

THE
SNAKE RIVER MONTESSORI
SCHOOL, INC.



Parent Handbook

Revision 4 – 1 September 2005

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The Snake River Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin in hiring, promotion, or training of employees, nor in the admissions, rights, privileges, programs and activities of its students.

This book was prepared by a volunteer parent. We welcome and appreciate your assistance throughout the year, particularly in any area you feel gifted or otherwise!

A Note to Parents

This booklet was designed to be a convenient and centralized reference for the parents and/or legal guardians of all students at the Snake River Montessori School, Inc.

We welcome any suggestions to improve or clarify the content and organization of this booklet. Please send suggestions in writing to the School, or place them in the suggestion box outside of the office. You may also contact the President of the Board of Directors at the address listed in this booklet.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

History and Organization

In 1984, Jill Schurman introduced Montessori education to Idaho Falls by founding The Montessori Place for kindergarten and preschool students. The School was housed in the First Congregational Church for six years. In 1995, the School moved into its own facility, built with the help of dedicated parents and other interested members of the community. Many of those parents wished to further their children's Montessori education beyond kindergarten. In order to accomplish this, The Snake River Montessori School was established in May of 1996. The Snake River Montessori School is a non-profit corporation and is dedicated to providing a Montessori education to a broad spectrum of the community in Idaho Falls. In 1998, the campus was expanded with a second building in order to house a second preschool/kindergarten class and accommodate the developing elementary school. These facilities were leased. In 2000, the School, through substantial donations of dedicated parents, was able to build its own 12,000 square foot building. Showing continued dedication, in the spring of 2003 parents supported construction of an additional building to provide expanded preschool and elementary classrooms, as well as a multipurpose room and media center.

The Snake River Montessori School is a non-profit corporation governed by a Board of Directors and supported by a variety of committees. The current Board membership may be found at http://srms.org/board_of_directors/index.html.



Margaret Hanson, Administrative Director, oversees all aspects of School operation and is the chief of staff. Jill Schurman serves as Education Director with 30+ years of experience in Montessori education.

Communication and Parental Involvement

Parental involvement in the operation and growth of The Snake River Montessori School encourages and enhances your involvement in your child's education. There are many rewarding opportunities available to interact with teachers, other parents, and Board members while contributing to your child's educational experience.

Good communication with your child's teacher is an important element in your child's education. To this end, there are parent orientation sessions scheduled at the beginning of each academic year; parent education meetings held during the year; and parent-teacher conferences held throughout the year. A monthly newsletter is also sent to parents to inform them of current activities at the School.

The administration and Board will attempt to keep you informed in a timely way about activities and School plans. Communication will include the following:

- **Monthly newsletter.** This is sent to the parents to inform them of current activities at the School and a summary of Board meetings. Please be sure to pick it up from your family folders and read it.
- **Bulletin boards in the School.** These bulletin boards will contain notices, agendas, schedules, and other timely information. Please feel free to ask the staff to post any items you feel would be of interest to the parents and be sure to check it frequently.
- **Parent Board Meetings.** These will be held twice annually to promote direct communication between the Board and parents. We encourage at least one parent from each family to attend.
- **Website.** www.srms.org This website provides the School calendar, policies, handbook, job opportunities, and information on School events. Also included is a list of links to non-local Montessori schools and resources.
- **Board meetings.** These meetings are held at the School on Wednesday of the first full week of each month, and are open to all parents. This is a good way to find out about the plans and workings of the Board.
- **Electronic Bulletins.** The School will occasionally use e-mail to communicate information or request volunteer services. The School's e-mail address is office@srms.org.

Philosophy

The basic idea in the Montessori philosophy of education is that all children carry within themselves the person they will become. To develop physically, intellectually, and spiritually to the fullest, children must have freedom- a freedom to be achieved through order and self-discipline.

Dr. Montessori developed what she called the Prepared Environment, which already possesses an order and allows children to learn at their own speed according to their own capacities in a non-competitive atmosphere. She recognized that the only valid impulse to learning is the self-motivation of the child. Children move themselves toward learning. The teacher prepares the environment, directs the activity, and offers the child stimulation, but it is the child who learns. Montessori children are free to learn because they have acquired an “inner discipline” from their exposure to both physical and mental order. This is the core of Dr. Montessori’s philosophy of education. Patterns of concentration and thoroughness, established in early childhood, produce a confident, competent learner in later years. Montessori teaches children to observe, to think, and to judge. It introduces children to the joy of learning at an early age, and provides a framework in which intellectual and social discipline work hand-in-hand.

Goals and Objectives

The main objective of The Snake River Montessori School is to provide a carefully planned, stimulating environment that will help children to develop the foundational habits, attitudes, skills, and ideas that are essential for a lifetime of creative thinking and learning.

The specific goals for children who attend the School are:

1. To develop a positive attitude toward school and learning.
2. To develop a sense of high self esteem.
3. To build habits of concentration for lifelong study skills.
4. To develop and foster an abiding curiosity.
5. To develop habits of initiative and persistence.
6. To foster inner discipline and sense of order.
7. To develop sensory-motor skills in order to sharpen the ability to discriminate and judge.

Questions, Comments and Concerns

All parents are encouraged to express questions, comments and concerns as they arise. In general, classroom issues should first be addressed to the staff member directly involved. If this does not result in a satisfactory resolution, or if the situation warrants another approach, please contact the Administrative Director or one of our Directors. If still unresolved, the matter may be taken up as a last resort by the board of Directors. Please refer to the School’s Grievance Policy for guidance on how to resolve serious issues. Best results are obtained through honest and direct communication at the lowest administrative levels.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Tuition

The tuition is based on an annual rate. Revenue from tuition covers most, but not all of the annual operating expenses of the School. For your convenience, the annual tuition is divided into nine (9) equal installments, although other arrangements can be made. The first month's tuition is due in June, with subsequent installments due on the first of every month, starting in September with the last payment due April 1st. The School provides a discount for prepayment, and discounted Extended Day plans. You may put tuition and Extended Day payments in the drop box located near the office or mail them to the school.

It is uncomfortable and costly for us to have to remind parents to pay their tuition on time, and so to avoid continual late payments, we charge a \$20.00 late fee. Your tuition payment is considered late after the 10th of each month.

