering the infant environment. The bench outside the classroom is for adults to remove their shoes.

CHILDREN'S POSSESSIONS:

Children like to bring their favorite possessions from home to show their friends at school. To make show and tell more special, each classroom has a process for bringing special things from home. Your teacher will tell you how this process works at orientation. It is our experience that children are most excited to share an item from nature, something they have made, a souvenir from a trip, or a family hobby.

Toys, Phones, iPods, iPads, Tablets, Trading cards, etc.., are to remain at home with the following exceptions:

▪ Primary students may bring a love-y to school if it helps them transition to school or help them sleep at nap time. Please make sure you take the love-y home at the end of the day! ▪ Elementary/Middle School students may bring a toy to play with only if they are enrolled in the late session program. The toys must be delivered to the teacher in the morning and they will not be accessible until 3:15pm. (e.g. they will not be accessible for school recess.)

SCHOOL POSSESSIONS:

It is likely that at some point in your child's Montessori experience they will come home with one or more odd looking special objects. These odd-looking objects are probably parts of very expensive Montessori materials. Montessori materials that are incomplete are removed from the shelves because they are incomplete. Presumably your child has taken the piece because he/she likes that material for some reason. But if he/she has a piece, the material will be off the shelf, so your child will not be able to enjoy it anymore.

So, if your child comes home with an odd-looking object, please return it the next day so that your child and the other children can continue to enjoy the material.

LOST AND FOUND:

Items that are labeled with the child's name do not get lost because your teacher can identify the owner and ask your child to take responsibility for the item. If you have lost an item that is not labeled, and you would like to have back, please check our lost and found that is located in the front lobby. Unclaimed lost and found items are given to a "child friendly" organization at the end of each season. Please leave valuable items at home as the school is not responsible for lost or misplaced items.

DIETARY & FOOD PROGRAM:

You can elect to purchase Pizza Friday.

You must pack a bag lunch for your child. The bag lunch should contain foods from the nutritionally

balanced US Department of Agriculture (USDA) food plate. Please do not send your child with treats such as candy, donuts, soft drinks or chocolate milk, these sugary snacks will be sent home with the child, (healthy "treats" include plain / fruit yogurt, popcorn, pretzels). Bag lunch beverages must be; 100% fruit juice, water or un-flavored milk (100% fruit juice and milk both count toward the USDA Food Plate requirement). The Health Department requires that you place an ice pack in the lunch bag even if it is a hot lunch (Yes, really!). In addition, the Health Department requires that we send home all leftover food from bag lunches.

There is one microwave in each classroom that is available to quickly warm-up foods. We do not have time to cook food or to warm frozen foods. Please send your with a microwave safe dish with food to be heated for no more than 10-20 seconds

Several of our students have severe, anaphylactic reactions to peanuts. Consequently, we are a peanut free / sensitive school. Please do not include products that contain peanuts in your child's lunch box/bag. If there is food that looks like it may be made with peanuts, a call home will be made for reassurance that it is not. All fruits and raw vegetables are washed by staff, even if the bag or container says it has been already washed. At no time will any student's food be microwaved in a plastic or Styrofoam container, plates, bags or wraps.

Toddler children who bring lunch from home must have food cut into pieces no longer than ¼ inch to avoid choking.

Great Food Ideas for the Lunch Box

Drinks:

Spring water

Milk (pasteurized animal milk 1%, soy/rice/cashew/almond milk)

100% all-natural juice

Main Course:

Sandwich or "Wrap"

Bagel sandwich

Hummus or baba ghanoush with pita bread cut in triangles

Pasta

Omelet

Quiche

Leftovers from dinner

Yogurt

Side "dish":

Cut vegetables

Dried fruit

Mini rice cakes

Applesauce

Dessert:

Cut/whole fruit

Mini corn muffin

Small "healthy" cookie like oatmeal/raisin, natural fig newton

Popcorn

Pretzels

Banana bread

LATE SESSION PROGRAM:

Our late session activities combine fun, fitness and learning; activities include: cooking, homework and teambuilding/games. All programs encourage the development of close friendships, self discipline and good sportsmanship.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

HEALTH:

Children are given a routine visual health check each day upon arrival. Any child who shows symptoms of being ill or infectious will not be admitted to School. No child is allowed in the school program without a Connecticut Health Assessment form with listed immunizations, signed by the child's pediatrician.

