

COMMUNITY HANDBOOK



Great Work  
Montessori School

2018-2019

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**SECTION 1: WELCOME**

Dear Families,

It is with sincere pleasure that we welcome you to Great Work Montessori School (GWMS). We are so excited to bring together a diverse population of learners to create a beautiful learning community.

It is our hope that this handbook serves as a starting place for our relationship. Students, families and staff of GWMS form a team in the development of our young people. As you read through this handbook, please ask questions, or make comments to our staff, and please share this information with your child(ren).

Together we can build a supportive and loving community for our children to grow in.

Thank you for your trust and support!

Kindly,

Amy Malik  
Head of School

## SECTION 2: WHO WE ARE

Great Work Montessori School is a Jefferson County Charter Montessori School founded in 2017. We serve children from all walks of life from ages 2 months through 4th grade with the intent to grow by one grade level every year.

Our campus is located at:

5300 W. Center Ave, Lakewood, CO 80226

Contact us:

Main phone number: 303-953-8900

Attendance Number: [attendance@greatworkmontessori.org](mailto:attendance@greatworkmontessori.org) or Flyer App

Extended Care Number: 720-660-0086

Fax number: 720-242-7367

Our tax Id is 47-5358912

## SECTION 3: MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

### **Our Mission**

To support *every* child in becoming a joyful and courageous agent of peace, builder of community, and creator of justice and beauty.

### **Our Vision**

An accessible and diverse public school embodying the Association Montessori Internationale standards for Montessori education. A student body who respect themselves, others, and their environment. A community of young people who see themselves as citizens of the world and enter into society eager and prepared to contribute to a peaceful and harmonious future. A collaboration between parents, educators, and community members working together to assist their children in recognizing their "Great Work."

### **Our Core Values**

AMI Standards: dedication to the complete expression of the Montessori Method allows for development of the whole child.

Diversity: children from all backgrounds benefit from learning together.

Community Partnerships: the child is best served through a collaboration of parents, children and the greater community.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

GWMS will admit students of any race, color, national origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, ability, gender, gender expression, gender identity and sexual orientation to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students in the school. GWMS complies with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules and regulations, including, without limitation, the constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, age, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry or sexual orientation. GWMS does not discriminate in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. This enrollment policy is designed to meet the requirements of C.R.S. §22-30.5-104(3), ensuring access to the school for all, from academically low-achieving students to exceptional students, and including students with disabilities.

## **SECTION 4: CALENDAR AND DAILY SCHEDULE**

### **Calendar Year**

Our calendar very closely follows the Jeffco School calendar. See the current school calendar on the website under Parents>Documents.

### **School Hours**

Before Care: 7:00am - 8:00am

All grades: 8:00am - 3:00pm

After Care: 3:00pm - 4:00pm

After Care Plus: 4:00pm - 5:30pm

### **The Montessori Work Period**

The morning work cycle is vital to the success of each student and supports the continuity necessary for learning. The work cycle begins at 8:00 a.m. in every classroom. Please help us by avoiding late drop offs and early pickups during this period. Please have your child to school on time and refrain from picking up until 12:00n at the earliest unless you've made prior arrangements with your child's guide. During the morning work cycle, classrooms will come together as a group, and the guide and assistants will provide daily structured physical activity.

### **Summer Enrollment**

Our summer program will be a camp style program and will first be open to GWMS students and thereafter for public enrollment. An enrollment contract, tuition agreement and updated student file will be required for participation in the summer program. Information on this program will come out in the spring prior.

### **School Closures**



GWMS closes for bad weather whenever the Jefferson County School District closes its elementary schools. For weather-related delayed openings, we will also follow Jefferson County elementary schools. Announcements regarding closures, snow routes, or delayed starts are made starting at 6:00 a.m. The school district announces school closures on its website: <http://www.jeffcopublicschools.org/closures/>.