Tuition Deposits

All students are required to pay a non-refundable program deposit of \$200.00. Also required is a non-refundable registration fee of \$100.00 for preschool and kindergarten students and \$125.00 for elementary students. Deposit money is used to pay part of our School insurance and to purchase some of the expendable supplies. Deposits are a necessary part of the School budget.

Enrollment Cancellation

It is agreed that enrollment as specified within the School's contract may be cancelled in writing by the parents or guardians without penalty (except forfeit of the deposit) prior to 90 days from the date of (re)enrollment. In the event that the student must be withdrawn from the School after said 90 days, parents agree to provide written notice to the School at least 90 days prior to the month of withdrawal. If 90 days notice prior to the month of withdrawal is not provided, parents agree to be responsible for the next three month's tuition beyond the date written notice of withdrawal is received by the School. Tuition is paid in monthly increments (except for prepayment) and is not prorated for parts of a month.

Parent Participation -- Classroom & Committees

We work at keeping our tuition as low as possible for a Montessori School. Our policy is to try to make Montessori education available to a broad spectrum of family incomes. Therefore, we require all parents to contribute 40 hours of service to the School in various classroom or committee activities. We need help in material making and material repair, fundraising, phone tree coordination, financial planning, building maintenance, classroom special projects, sharing special interests with the children during circle time, and helping with Friday afternoons' practical life and art material clean-up. The 40 hours of service time are a required part of the student contracts and are not optional.

Fundraising

During the school year we have several fundraising events. These include, but aren't limited to, the Chinaberry book sale, and Mardi Gras event. These fundraising events are vital to the School's success. Tax credits and deductions are given for contributions to the School. We raise money for playground equipment, books, cassettes, Montessori material, science equipment and other learning materials. Parent involvement is required, for without it we could not raise the funds that allow our program to grow and improve.

THE MONTESSORI CURRICULUM

PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN GOALS

A teacher's job in the classroom is to watch each child carefully to see where there is interest, and then to guide that interest and stimulate it. Children become interested in a wide variety of areas, but they do it on their own schedule, so we accommodate ourselves to their schedules. We see that the children are introduced to and are aware of all parts of the curriculum.

Although our classroom environment seems very academically oriented, our real goals for the children are not primarily academic. Instead, we hope to have them leave us with confidence in themselves; with an independence of thought and action that permits them to make decisions on their own; and with the understanding that they are responsible not only for their actions, but also for their own learning. We also hope that they leave the class with increased curiosity about the world around them and with a sense of their obligation to help others. We work toward these goals through indirect means, helping them acquire skills and knowledge that lead to the real goals.

Some of the skills that even the youngest children start acquiring include:

- Keeping track of one's belongings: Each child has a place to store possessions and the responsibility to do so.
- Understanding order: Each child learns to put things away in the proper place, to take turns, and to follow the intrinsic order of the materials.
- Doing things for oneself: Zipping, buttoning, etc. are skills which will come out of the necessity of taking care of oneself in the classroom setting. The children develop an interest in these skills when they see older children doing them.
- Sharing an adult: The children realize that they cannot have the undivided attention of an adult.
- Developing self-control: The children learn to observe the limits of the environment and the community because they want to belong.
- Acquiring more language skills: Children's new feelings and experiences will eventually broaden their range of expression.

Continuity

Children stay in preschool classes two, three or four successive years, which means that teachers, parents, and children develop more intimate relationships than one usually finds in preschools. Because we know the children so well, we are better able to recognize what stage a child is in. Children go through periods of intense intellectual growth and interest, during which time they need a lot of our attention and many lessons. They go through other periods when all their attention seems focused on social relations. During this stage they often fail to profit from academic lessons, but may benefit greatly from help and suggestions on how to get along with friends and foes.

Repetition

Lessons introduce children to materials, how to handle them, and what to do with them, but repetition on the part of the child is the key to coordination and integrated development. We want the children to repeat work because the materials are designed to lead the child deeper into understanding. An exercise that has no deeper value than to be done once and finished is not worthy of space on our shelves. You can help your child by emphasizing the value of practicing and by encouraging repetition. You can show respect for the work your child does again and again. Very seldom does a child repeat for the wrong reasons; should this happen, we will definitely step in, but generally, you should rejoice to find your child repeating work.

Record-keeping

Because we work with each child on such an individual basis, we keep track of how often each child is asking for lessons. New children soon realize that the way to learn about something in the classroom is to ask for a lesson on it. By keeping this type of record we



avoid the problem of overlooking a quiet child and over-teaching a demanding child. Secondly, we keep detailed notes on each child's individual lessons and about the progress we see in his/her social and emotional development. Third, we write summary reports twice a year for parent conferences.

Freedom and Discipline in the Classroom

Good discipline, in the sense that it is usually understood, is not a problem for us in the classroom. We have two basic rules at the School:

*No one may hurt or abuse people or things.
No one may disturb or interfere with another's work.*



We have worked hard to be consistent and evenhanded in our enforcement of these rules. A child who is out of control and breaks one of these rules is asked to take time out by sitting in a chair (the "quiet chair") until he feels under control and ready to abide by the rules. We rarely have to use the "quiet chair."

Helping children develop inner discipline is a much more difficult task. Those children who are very self-disciplined and can exercise responsibility for themselves have a tremendous amount of freedom in the classroom. They choose what they want to do, when they want to do it, and how. Teachers are merely friendly sources of information for choice in the classroom. As children develop increasingly greater control over themselves, they have an increasingly greater degree of freedom in the class. How much external control we impose thus varies from individual to individual and changes as the child changes. Please refer to the discipline policy for further specification.

Patience

One of the most difficult tasks teachers have is to develop patience. Many people think that it takes a lot of patience to deal with young children because they ask a lot of questions and need a lot of help. That kind of patience is easy to come by. The patience that is hard to develop is the kind that allows one to wait and not give help too soon. It takes patience to listen to a squabble and not interfere, but to let children settle it alone. This willingness to wait, although hard to develop, seems to be very important for the growth of confidence in a child.

The Social Environment

One of the many misconceptions about a Montessori classroom is that social relations are not of primary importance to the teacher, and that the class is not a very sociable environment. Actually, a good Montessori classroom is a very friendly place where children talk to one another freely and group/regroup at will. A traditional classroom, in which the teacher directs the whole show, has a very limited opportunity for the children's spontaneous social interaction.



CURRICULUM: THREE TO SIX YEARS

The preschool and Kindergarten curriculum for the School is an individualized program which helps each child develop physically, emotionally, and cognitively at their own pace. The curriculum helps each child gain self-esteem, independence, physical development, and academic achievement.