SCREEN TIME:

Because we care about the health and wellbeing of the children in our care, we follow the American Academy of Pediatrics' Recommendations on Screen Time: • Children under 2 should have no screen time • Children age 2 and over should watch less than 30 minutes per week at child care, and less than 2 hours per day total. We understand that TV and other electronic media can get in the way of exploring, playing, and interacting with others, which encourages learning and healthy physical and social development.

Therefore, we will restrict screen time by:

Allowing no more than 15 minutes of educational computer time per day.

Not allowing any screen time during meals and snacks.

Having zero screen time (TV, video, and computer) for children under the age of two. We encourage families to restrain from using cellphones/electronic devices in our building while dropping off or picking up their child.

ANIMALS:

Due to health reasons, family pets are not allowed in school. Pictures and videos can be shown if the child would like to show off their family pet. All animal presentations, (petting zoo, little critters) must be approved through the Director.

Service dogs are exempt. Emotional Support Animals are not allowed in school.

NAPPING:

Napping is offered in the early childhood classrooms. Napping cots are provided by the school and are disinfected daily with bleach water. Children nap in their classroom with the lights turned down. Children who normally nap at home and whose parents prefer them to nap at school will be asked to close their eyes and try to sleep. No child is made to stay on his or her cot if they cannot fall asleep after 20 minutes of quiet time. Naptime for children who do sleep is approximately 2 to 2 ½ hours. Infant sleeping times follow the infant's schedule and infants are always placed in a crib on their backs. Parents are responsible for the weekly laundering of bedding used at school. Soiled bedding

will be bagged and sent home on the day it is soiled.

SAFE SLEEP:

No swaddles unless prescribed by a pediatrician. The staff observe the nappers at least every 15 minutes. No teething necklaces/ or jewelry allowed for children under the age of 3 years (these are a chocking hazard).

INCIDENT /ACCIDENT FORMS

Students that have a minor incident or accident will have an incident report that is signed and sent by the teacher and administration as well as signed by the parent / guardian.

Serious accidents or injuries follows the same protocol, but, in addition, a report also goes to the Office of Early Childhood.

SCHOOL NURSE:

Hudson has two nurses that visit weekly; one nurse is for preschool students and another nurse is for the school age students. These nurses keep nursing logs, check medications and paperwork, check medical forms/immunizations, conduct eye and hearing screenings, and occasionally conduct faculty health education workshops.

ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILIES TO SECURE MEDICAL INSURANCE

Families who are without health or dental insurance should ask the office for help to procure medical insurance through the CT State Husky program. The office will help you fill out the necessary forms and initiate contact with medical providers. For information on the Connecticut Husky Plan, please contact: 1-877-CT-HUSKY (1-877-284-8759) or http://www.huskyhealth.com.

ILLNESS/EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL:

One of the key elements in improving overall health is to ensure that the children who attend the program every day are healthy. The tricky issue, of course, is trying to define "Healthy". The school's pediatric physician; Dr. Garcia, feels that we need to be practical in defining "healthy" and that we consider the needs of working parents. However, if children come to school with preventable contagious diseases, then collectively all the parents will lose more work time. So, as always, we are looking for balance.

Dr. Garcia has developed the following list of symptoms to define "unhealthy". If a child has any two of the symptoms listed below, they are considered unable to attend school for 24 hours medication free, and/or will be sent home unless they have a doctor's note confirming that their symptoms are caused by non-contagious factors such as allergies.

1) Persistent cough

2) Vomited in past 24 hours

3) Temperature of 101°F or greater

4) Rashes of uncertain etiology

5) Watery stool

6) Uncharacteristic irritability or lethargy

7) Persistent crying

8) Difficult breathing

9) Illness that prevents the child from being comfortable in the program

In addition to Dr. Garcia's protocol, the State of Connecticut requires that children be absent from school for 24 hours medication free, if any one of the following occurs:

1. Two episodes of diarrhea (watery stool) in a 1/2-hour period

2. Temperature of 101°F.

3. Undiagnosed rashes

4. Purulent conjunctivitis, tuberculosis, impetigo, coxsackie, strep throat, scabies, head lice, pertussis, mumps, measles, hepatitis and other contagious diseases.

5. Illness that results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.

EPIDEMICS:

Epidemics are more common in schools than other types of organizations because children are in frequent physical contact with one another. Nevertheless, the rapid spread of a highly contagious health problem can be prevented or reduced by early detection and treatment. In the event that a highly contagious health problem is identified in school (e.g. pink eye, Head Lice, Chicken Pox, etc.) All parents will be notified immediately.

Once a highly contagious health problem is identified, administration will contact the Center for Disease Control at Danbury Hospital and the Danbury Health Department for instructions on how to deal with the situation. The information they give us will be passed along to you. In the past we have been very successful at preventing epidemics through a cooperative effort by the parents and staff.

UNVACCINATED STUDENTS: Effective 8/31/2021 Connecticut law does not recognize religious exemptions from vaccine requirements; however "Medical Exemption" are still accepted. During a vaccine preventable disease outbreak, all students who are unvaccinated will be excluded from school if a public health official determines that is appropriate. Unvaccinated children will be excluded from school until: (1) the public health official determines that the risk of infection spread has ended; (2) the child becomes ill with the disease and completely recovers from it; (3) the child is vaccinated according to public health protocol; or (4) the child has proof of immunity to the disease.

FIRST AID:

All parents are required to sign an Emergency Release form as part of the admissions paperwork. This form gives the school permission to allow teachers who are certified in First Aid to treat minor injuries. Parents will be notified of the occurrence of minor injuries by an "Incident Report." In case of a more serious accident at School, parents will be notified immediately during or after first aid is being administered. If you cannot be reached, the emergency contact on your form will be contacted. If that person is unavailable, we will arrange for your child to be taken to the emergency room at Danbury Hospital via ambulance. If it is deemed necessary to get your child to the hospital immediately, the child's teacher or someone familiar to your child will accompany him/her in the ambulance and stay with him/her at the hospital until you arrive.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION:

The school only administers "Life Saving Medication". The school will not administer medication for fever (unless there is a history of seizures), teething, inhalers, etc, unless these are life-threatening. The School is not permitted to administer medication of any kind unless a copy of the Connecticut State Form entitled "Authorization for the Administration of Medication by Day Care Personnel" is completed. It is required that the medication is in its original container with the prescription label attached and at least one dose of the medication must have been administered at home. Please note the following regulations must be followed if the school is to administer medications.

1. We will only dispense medications if the Medication Administration form is filled out completely. Each line must have something written on it. The top portion must be filled out by the doctor, signed and

stamped. The bottom portion of the form must be filled out by the parent or guardian. 2. We are not allowed to accept faxed medication forms. All forms must be originals and they must have two sides. Please be sure to take a blank copy of the Medication Administration form to the doctor when you have your annual school physical.

3. All over-the-counter medications require the same Medication Administration form as prescription medications. The Medication Administration forms need to be renewed every 6 months if the child is to continue to receive medication. It is the responsibility of the parents to assure that the forms are current.

4. All medications brought to school must be delivered to the office so that we can check the medication and paperwork to ensure it complies with State regulations. Do not give the medication to your child's teacher or leave it in your child's locker.

5. The Medication and the form must not be expired. The medication must be labeled clearly with the child's name and the name of the medication.

6. We do not administer antibiotic medication at school unless it is medically necessary to administer it between the hours of 9am–3pm per the doctor's orders. Antibiotics that are ordered once a day should be given at home. Twice a day should be given before and after school. And, if ordered three times a day, the medication can be given at home before/after school and at bedtime. 7. Medications will only be administered during the hours of 9am-3pm unless there is an emergency. 8. Nebulizer treatments will be administered in emergencies and by physician's order when arrangements are made through the office.

9. There is a Nonprescription Medication form that is used for sunscreens, diaper rash ointment/creams (Desitin, A&D ointment, Vaseline) and/or teething gels. The Nonprescription Medication form must be filled out completely with information written on every line. This form only requires the signature of the parents/guardian. The Nonprescription Medication form is valid for six months. Again, it is the parent's responsibility to assure that we have current forms. 10. If your child refuses to take a medication or will not take it correctly, you or your medical release contacts will be contacted to advise you/them of the circumstances. The school will not administer medication to an uncooperative child. The school will follow the instructions of the parents/guardians/medical contact. If the parents and the medical emergency contacts are not available, the school will contact the school nurse, the school doctor or other available medical personnel to determine if it is necessary to take the child to Danbury Hospital to have the medication administered. All medication taken or not will be registered on the medication log form 11. Emergency medications are stored in the children's individual classrooms in backpacks that only teachers can reach. They are stored in their original containers with expiration dates and proper paperwork. Non-emergency medication must be in the original box and also require proper paperwork and are kept in a locked cabinet in the nurse's office. The nurse reviews and checks in all the medications.