Practical Life

Children learn how to function successfully in their own environment. They acquire independence, both physically and mentally. Coordination, balance and muscular control, and order are by-products of the materials and philosophy employed. Children learn work habits, concentration, perseverance, and respect for others. Specific practical life activities include:

- Elementary exercises involving mat, chair, door, tray, grain, water, funnel, sponge and folding.
- Care of self, including washing hands, grooming, sewing and dressing frames.
- Care of inside environment, including dusting, sweeping, polishing, furniture washing, mopping, folding, and flower arranging.

- Food preparation, including setting a table, preparing fruit and vegetables, and pouring.
- Care of outside environment, including sweeping, pulling weeds and collecting leaves.
- Grace and courtesy skills, including greetings, shaking hands, excusing oneself, interrupting, introductions, and saying please and thank you.

Sensorial

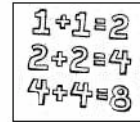
The main objective of the sensorial area is to refine and develop the five senses. The classification, contrasting and comparison of color, shape, smell, feel, temperature, weights, and textures are explored. All of this broadens the child's ability to proceed to a higher level of activity. Specific sensorial activities include:

- Language and games involving solid cylinders, pink tower, broad stair, red rods, color tablets and geometric solids.
- Exercises involving the geometric cabinet (circles, rectangles, irregular figures, triangles, and polygons), constructive triangles, superimposed geometric figures, binomial cube, trinomial cube, knobless cube (graduation and comparison), stereognostic senses (rough and smooth boards and fabrics), discrimination exercises (mystery bag, smelling bottles, etc.) and square of Pythagoras.

Mathematics

The primary purpose is to lay a sound number and geometry foundation. We are interested in numbers, quantities and the decimal system. We teach the basic operations of addition, multiplication, subtraction and place value. We also teach fractions and measurements. Specific mathematics activities include the following:

- Numbers one to ten.
- Decimal system.
- Teens and tens.
- Short and long chains.
- Memory work on addition, subtraction, division and multiplication.
- Fractions, including replacement exercises.


$$\begin{array}{l} 1+1=2 \\ 2+2=4 \\ 4+4=8 \end{array}$$

Language

All pre-reading and pre-writing skills are emphasized in a sensorial manner. Vocabulary, drama, and diction are an integral part of our curriculum. When a child is ready to read and write, we use various readers and workbooks. We encourage the child to write creatively. Specific activities include:

- Enrichment of vocabulary and concepts involving questioning games, conversation, naming materials, story telling, classified cards and poetry.
- Sandpaper letters and moveable alphabet.
- Phonetic object game and reading cards.
- Key phonograms used in making words, sentences and stories.
- Reading comprehension.
- Chalkboard, pencil and paper, capitals, creative writing, puzzles and environment labels.
- Function of words, including: article, adjective, noun, logical adjective, conjunction, preposition, verb, adverb, logical adverb and word studies.

Science

We study living and nonliving things, plants and their parts, animals and their parts, life cycles, metamorphosis and the physical sciences. Seasons and temperature are also part of this study. Specific science activities include:

- Living things, including plants, animals, vertebrates and invertebrates.
- Nonliving things, including natural and manmade things.
- Botany cards, language and extensions.

- Zoology, including vertebrates, general characteristics of birds, fish, reptiles, and amphibians and invertebrates.
- Parts of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and arthropods.
- Science involving atmosphere, gravity, floating/sinking, magnetism, shadows, magnifying glasses, sound and the solar system.

Social Studies

Geography, history, calendar, time, holidays, maps and cultures make up part of this section of the curriculum.



- Geology.
- Geography including a sandpaper globe, painted globe, map of the world (continents and oceans), maps of the continents and USA, continent folders, needs of man, land and water forms (island/lake, cape/bay, gulf/peninsula, isthmus/strait, systems of lakes/archipelago), and definitions.
- Time, including days of the week, months of the year, calendar and clock.

Art

The child must develop skills before being able to create pictures. The child is also introduced to all forms of art expression. This introduction includes studies of pictures by famous artists. Specific activities include:

- Developmental skills including cutting, use of brushes, gluing, drawing and coloring.
- Exposure to the works of famous artists.



Music

This part of the curriculum includes development of skills and appreciation for music. Specific activities include:

- Bell exercises to help develop perceptions of high-low, matching, and scale.
- Exposure to different types of music.
- Singing.



CURRICULUM: SIX TO TWELVE YEARS

The elementary curriculum for the School is an individualized program that helps each child develop physically, emotionally and cognitively at their own pace. The curriculum helps each child gain self-esteem, independence, physical development and academic achievement.

Practical Life

Continue the development of coordination, concentration, perseverance, and daily living skills through exercises and housekeeping jobs in the classroom. The children learn to self-govern through their specific jobs, including "peacekeeper."

Mathematics

The math program is designed to promote a thorough understanding of mathematical principles. The Montessori materials provide an experimental, manipulative, hands-on approach. Students will learn linear counting, basic operations, rounding, geometric shapes, measurement of length, bar and line graphs, algebra, fraction operations, money and time. Specific mathematics activities include:



- Numeration including teens, tens, greater than, less than, quality and quantity, conservation of numbers, long chains, and hierarchy material.

- Games, memorization, static and dynamic abstraction, and story problems addressing addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- Time and money skills.
- Fractions including equivalence, same denomination, whole number, reduction to lowest terms, different denomination, improper fractions, and story problems.
- Number and multiples activities include binomials, trinomials, introduction to prime number, and factors.
- Measurement activities include length, weight, and capacity.
- The study of geometry includes the geometry cabinet (triangles, quadrilaterals, and polygons), point to solid, lines, angles, triangles, quadrilaterals, circles, and polygons), and study of equal/similar/equivalent.
- Algebra using material that demonstrates the mechanism for finding the square root.

Language

Reading is the central focus of the primary program and continues to be the cornerstone of all future learning. The curriculum will emphasize vocabulary, decoding, and comprehension. Specific activities include:

- Reading activities include basic sounds, phonograms, phonetic reading, non-phonetic reading, puzzle words, interpretive reading, fluency, reading commands, and comprehension skills.
- Calligraphy skills include cursive (lower case, upper case, joining and words), neatness, style, the study of writing and the study of language.
- Creative writing activities include development of research skills (alphabetizing, use of dictionary, paragraphing, and imagination).
- Language arts activities include compound word, homonyms, synonyms, antonyms, suffixes, prefixes, word families, contractions, singular/plural, masculine/feminine, verb tense, personal pronouns, positive/comparative/superlatives, vocabulary enrichment, and spelling.
- Grammar activities include articles/nouns, adjectives, verbs, prepositions, adverbs, pronouns, conjunctions, interjections, and analysis.
- Sentence analysis includes subject, predicate, direct object, indirect object, and logical analysis.

Science

Our goal is to increase observational skills, natural curiosity, knowledge, and understanding through readings, experiments, explorations, and field trips. Topics include the characteristics, functions, and habitats of animals and plants; differences of night and day; common weather conditions and climate; properties of water and air; and forms and sources of energy. Children learn to classify, graph, predict and draw conclusions from their observations from field trips and experiments. The entire program provides a healthy balance between methodology and data, and also between the biological and physical sciences. Specific activities include:

- Zoology studies including living/nonliving, animal/plant, vertebrate/invertebrate, classes of vertebrates, internal and external vertebrates (fish, amphibian, reptile, bird, and mammal), invertebrate phyla, invertebrates (protozoa, porifera, coelenterate, annelida, arthropoda, mollusca, and echinodermata), animal stories, animal classification, vertebrate chart and invertebrate chart.
- Botany studies include parts of a plant (root, leaf, and flower).
- Biology studies include parts of the body (external and internal) and skeleton.
- Physics and chemistry such as the structure of atoms and molecules. The difference between elements and compounds, the chemical composition of familiar compounds. The three states of matter and chemical and physical change. Students also do research about the elements and receive a first exposure to Mendeleev's Table of the Elements.

Social Studies

The program includes the study of the calendar and reading time down to seconds; geological maps; American customs through patriotic songs, legends, folk tales, and holiday celebrations; landform

identification; and continent studies. Civics instruction encourages good character through stories about moral problems and their solutions; identifies familiar American symbols and briefly describes the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. History will be taught through the use of time line of Botany and Zoology and the Needs of Man. Specific activities include the following:

- Physical geography studies include land and water forms, isolation maps (oceans/seas, inland/lakes, cape/bay, gulf/peninsula, isthmus/strait, systems of lakes/archipelago), mountains, deserts, rivers, volcanoes, and planets. Other studies address cycles, geology, and weather.
- Political studies countries of continents (North America, South America, Europe, Asia and Africa), states of the United States of America, capitals of North America, and flags of countries of continents (North America, South America, Europe, Asia and Africa).
- Social studies focus on zones of earth, needs of man (material and spiritual), map reading, and parts of flags.
- History studies include the concept of time (understanding a day, week, month, year, decade, century, lifetime, B.C./A.D.), pre-history (clock of eras, geological time line, time line of life, time line of man, and fossils), and history (pledge of allegiance and national anthem).

Art

Art activities and opportunities to view and learn about great works of art foster the development of the student's aesthetic awareness. The goal is for all students to gain confidence in their creative abilities to handle a variety of media. The program is often correlated with other areas of study.

Physical Education

Children are encouraged to learn and become proficient in sports skills and physical activities. The emphasis is on learning the joy and importance of exercise and lifetime physical fitness, and being familiar with various sports skills. Activities focus on cooperation, coordination, strength, and stamina.

F.A.M.E. (Fine Arts Mini Experience)

Students are exposed to the great fine artists and composers of history. This award-winning program is presented to students by parents and supported by teachers. Emphasis is on recognizing famous works of art and music, their creators, and understanding the basic elements of composition while appreciating these classic works of art.



Music

Children are encouraged to experience the joy of performance and to develop aesthetic awareness. Understanding and interpretation of printed musical symbols are stressed, as is the understanding of rhythm. Recorders, other instruments, and singing are vital to the program. The program is integrated with social studies, science, and language.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Admission

The Snake River Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in hiring, promotion, or training of employees, nor in the admissions, rights, privileges, programs, and activities of its students.

However, the following requirements must be met prior to admission:

1. Prospective students must be at least 2 1/2 years old, potty- trained, and able to leave their parents.
2. All forms and contracts relating to admission must be completed and signed in full before the student begins class.
3. A deposit must be remitted to save the student's place.
4. An interview with parents and child is required before admission.

Kindergarten and Preschool Program

There is a great deal of planning involved in a Montessori preschool. This compels us to have a policy of non-interchangeable days. For example, a child in the four-day program who misses several days due to illness may not make them up on Fridays.

Our kindergarten program is for children five years and older, when they are ready for the kindergarten work. The program is held five days a week: Monday through Friday. Pick up time will be 3:15 p.m. The kindergartners and elementary students will also need to bring a sack lunch.

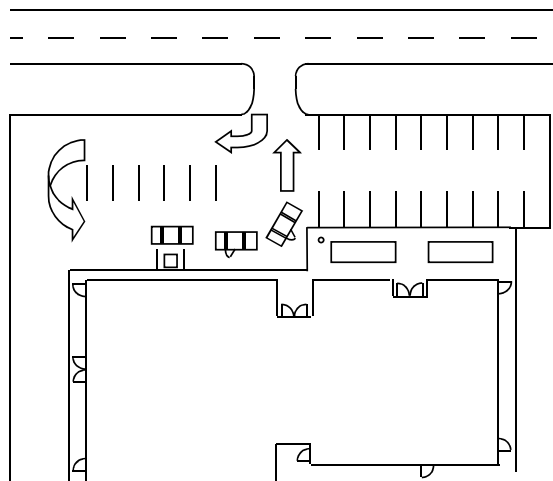
Children with Learning Differences

We are trained to individualize and adjust instruction for children in a variety of ways. This training allows us to successfully accommodate children with a variety of learning differences. Any testing, therapy, or tutoring above and beyond classroom time will be an additional expense to parents. Parents will be expected to arrange for the advice and assistance of professionals trained in various therapies when required for the child's success in school. This includes psychologists, speech therapists, and physical or occupational therapy. If a child's special needs will require too many adjustments to our program or detract too much from meeting the needs of the other children, we shall have to recommend another more suitable environment.