The school has been granted authorization by the Heath Department to administer medications and our records are regularly reviewed by the State. If we do not follow their procedures exactly, they may revoke our authorization. Although we understand that complying with the regulations is inconvenient, it would be more inconvenient if the school lost the authorization to administer medications

SUNSCREEN FOR SUMMER PROGRAM

Children who use sunscreen and who are enrolled in the summer program must use sunscreen with a minimum SPF (sun protection factor) rating of 30. If your child comes to camp without sunscreen, a new bottle of hypoallergenic sunscreen will be provided to your child and you will be charged for it. Your child's sunscreen must have the complete set of manufacturer labels and your child's name must be written on it with permanent marker. Although the Montessori program stresses independence and care for oneself, the school staff will carefully supervise and help younger children apply sunscreen as needed. Children 9 years old and older will be reminded to apply sunscreen to themselves or a "buddy". School staff are instructed not to apply sunscreen to children 9 years old and older (exceptions may be made for unusual circumstances or children with certain disabilities). If your child is unable to use sunscreen, we require a note from a licensed physician stating that the child may not use sunscreen as well as the specific precautions that must be taken to ensure that your child is not burned while participating in outdoor activities. In addition, the school will require a note from the parent giving the child permission to participate in outdoor activities.

HOME PLAN OF ACTION FOR ILLNESS:

Although the probability that your child will be sent home from school due to illness is not very high, Murphy's Law would suggest that your child will become ill and need to be taken home at the worst possible time. It is very important that you make some sort of back-up plans for someone to take your child home if you are unable to do so. In addition, the morning staff is very vigilant in sending home children who should not be in school due to illness. If your child becomes sick on the way to school, you will be asked to take your child home or to your back-up care provider.

MEDICAL HEALTH FORM:

Your child's physical /medical form must be returned by the first day of school. Physicals and immunizations must be up to date. This form will be placed in your child's school file in the front office.

MEDICAL TREATMENT:

In the event of an emergency resulting from illness or accident when the parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will seek guidance from the child's pediatrician, the school nurse, paramedics or the school doctor: Dr. Vincente Garcia, (203) 489-5437, 2 Old New Milford Rd #2d, Brookfield, CT 06804. Or, in the event of a dental emergency, Dr. Daniel Tseng will be contacted at (203)-792-3316. When a child is severely hurt, and Emergency Room treatment is necessary, staff members will call 911 to request ambulance transportation to Danbury Hospital. The staff person most familiar with your child will stay with him/her until you arrive.

INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTING:

Incident reports will be prepared for all significant incidents/accidents on the day of the incident. Significant incidents/accidents would include any events that involve blood, bumps to the head, larger bruises or non visible incidents involving breathing (asthma), unconsciousness, bones and twisted, sprained or strained joints (including the neck or back). Teachers will inform parents immediately after any significant incident. A copy of the incident report for all incidents will be provided to the parent by messaging or hard copy if requested.

STRINGS ON COATS & JEWELRY ON CHILDREN:

Strings on children's coats are responsible for many injuries and strangulation deaths (strings get stuck in climbers, trees, school busses and even family pets have strangled children by pulling on coat/hood strings). Please do not buy clothing for your children with loose strings and remove strings from any clothing with strings. If you forget to remove the strings and we see them, we will cut them off.

Children are not permitted to wear jewelry, other than pierced earring studs, at school. Necklaces, bracelets, rings, earrings and other jewelry can get caught during your child's busy day. For young children, jewelry can be a distraction to their real purpose for being at school. Children who wear jewelry to school will be asked to remove it. The school is not responsible for jewelry that is lost either before or after it is removed.

CHOKING HAZARDS:

Toddler/Preschool: As a rule of thumb, objects that can fit through a paper towel tube represent a potential choking hazard. Please make sure that your child does not bring small objects to school that might find their way into their mouth or the mouth of a friend. Favorite small objects that children bring from home are coins and miscellaneous toy pieces.

Elementary: Although elementary students generally do not put small objects in their mouths, they are more likely to sneak hard candy and chewing gum into school. Please remind your child(ren) that these treats are not allowed in school.

INFANT FEEDING:

In order to reduce the spread of germs from baby bottles/nipples, all formula must be brought from home already bottled. Bottles must be clearly marked with your child's name. Food borne illnesses and food allergies can cause severe risks to infants. To minimize any ill effects from food related illnesses, infants up to 18 months will only be fed food brought from home. Shelf stable foods (e.g. baby foods in unopened jars, uncut fruit, breads and crackers) may be brought to school at room temperature. All other foods must be delivered to the school in a thermal cooler with a frozen ice pack. Hot or warm foods that are not shelf stable will not be accepted. Infants should be fed their first meal of the day at home. Home feeding is especially important during the first 12 – 15 months because infant bodies need nutrients upon waking up. Additionally, research indicates that mother/child bonding, especially during the first 12 months enhances the child's emotional well-being and contributes to success in school years later. Spending quality time supporting your child with love and nutrition first thing in the morning will help your infant transition into his/her day with a sense of peace, safety and security.

Infant feeding times are not scheduled by the teachers; they take place in response to the infants' signals. In addition, breast feeding is encouraged, and nursing mothers are welcome to nurse at school. All food/ bottles that are given to any enrolled infant will be documented for parents / guardians. All left over formula or breast milk is discarded after the infant has finished eating or an hour after feeding.

INFANT SLEEPING:

In light of the research associating Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) with infants who sleep on their stomachs, the School only allows infants in cribs to be placed on their back. If children arrive to school and are asleep in a car seat or anything other a crib, they will be transferred to a crib immediately once the staff member accepts the child in the class.

Diapers: Hudson does not allow cloth diapers. Only disposable diapers are accepted. The CT State Office of Early Childhood does not allow the use of any items, sleep coverings, soft pillows or toys to be placed in infant cribs in a childcare setting. However, infants may be placed in a crib wearing a "Sleep Sack".

Hudson's infant cribs are in compliance with CPSC. https://www.cpsc.gov/SafeSleep

OUTSIDE PLAY FOR INFANTS/ TODDLERS

On days when it is when it is nice outside (using the childcare weather watch) the infants may be brought outside in the infant buggy's to take a walk through-out the parking lot or the toddler play area.

ASBESTOS POLICY:

In accordance with 40 C.F.R. section763, "Asbestos-Containing Materials in Schools", and section 19a-333-1 through 13 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, "Asbestos-Containing Materials in Schools", we are required to inform you that an asbestos inspection has been completed and there is no asbestos

containing materials in the school building. An asbestos management plan has been drafted that states that no asbestos materials will be used in any future building renovations.

PESTICIDE APPLICATION AT SCHOOL

We use non-toxic techniques inside and outside of the facility to prevent and control pests (both insects and weeds). If a serious threat remains and pesticide application is the only viable option, parents and staff are notified in advance. Hudson has a contract with a licensed exterminator who inspects the grounds quarterly and who responds to specific requests to remove unwanted pests. They are not allowed to apply toxic materials on school grounds and typically use organic and non toxic strategies to trap or make pests go away. Any organic products used will be applied when children have the least exposure to the application area for at least 12 hours.

Regulations for pesticides on school property are very strict and the exterminator will endeavor to control pests without the use of pesticides whenever possible. During the summer months, the exterminator applies cedar oil to drive off ticks and mosquitos. Hudson may permit pesticide application by a "certified pesticide professional" in emergency and non-emergency situations. Hudson will also allow a person other than a certified pesticide professional to apply pesticides to eliminate immediate threats to public health, which threats include those posed by mosquitoes, ticks, or stinging insects when no other practical solution exists. In such situations, the school must determine that (1) an emergency application is necessary; (2) it would be impractical/untimely to obtain the services of a certified pesticide professional; and (3) the emergency application does not involve a restricted pesticide.

If a non-emergency pesticide application is made, the school will notify the parents/guardians of each child enrolled in the facility no later than 24 hours before the pesticide application occurs. Notice of emergency applications will be provided as soon as practicable. Notice will be provided by email and by posting on the white board at the entrance of the school building and will include the following information:

- **the name of the pesticide's active ingredient**
- **the target pest**
- **the location of the application within the day**

• the date of the application

The school will maintain a copy of the record of each pesticide application for a period of five years.

DUST MITES AND FURNITURE ALLERGIES

School areas used by children who have allergies to dust mites, or to components of furnishings or supplies, are maintained by the program according to the recommendations of the child's health professional.

WE ARE A GREEN ENVIRONMENT

Hudson is continuing its mission to Going Green. The school does not supply plastic utensils or paper plates for children or staff. Please think about using alternative materials for your child's lunch and snack box. The Bento box is a wonderful resource to keep children lunches cold or if need be warmed up.