School Records

The School will maintain records on each student including personal and family background information; records of academic work and achievement; attendance and health data; and teacher observations. Student information will be held in confidence, and will not be disclosed without the written consent of a parent or guardian, with the exception of that provided in the School Directory (student and parent names, addresses, and telephone numbers), or in connection with a health or safety emergency. These records are the property of the School and will be maintained in locked files in the School office. Parents may schedule an appointment with the Administrative Director to review their students' files in the School office, and may obtain a copy of the information if desired. Parents may request that their child's records be amended to correct inaccuracies or provide clarification. If parents do not want their family's information included in the School Directory, they must submit a signed refusal form.

Arrival and Departure



	<i>Arrival</i>	<i>Departure</i>
A.M. Preschool	8:30-8:45 AM	11:45 AM
Kindergarten	8:30-8:45 AM	3:15 PM
Elementary	8:20-8:30 AM	3:15 PM

Unless an authorized adult is outside greeting the arriving children, *do not* just drop your child off at the designated stop in our traffic loop. Park your vehicle and walk your child all the way to his/her classroom. *Please! Remember to never leave your engine running for any reason!*

When arriving at School, enter on the west side of the driveway, form a line as shown on the map, wait for an adult to greet your child, and then exit on the east side of the drive.

At dismissal time, for Preschool/Kindergarten students, park your car in the designated areas (not in the drive) and pick up your child from the playground or classroom. **(Check your child's cubby and family folder daily for work or School notices.)** Please enter preschool classrooms from side doors unless ice or snow prevents it.

For elementary students, please pick up using the same loop as at drop off. Parents: please check your family folders at least a couple of times per week.

Tardiness is very disruptive to the teacher and to the class, as well as to the child's routine. A child who is late often will miss a great deal. Children greet each other as they remove outer clothing and make the transition from leaving their parents to beginning their school day. This transition is easier when they can prepare themselves with others.

IMPORTANT! *If someone else is to pick up your child, please send written authorization. We cannot release children to unauthorized persons. Call-in requests are not allowed.*

Late Pick-Up

Children who are not picked up at their scheduled time will be placed in the Extended Day program and be charged accordingly.

Dismissal from the School

The following constitutes grounds for your child's dismissal from our program:

1. Inability to function in the Montessori classroom. Occasionally a child needs more help than we are equipped to give. Parents will be informed if the teacher feels a problem exists.
2. Overdue tuition. The School is constantly striving to hold our tuition costs down and to provide the best possible education to your child. We need your cooperation in making payments on time. If you are having difficulties in this area, please contact us and we will be most happy to help you

work out a satisfactory solution. If parents are one month behind on their payments schedule and have not made special arrangements with us, their child will not be permitted to attend class.

3. Continued failure by the parent to attend parent/teacher conferences.
4. Failure to meet the annual service hour commitment to School activities.

Field Trips

During the course of the school year we will have occasional field trips to enrich the children's learning experience. All trips will be announced in advance and all children must have a signed permission slip on file in the office. We will use regional transportation services when appropriate. However, if that is not possible, children will be transported by a parent or other responsible adult. The School does not have the necessary vehicle, insurance or licenses to transport the children. Parent drivers must have a copy of their drivers license and proof on insurance on file in the office.

Emergencies

In the event of an accident or sudden onset of an illness, the School will not hesitate to seek proper care for a child. The child's individual emergency instructions on file in the School are consulted immediately and the parents are called. If necessary, the child will be taken to EIRMC Emergency Room. The consent statement that the parent signs will accompany the child so that treatment can be given immediately in the absence of a parent. It is IMPERATIVE that you keep the emergency contact information up to date.



Health Policy-Sick Days

If your child will not be attending school please call or e-mail the office by 9:00 A.M. The medical form and medical release form must be filled out and returned before the first day of school. The following is a list of symptoms to guide you in deciding whether your child should be sent to school. Your child should *not* be sent to school with any of the following symptoms:

- Fever AND sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion. Fever is defined as a temperature of 100 degrees F. or higher taken under the arm, 101 degrees F. taken orally, or 102 degrees F. taken rectally.
- Body rash with fever.
- Diarrhea – runny, watery, or bloody stools.
- Vomiting – two or more times in a 24-hour period or once with other symptoms.
- Sore throat with fever and swollen glands.
- Severe coughing – child gets red or blue in the face or makes a high-pitched whooping sound after coughing.
- Eye discharge – thick mucus or pus draining from the eye, or pink eye. All pink color must be gone from the eye before the child returns to school.
- Yellowish skin or eyes.
- Irritability – continuous crying, or behavior requiring more attention than you can adequately provide without affecting the health and safety of other children in your care.

Regarding the dispensing of medicine to your children at school, the [Idaho Board of Nursing Rules](#), section 010.05, provides for medication to be given by a reliable adult in a school setting if it is:

1. The medication is in the original pharmacy-dispensed container with proper label and directions.
2. Written instructions have been given to the designated care provider by a licensed physician, pharmacist or nurse concerning the reason(s) for the medication, the dosage, expected effects, adverse reactions or side effects, and action to take in an emergency.

If you think a situation may arise where medicine will need to be given at school please be sure to ask your doctor or pharmacist for the required note. Without the information listed above, we cannot dispense medicine.

Communicable Diseases

Please review and become familiar with symptoms of the following common communicable diseases. Two examples include:



Chicken Pox: Incubation period 13-17 days.

First symptoms: slight fever and rash. Period of “communicability”: not more than one (1) day before, or six (6) days after the appearance of rash.

Scarlet Fever: Incubation period 1-5 days.

Symptoms: vomiting, fever and sore throat: evenly diffused bright red rash, usually appears on the second or third day. The tongue may develop a strawberry like appearance. Period of "communicability ": 24-48 hours after treatment.

Telephone Calls and Messages

Any phone calls or messages must be made through the main office number (524-4730). Calls to the teachers and aides should be made at noon or before or after school hours. Teachers and aides are not available to speak on the phone during class time.



Family Folder

Each family will be assigned a “family folder” that will be kept in file cabinets located in the main hallway of the School. Important documents are placed there regularly for take-home, including newsletters, tuition bills, and student projects. *Please check your family folder regularly!*

Newsletter

The School sends out a newsletter monthly to inform parents of the current topics of study, pertinent notices, board meeting information, etc. This enables parents to follow-up on school studies at home through books, trips and general discussion.