Please make sure the box is microwave safe. The school will provide cups and napkins for those students who forget to being them.

TUITION

Hudson Country Montessori School is a not for profit organization. Your prompt tuition payment is essential for the smooth operation of the school.

The key points from the Enrollment and Tuition Agreement that you signed are presented here for easy reference:

1. The Parent(s) agree to pay tuition and fees in accordance with the most current applicable Tuition Schedule(s) and other fee schedules published by the School. There will be no tuition reduction/refund for any holiday, family vacation, other family situation or medical condition (including non-vaccinated students) that may cause a student to be absent from any of the School's programs.

2. Tuition is calculated and due on an annual basis. The monthly payment schedules are installment payment plans established for the convenience of the Parent(s). Monthly payments are not payments for a specific month. Late payments made toward a monthly payment plan will be assessed a $50 late fee for accounts that are past due. If tuition becomes 15 days delinquent, continued service will be denied, and the Student will be disenrolled without advanced notice. Two week advance written notice is required to withdraw a student. Parents are liable for tuition until two weeks after written notice is received by the School office.

3. The annual tuition rate for the school year includes 41 weeks of school. The annual tuition rate for the extended year (includes summer) is for 51 weeks of school/camp. Tuition is prorated based on the number of weeks of enrollment, irrespective of holidays, emergency closings, quarantine closings, illness or any other factors that may occur in any given week.

4. A $500 fee is required to reserve a space for your child for school year admission. Of that fee, $250 is an application fee and $250 is a prepayment that is applied to your final tuition payment. The tuition prepayment portion is refundable until July 1, prior to the term on the application; the application fee is not refundable.

5. Tuition for summer camp program (ages 3 years old and older) is payable in advance, upon registration (children already enrolled in the school year program may continue to pay monthly).

6. Changes to a student's schedule will be made subject to a $50 administrative fee for each change after the first change. The tuition schedule is subject to change with 30 days' notice.

7. The Parent(s) agree to pay all costs, expenses and attorneys' fees incurred by the School in any proceeding for the collection of the debt or in any litigation or controversy arising from or connected with the Tuition and Enrollment Agreement.

8. All new students enrolled in the School will be given up to a 3-month PROVISIONAL/adjustment period. If the School feels that the new student has not made a satisfactory adjustment to the School and must disenroll, a refund will be given only for the unused portion of any tuition prepayments.

9. It is understood that in signing this Agreement, the Parent(s) agree(s), on behalf of him/her/themselves and the Student, to accept the rules, policies, procedures, mission and requirements of the School as noted in the Parent/Student Handbook and other school notices. In the event the Student and/or a member of his/her family does not meet the academic or behavioral standards of the school, the Head of School, Education Director or Director at his/her sole discretion, may discipline the Student, exclude a family member from participating in school events, or require the Student's withdrawal. The Parent(s) agree, on behalf of him/her/themselves and the Student, that in signing this Agreement, the decision of the Head of School in this regard shall be final; any such decision shall not relieve the Parent(s) of his/her/their tuition obligations, as detailed above.

10. Students enrolled in two-day, three-day or four-day programs must maintain the same schedule every week and this schedule must include a Monday or Friday. There will be no substitution of days due to holidays, unexpected snow closing days, family vacation, other family situations or medical

conditions that may cause a student to be absent from any of the School's programs. Children enrolled less than five days per week are not eligible for the School Calendar (SC) discount. An exception will be made for families with an elementary age student enrolled concurrently who is on the SC calendar (this is to make the schedules for both students the same).

11. Only the elementary classes make-up snow days. Days will be made-up only if the number of emergency closings exceeds 5 days during the school year.

12. The School does not discriminate against any person in admission or employment because of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, IEP's or physical or mental disability in violation of existing state or federal laws or regulations.

SECURITY SYSTEMS

KEYPAD SYSTEM:

There is blue keypad at the front door. When you enter your personal identification number, the door lock will release to allow you to enter the building.

Function:

The school keypad is a time clock, a door security system and a message delivery system. When you enter your code, the computer records the time of entry, releases the door lock mechanism and displays any special messages or important reminders.

PIN Code Assignments:

Every parent has his/her own PIN code. This system will keep a digital record of who picked-up and who dropped-off each child(ren). If you would like additional codes to track other people on your release form, please contact the office.

Timeclock Door Entry Function:

If you are dropping-off or picking-up all your children:

1. Enter "0" and your code.

2. Press Enter

3. Enter your code again (without "0")

4. Press Enter

5. Choose the child(ren) you will be drop-off/pick-up and select "finish"

If you have any questions please visit us in the office.

There is also a fingerprint function. This function is a faster way to enter the building. If you are interested in this, please see Mr. Jack. Mr. Jacks days and hours are:

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. 8:00am -2:00pm

BILLING FUNCTION:

In the morning, the computer compares the time you drop-off with your child's scheduled arrival time; in the afternoon, the computer compares your pick-up time with your child's scheduled pick-up time. If your pick up or drop-off times are not within the scheduled times, you will be billed automatically for the additional time. Please note that drop-off times are calculated from the time you enter the building. (If you pick-up after 5:30pm or later than the close of school for early dismissals due to holidays or inclement weather, we may use an additional time clock to compute your overtime charges.) If you do not clock-in or clock-out, the computer will assume you arrived at 6:45am and/or left with the last employee and you will be billed accordingly. The school reserves the right to bill parents based on records kept by the child's supervisor / teacher for late pick-ups when those records provide a better reflection of when a child was actually picked-up from the classroom.

SECURITY:

In order for the keypad security system to work, we need your help! Please do not let anyone into the building without clocking-in even if you know them. If you see anyone enter the building without clocking-in, report it immediately – they may not belong in your child's school!

SURVEILLANCE:

The school has installed surveillance systems in a variety of locations throughout the school. These systems serve one or more purposes depending on their location. The purpose of these systems is: security (to monitor and record who enters and leaves the building and at what time); supervision of classrooms by administrators; for faculty training purposes; and for student education (elementary classrooms in New Rochelle and Danbury will collaborate in technology and other educational projects). The images from these systems may include sound and/or sound recording and will primarily be used on the premises but they may be viewed by Hudson employees or students over the internet through a secure connection at a remote location (for example, at our sister school in New Rochelle or Mr. & Mrs. Meyer's home). These images may also be recorded and archived in the school's confidential files for no more than 30 days unless the school has a specific need to keep specific recordings for a longer term. These images will not be available to the public nor will they be made available to parents, except, parents may observe live classrooms on the monitors located in an administrators office (in the presence of an administrator/teacher) and parents may be shown selected recordings by an administrator in an effort to resolve concerns regarding their own child(ren). Under no circumstance will recordings be distributed to anyone except as required by law.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN:

Hudson's response to different emergency situations can be found in the red Crisis Response Binder on the shelf in front of the desk in the front office.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

Hudson Country Montessori School recruits and serves children from diverse backgrounds. We serve all children including children with special needs and disabilities and children from diverse backgrounds.

ADMISSIONS:

The School's fundamental objective in admissions is to determine how likely a student is to be successful in our Montessori environment and to ensure that the families vision for their child is consistent with our Mission and vision for our school. Preference is normally given to families with children already attending Hudson and applicants with previous Montessori experience. During your first visit to Hudson, prospective parents are given a tour of the school. After the tour, prospective parents are encouraged to schedule a classroom observation to see how different the Montessori environment is from a traditional education environment. When a family selects a Montessori education at Hudson Country Montessori School based on discussion and observation, the next step is to fill out the application and submit it to the school with the application fee. At that time, a parent/child interview visit is scheduled. The school asks that both parents meet with the Head of School or Director during the interview visit.

During the interview visit, the prospective child will visit with the Coordinator or one or more teachers who will observe the child in the classroom environment. The Coordinators or teachers will assess the child's readiness for the program. While the child is meeting with a classroom teacher, the parents are meeting with the Head of School or Director. Sometimes, a child may have a bad day and will be asked to return on another day for a second observation/interview.

Children entering at the Primary level are invited for a thirty-minute visit in a classroom. This is an opportunity for the child to interact with the materials, other children, teachers and coordinator. The primary classrooms are not equipped to provide diaper changing services. Children must be toilet trained in order to enroll in the primary program. Exceptions and accommodations are made only for those students with identified disabilities.

Children entering at the elementary level are requested to spend at least two consecutive days in a classroom for assessment and observation. The school will request a copy of the student's file from the candidate's present school before the candidate will be interviewed for enrollment. Elementary students from outside the school will be asked to take an entrance test.

Following the parent/child interview, the admissions committee will meet to discuss the interview. Parents will be notified in a timely fashion by email with the committee's recommendation. Priority in admissions is given to families with a history of commitment to the school for the long-term education of their children.