“No School” Announcements

We follow School District 93 for school closing due to inclement weather. All the popular radio stations announce school closings. If the weather is severe, please listen to your radio. *(Please note that “No School” announcements also cancel Extended Day.)*

Parent Night

In the spring, an evening is set aside when children may bring their parents to School. The teachers, although ready and available, are in the background on this night.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

The School has two formal parent-teacher conferences per year, and we are always available if you want to talk with us about your child. Please call us at home for a phone conference, or to set up a time when we can meet. We do ask that you not discuss your children with us in front of them. Children listen and act upon what they hear, often in ways we do not want.

School Meetings

We will have an orientation meeting for parents in September and at least three more meetings during the school year that focus on the Montessori system and the young child.

Teacher Preparation Days

The Montessori Classroom is a living and growing environment. To keep this learning environment fresh and exciting, the staff needs to change and renew the classroom from time to time. Please be assured your child will greatly benefit from this. No school will be held on teacher workdays.

SPECIAL PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION

Attendance

When possible, please notify the schools in advance if your child will be absent for more than two (2) days. Communicable diseases need to be reported to the School immediately so that we can notify all the parents.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special! In that spirit, we ask you to join us at your child's school celebration. Please bring photos of your child to include: a birth photo, six months, and then one for each year. Help us to tell the story of your child's life. We suggest that you provide individually wrapped snacks for your child's celebration. Please send low crumb snacks (no cupcakes). Cookies, muffins and sweet breads are favorites and clean up is easier. If you are planning a home birthday party for your child, *please do not bring or hand out invitations at school*. Those not invited may have hurt feelings.

Toys

Children should not bring toys to the classroom. Books or other educational materials that might be of interest to all children are welcome. Be sure that the children's names are clearly marked on all books.

Clothing

Play clothes are encouraged (i.e.: simple, washable, sturdy and easy-to-manage). In cold weather, layering is best. Please have your child's name on all sweaters, shirts, jackets, boots, hats and gloves so we can help identify their clothing. Snowsuits, boots, scarves and warm mittens are a must for our snowy, windy winters.

Each child needs a pair of soft-soled indoor shoes. Ballet slippers work best. Your child needs to have a complete change of clothing including underwear and socks. The clothing should be packed in a large zip-lock bag with the child's name on it brought to school the first day, and checked frequently for completeness and weather appropriateness.

Outside Play

Children need sunlight and fresh air, so outside play is an important part of our program. Weather permitting, we play outside for at least 15 to 20 minutes every day. Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately. Children need windbreakers with hoods for our Idaho autumn and spring.



Geography

Each month we will be studying a different area of the world. This helps the young child understand geography a little better. We like to have different foods, artifacts, clothing, music, etc. from each region. We will note in each month's newsletter the area that the children will be studying, and ask if we might borrow any relevant items you may have from these places. Our children are taught to be very careful.

Gifts

It has been a School tradition for the children to present their class with a book for the classroom library to celebrate their birthdays. This enables the children to learn the value of giving rather than just receiving. Parents wishing to participate in this tradition should inscribe the book with the child's name and birth date and the number birthday the child is celebrating. We will have a list of books to choose from in various price ranges.

At holiday time, the teachers ask that parents do not give them personal gifts, but give the classroom a gift instead. We will have a list available that will include items such as fun erasers, art paper (especially colored tissue or foils), beautiful shells, rocks, etc.

Observation

Our class is open for observation after the first 6 weeks of school. If you wish to observe sooner, you may use the observation windows.

Holidays

The School keeps holiday celebrations simple.

Halloween is enjoyed with art, pumpkin carving, songs, Jack-O-Lanterns, roasting seeds and animal mask making. The masks are then worn in a parade. Parents are invited. No scary or distorted masks are allowed, nor dressing in costumes for the day.

Thanksgiving is celebrated through art and songs as the children learn about the history of Thanksgiving and the importance of being thankful for what each of us has. The children are encouraged to help collect food for Thanksgiving baskets for the needy. A small feast is enjoyed by all the children and parents at school.



Christmas and Hanukah are presented as times of giving and sharing. Religion is not discussed but traditions are. Songs such as “Jingle Bells”, and “Dreidle, Dreidle” are learned and gifts are made.

Valentine’s Day: We learn songs and make a card to give to parents. A Valentine cookie is enjoyed. In recent years, we have begun exchanging Valentine Cards with classmates.

Snack Time

Children in the preschool/kindergarten classes are provided a small, nutritious snack during the work period. We ask families to take turns providing the snack once or twice during the school year. A weekly schedule will be distributed during the first week of school. Families are asked to provide enough juice, crackers or cookies, oranges for juice squeezing, and apples for the week. If you need help in planning, the teachers and aides will be happy to advise you. We try to keep a running list of what we have had for snacks lately, which might also help you.

Food that is wholesome and does not contain a lot of salt, sugar, or chemical additives is best for the children. Some suggestions for snacks include: graham crackers (regular or cinnamon), Waverly Wafers, Town House crackers, Ritz crackers (Air Crisps are a favorite, but because of their delicate construction, many get broken in the box – plan accordingly), vanilla wafers, Lorna Doones, Danish butter cookies, Teddy Grahams, Sunshine brand Lemon Coolers, Wheat Thins, pretzel sticks or mini-twists, and animal crackers. Cereal such as Cheerios is also a good choice, and mixed with raisins makes an appealing snack. Cheese cubes, baby carrots, and grapes are often overlooked as good snacks. Please provide a variety of snacks during your week; no one, not even a child, likes to eat the same thing every day. Please do not buy huge bags or boxes of animal crackers, pretzels, or goldfish crackers, as they often get stale before we can use them.

Because we have children with extreme nut allergies, we ask that you **NOT** provide snacks with nuts or any trace amount of nuts – please check ingredients very carefully.

In choosing juices, please provide only all natural, 100 percent juices. Many fruit drinks are full of sugar, artificial colors, and chemical additives, so please read the ingredients. Be aware that “juice cocktail” on a can of juice cocktail means sugar or “high-fructose corn syrup” has been added. Some favorite juices are: apple juice (not cider); cranberry blends (not plain cranberry); orange and orange blends; grape; cherry; raspberry; and peach. For storage purposes, we prefer cans of concentrate – frozen or not frozen – rather than bottles. Six cans will usually last through the week. Juicy Juice and Welch’s come in non-frozen concentrate cans of 100 percent juice. Some of the Welch’s flavors, however, are not 100 percent juice, so again, read the labels carefully.

Occasionally, on birthdays or around holidays, families like to provide a special snack. Please let the teacher know when you are planning to do this. Health department regulations require that snacks brought must be individually wrapped.

Thank you for providing snacks to the children. We appreciate your efforts.

Kindergarten Lunch

Please pack a nutritious lunch! We discuss balanced diets with the children and the need for protein, fruits, vegetables, carbohydrates, fiber and dairy products. Too much sugar causes sugar rushes and then depressions. Some sweet is fine but in moderation. Sending a five-year old with an adult-size candy bar is not appropriate. A cookie is fine. Many children like having several small items in their lunch. For example, a sandwich, small fruit, drinks (no carbonated beverages), small container of veggies, raisins or nuts and a cookie. How much of each depends on your child's appetite.

IMPORTANT! Please do not send food that needs to be microwaved! Also, no Gogurts, taco/pizza Lunchables, or carbonated soda will be allowed in children's lunches

SPECIAL ELEMENTARY INFORMATION

Elementary Attendance

Good attendance at the elementary level is an extremely important aspect of each student's education and has many carry-over implications for later life. Tardiness disrupts the children already at work and disorients the child who is late. The elementary class begins promptly at 8:30 a.m. with each child ready for the day's work. If your child is absent or tardy, please contact the School by 9 a.m. so that special arrangements can be made if needed. If you find it necessary to take a student out of school for a period of time, we request a written note for the absence to be submitted to the teacher in advance. We recognize the 90% attendance recommendation from the State.

Elementary Supplies

The supplies your child needs for School have been carefully evaluated for quality and quantity. Please purchase the brands recommended; they will provide your child with the highest quality for their most important work.

Elementary Birthdays

A birthday is a time for recognition and celebration. A schedule will be sent home with your child designating one day per month as a celebration day for all the birthdays occurring during that month. Parents of that month's birthday children should cooperate in coordinating a nutritious snack for that month's Party Day. We also find that children enjoy bringing in a special present for the class on that day. This could be a new book for our library or a new piece of equipment for the room. This is a positive way for the child to give from the heart.



Elementary Sharing

The elementary class has no organized "show and tell." At this level the children bring in things that pertain to what we are studying and share favorite books on their own. They have a very large variety of opportunities to share with their peers; stories and adventures as well as making more formal presentations to the class.

Personal Property

Under the conditions listed below, children may bring toys that are appropriate for our learning environment. Balls, jump ropes, etc., for use on the playground; erector sets, etc., may be brought for the science environment.

Conditions:

1. All items from home must be labeled with the child's name.
2. All members of the class will use anything brought in.
3. No Barbies, stuffies, small cars, Game Boys, etc.
4. No small toys or collectibles.

Elementary Clothing

For your child's health and safety, ***ALL CLOTHING MUST BE:***

1. Labeled with your child's name.
2. Appropriate for the weather and any activity that might go on in the classroom. Warm, washable, fits appropriately, easy to manage and with workable parts. Shorts under girls' dresses. Belts for pants that are big.

Shoes:

1. Slippers in the classroom (no large distracting silly slippers).
2. Snow boots for snow.
3. Shoes appropriate for PE activities.
4. No sandals, cowboy boots or platform shoes.

Outside Wear:

We will be going outside every day unless the weather is unsafe. If your child does not have appropriate snow gear they will not joint the class activities. A coat that closes, snow pants, boots, warm gloves of mittens and a hat are essential. Layering is a good idea – they can always take off, but not always put on what they do not have.

CAUTION: In Idaho the weather can change rapidly, especially in the spring and fall. Please send a jacket with a hood for those times.

Elementary Gifts

At holiday time, the teachers ask that parents do not give personal gifts, but give the classroom a gift instead. We will have a wish list available for the elementary class in the office.

Elementary Holidays

As we work globally, the celebrations of holidays are kept very simple with a stress on culture and tradition. The celebrations are also child-directed and activities may be tied to service projects.

Elementary Lunches

Your child should be responsible for their lunch and snack making, packing, transporting and cleaning. Please provide them with choices for a well-balanced diet.

Example 1:	Example 2:
Lunchmeat sandwich	Yogurt
Piece of fruit	Small salad
Carrot sticks	Chips
Granola bar	Raisins
Milk	Juice

We do not recommend cookies, cakes and candies unless they are in very small proportions. NO soda, please.

Elementary Snacks

The elementary child is very intense in his/her learning. Students should bring their own snack that is low in refined sugar, fat and salt. Suggestions include fruit, vegetables, dairy products, complex breads and cereals, and legumes. Any allergies or other information will be noted on the snack schedule.

Visits & Observation

Visits and observations are two different ways parents may spend time in the classroom. Visits involve spending one-on-one time with your child, doing work, sharing snack or lunch or playing outside together. Visits last about an hour. Observations are for silently watching the goings on of the classroom. The parent does not engage in the activities of the children; instead, the parent watches as the children go about their daily routine. Parents are encouraged to take notes so questions may be asked later. Our class is open for visitation or observation at any time after the first six weeks of school. We do request advance notice so that we do not have conflicts in schedules or too many observers at one time, as this is very disruptive to the class.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM

The Extended Day Program was created to provide families enrolled in the Snake River Montessori School with convenient year-round childcare consistent with the Montessori philosophy.

Hours



Extended Day is available from 6:45 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. If you are late in picking up your child, you will be charged \$1.00/minute after the first five minutes. We realize true emergencies arise. Please call if you are going to be late. We will try to work with you. (Extended care will be available during scheduled School holidays: parent/teacher conferences, spring break, etc.) A holiday schedule is available at the beginning of the school year and parents will be required to find alternative arrangements if their work is not participating in the holiday. If the School is closed due to weather, the extended care program will also be closed.

Fees

Costs associated with the Extended Day program are calculated and paid monthly according to the payment type chosen. Payments are due by the 15th of the month. Payment should be made to the Snake River Montessori School. Please indicate in the memo area that it is for Extended Day. Drop your payment in the payment box at the School or mail it to the School. A receipt for payment is available. The rates charged are based on the hours used. A number of access plans are available through the office.

Registration Fees from Sept.–Mid-June

Individual Student	\$25.00
Family Rate	\$40.00

Late Charges

It is uncomfortable for us to remind parents to pay their extended care bill on time. Payments are due the 15th of the month. Therefore, we charge a \$20.00 late fee on the 25th of the month.

Important Closure Dates

In order to give our staff some time off, we have scheduled some days that Extended Day will not be open. We will remind you of these closure dates throughout the year. See school calendar.