With this procedure, both the school and parents are able to evaluate it the school is a good fit for the student and visa-versa.

Following admissions to the school, all new children are given up to a three (3) month provisional adjustment period. If the School feels that the child has not made a satisfactory adjustment, a refund will be given only for the unused portion of any tuition payments. Hudson is willing to assist families with alternative placement.

SCHOOL READINESS GRANT

Hudson has been selected by the State of Connecticut to participate in special Early Childhood Education pilot programs that includes educational subsidies to families through the School Readiness Grant Program.

ADMISSIONS:

Three and four-year-old Danbury residents are eligible to enroll in the School Readiness program regardless of family income. Tuition fees for families are determined by the OEC School Readiness and based on a sliding scale. A fee determination form is prepared for each family based on family income, and after it is signed, families are provided with a copy. Procedure for fee determinations will be reviewed with every family applying for admission and thereafter with the SR Coordinator.

Additional guidance on income and tuition calculation using the SR sliding fee can be accessed at the OEC Website

Children receiving the tuition subsidy through the School Readiness Grant are enrolled on a first come, first served basis as required by the Grant. All school policies and procedures noted in this handbook, other than the enrollment criteria apply to children enrolled under the School Readiness Grant. In addition, the School Readiness Grant calendar varies slightly from the regular Hudson calendar. All children must be potty trained to be in a primary classroom.

This programs curriculum aligns with the CT / ELDS and DOTS which are used for planning learning experiences, observing, and documenting children's progress, as well as is used for implementing teaching strategies. Upon request the school will send the kindergarten DOTS to the kindergarten programs.

Staff, parents, and others collect information on quality from many sources, and engage in a reflective process to assess the effectiveness of the program as measured by accreditation /approval entities, OEC evaluation measures, and program measures.

All children 32-36 months of age enrolling in our program must have written authorization from the

child's parent/guardian and the Director of school to attend. This form is sent with the welcome package once enrolled.

● All children enrolled in the School Readiness Program must be fully potty trained by the time they begin classes at Hudson.

● Families who are delinquent in payment of tuition by 10 days will be subject to disenrollment. ● Children enrolled in the School Readiness Program with more than 10 unexcused absentees will be withdrawn from the program.

Subsidy Amount Determination/Redetermination:

The school is required to collect the following paperwork for the Grant every six months:

1. Current Proof of Danbury Residence

2. Proof of Income for all Parents/Guardians

3. School Readiness State Report Form

4. Letter of Agreement

5. School Assurances Form

6. CCAP (Care4Kids) application or letter stating reason for denial or ineligibility. We will assist families in accessing the application and filling it out.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN:

Classroom group size: twenty students and two teachers

Ratio of staff to children: one staff to ten students for all indoor / outdoor activities. This also includes naptime and bathroom areas if they are not in the classroom.

Late Pick-up; Supervising Staff is at the age of 18 years or older.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT:

The School Readiness program requires children to attend school on a regular basis, five days per week, at least 6 hours per day. For 48 weeks per year on a regular basis. School Readiness students follow the "Hudson" calendar. There are a few days in the year when Hudson is closed for all students except School Readiness students. Those days are indicated with an S.R. on the published school calendar.

For days that the school is not in operation, the SR Coordinator will work with other schools to request care for these students.

HOME / SCHOOL CONNECTION:

Throughout the year, projects and books are sent home for family involvement. Projects are done at home and sent to school for each child to share. Ex: passport project. Information and workshops are held for families and teachers on the importance of reading. Evening programs "Literacy Night", and Books programs are implemented.

KINDERGARTEN AGE CHILDREN:

To prepare children for Kindergarten, School Readiness families are invited to attend the "Moving up Night" at Hudson to determine if they want to continue their child's education at Hudson. We also provide School Readiness parents with information about enrolling in public school Kindergarten. Flyers and other Handouts are distributed to each family. The office can help families determine which of the district schools each child will attend and how to contact them for enrollment. Children leaving Hudson to attend a Kindergarten program elsewhere will have their records

transferred to the new program if requested in writing.
Parents will also be informed of any kindergarten information nights offered by Danbury schools.

HOW THE SCHOOL MEASURES EFFECTIVENESS AND QUALITY: NAEYC ACCREDITATION, School Readiness Quality Monitoring, OEC inspections, Parent and Staff Surveys, Consultant reviews, and the Class Volunteer Board.

♥ 2025
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