- **Labor Day**
- **Thanksgiving Break**
- **Winter Break**
- **President's Day**
- **Spring Break**
- **Memorial Day**
- **Family Picnic**
- **July 4th**

PLEASE NOTE: If the School closes due to severe weather Extended Day will also be closed!

Attendance

Parents must check their children in or out on the time clock. If you miss a check in or out please record it on the missed punch log as soon as possible. **If you do not check your child out you will be charged until 6:00 P.M.** The extended day staff will check the children in and out for regular school sessions. No child is allowed to leave the Extended Day facility unless checked out by a parent or guardian. Only those people specified on the registration form will be allowed to pick up the child unless written or verbal permission is given. The person picking up the child will need to provide identification.

Parents with varying work schedules are required to sign their children up on the Friday before the upcoming week. A weekly sign-up will be provided for this purpose.

Children who are too ill to attend school may NOT attend Extended Day. Please refer to our Health Policy.

Snack

Your registration will pay for a nutritious snack. There will be a morning, afternoon and early evening snack. If you would like to bring a special snack for sharing, please let us know a day before (*Allergy alert: please do NOT bring snacks containing nuts or nut residue – often products are manufactured in plants that process nuts, which can in turn cause the product to contain trace amounts of nuts. Please read labels carefully*).

Lunch

Please provide a nutritious lunch for your child. Please include fruits, vegetables, dairy products, lunchmeat sandwiches, etc. No carbonated beverages, Gogurts (tend to be messy), or adult-sized candy bars.

Extra Curricular Activities

Extra curricular activities may be held after school. Those who choose to participate will be charged an extra fee by the activities instructor.

Activities



Program activities are planned to ensure a fun and nurturing environment, while extending the Montessori philosophy into the "after school" hours. These activities may include indoor and outdoor play, dress up, gardening, igloo making, ice sculptures, manipulatives, puppet theater, music, dance, art, etc. A nap/quiet time will also be provided. For Elementary students, there will also be homework assistance.

Naps: Children who require a mid-day nap will be given the opportunity to take one. Please bring a blanket and pillow. (Sleeping cots will be provided). Children may bring one, small sleeping buddy (stuffed animal). Please label all of the children's belongings. For health purposes, it would be best if the pillows and blankets were taken home at the end of each week to wash and be returned the following week.

OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION

CHILDREN'S FEELINGS ABOUT STARTING SCHOOL (OR, "I DON'T WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL BECAUSE...")

Separation Anxiety



Although some children happily start their new school year without a qualm, there are others for whom it is a difficult experience. This is especially likely to happen if there is a younger sibling at home and the child realizes that the baby will get undivided attention during school times.

If your young child is fearful about being left at school, there are several things you can do. Before arriving, be calm and reassuring about your reappearance at the end of the morning. Describe how you will come back after playtime. At the classroom door, give a hug and kiss and say, "Have a good day and I'll see you after play time." Then quickly leave without looking back.

Even if your child is shrieking as you leave (and some children do), continue out the door. We will step into the situation and help your child get over these fears. By leaving this way you are saying to your child, "I know this place is a safe place for you, I have confidence in your ability to handle the new challenges, and I will reappear on schedule." Be assured that even the most chilling screams are over in a few minutes, and this crying at the door lasts only a few days. This way of leaving your child, rather than being hard-hearted and uncaring, seems to bolster confidence most quickly. Protracted leave-taking and emotional good-byes only prolong this period of adjustment.

If your child uses a security blanket or toy and wants to bring it to school, explain that School is not the place for blankets, (or bears). The security blanket or toy can be left in the car so it will be there when the child returns after playground time.

Peer Group Anxiety

This anxiety often shows up as "...because no one likes me." Many children who start the class at an older age worry that the other children will not accept them. Whereas the separation fear of the young child is always recognized as legitimate by parents, this fear in the older child is often not acknowledged, or is brushed aside by parents. It is a real fear and parents can do several things to help. A shy child may not know how to ask someone to play. You can help by actually telling your child what to say, or how to ask. We do this in the classroom and it works well.

There are indirect ways to help, too. Carpooling with another child produces an instant friend for the shy child. Inviting another child home for the afternoon will give your child much more confidence in making friends.

Unrealistic Expectations

Some children--especially younger siblings--think that we will expect them to be able to do all the things they see their older siblings do. These are the children who may say something like, "school is too hard." They are afraid that our expectations of them will be much too high for them to achieve. If you sense that your child is feeling this way, make some casual direct comments to the child, such as "Teachers don't expect children to know how to do that until after they have been in school for a while." (Use "long time" if the expectation is really out of line with the age.)

Another expectation is to anticipate the bestowal of great knowledge soon after entering school. Some children feel they will immediately be able to do all the things that older children do.

All of these fears can surface at the beginning of school, before the child has a real chance to experience the realities of the class. If your child should suddenly exhibit a fear later in the year, let your teacher know, so that we can try to discover what is causing it.

Parents' Feelings About Their Child Starting School

Sense of Loss

Parents sometimes feel a sense of loss when their child starts school. Teachers agree that it is hard to see the stage of babyhood pass. They feel the same sense of loss when a child leaves the class after spending many years there. But no one can hold a child back from this new adventure. Focusing on the positive aspects of this new stage may help. Remember also that teachers are merely helpers along the way.

Parents' Worries

Sometimes parents are concerned that they and their child will not be liked and accepted, or that they will not have done a good enough job of parenting. First of all, the Snake River Montessori School, like all Montessori schools, is interested in having all kinds of families and personalities in its community. This variety adds fun and interest. Second, teachers and staff know only too well how hard it is to live up to one's self-expectations ("Will I meet the parents' expectations of a good Montessori teacher?") We are not here to judge you or your parenting skills. We are here to provide a good educational experience for you and your children.

What Did You Do In School Today?

Any parent whose child had been in the class will confirm that the answer is "Nothing," or "I don't remember." Why a child cannot relate what has been done during the day is an age-old mystery, but you can ease some of your frustration by rewording your question to be more specific: "Who did you share snacks with today?" "Did you have time to get to the art corner?" "What did you talk about in circle today?" "How did your sharing go?" Questions like these usually elicit more satisfying responses from your children about their day at school.

THANK YOU
FOR CHOOSING

The SNAKE RIVER

MONTESSORI SCHOOL

We look forward to growing as a school as your child grows as a person



NOTES...