## **SECTION 5: SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

### **NIDO Program**

The Montessori Nido environment is a community of infants ranging from 8 weeks old to 18 months. The adult to child ratio is 1:4 with a maximum of 8 children. This program is developed to support children who need full time care while their parents are working and is set up to emulate a home environment. The area for movement starts with activities for visual, tactile and auditory experiences while giving the space and motivation for freedom of movement through different types of mobiles, grasping materials, and rattles. As the child develops there are activities added to stimulate eye-hand coordination such as rings on a peg and containers that they can put things in and out of. Dr. Montessori often referred to the hand as “the instrument of the intelligence”. Therefore, abundant materials are offered for the experience of developing their fine motor skills. Just as at home there is an area for physical care, feeding and sleeping. The children each have their own floor bed and are supported in their individual sleep/wake cycles. We support the transition from a liquid diet (breast milk/formula) to solids by means of a child-led, scientific process. This environment prepares the children for their work in the YCC environment once their individual sense of independence suits the transition.

Description here.

### **Young Children’s Community (YCC) Program**

Our Young Children’s Community offers a prepared environment for up to 10 children, ranging in age from 12 months and walking, to 3 years old. Giving the child freedom within limits and the ability to experience their environment maximizes their ability to construct their conscious mind. The prepared environment is made up of two main areas; practical life and language, with a smaller area for manipulative specific work. Art and music are woven into each day with singing, dance and fine art always available to each child. The practical life area is meant to provide purposeful work that is based on the activities of the home; self care and care of the indoor and outdoor environments. These are items that they see in use in everyday life, but are made specifically for their use. Practical life activities encourage and support repetition, helping the child develop concentration as well as aiding in the integration of intellect, will and movement among many other things. The language area provides material that enables the child to transfer ideas from the concrete to the abstract and provide vocabulary. The children’s experience in the YCC prepares them for the Primary environment, allowing for a seamless transition from one level to the next.

## Primary Program

The Primary environment is rich with learning opportunities. Children continue to develop independence and social grace in this mixed age grouping in which older children teach younger children and younger children aspire to advance to the work of the older children. A three hour uninterrupted work cycle allows children to deeply engage in the work of their choice and also receive individual lessons with materials designed to meet them exactly where they are at, and continue to challenge their learning.

### DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00 Work Cycle

11:00 Group Time 11:15

Outdoor Play Time 1

2:00 Lunch

12:45 Clean-up/Half-day Dismissal

1:00 Nap/Rest

1:30 Afternoon Work Cycle for Non-nappers

3:00 Afternoon Dismissal

### AREAS OF THE CLASSROOM

Practical life activities are real life activities that develop independence and self-direction, while caring for self, others and the surrounding environment. Sensorial activities refine the senses and strengthen the child's memory while providing a foundational reference to connect with the world around us. Language activities allow the child to develop and express their thoughts to connect with others while simultaneously promoting confidence and independence.

Mathematics in the Montessori environment encourages concrete to abstract thinking in which the child logically solves problems through the mathematical mind. Within these areas the children also explore science, history, geography, art and music. There is a heavy emphasis on Grace and Courtesy. Children practice using manners, respecting each other, conflict resolution and positive self-expression. Their time here also prepares them for the work of the Elementary environment, allowing for a seamless transition from one level to the next.

## Elementary Program

Montessori described three important tendencies emerging at the elementary school age: the transition of the child's mind from *concrete to abstract* reasoning; the birth of a moral sense; and the intensification of the drive to explore the natural and social environment. The Montessori elementary program is designed to meet the needs of each child in a way that is both faithful to Dr. Montessori's insights and consistent with the expectations of parents and society. The elementary program is for children ages 6-12.

### The Great Stories

Traditionally presented every year in the Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary class as an inspiration to new and older students alike, *The Great Stories* are five key areas of

interconnected studies in the form of inspiring stories. These *Great stories provide a foundation for Montessori's "Cosmic Curriculum,"* and include:

1. *The Story of the Universe and the Formation of the Earth* involves astronomy, geology, chemistry and physics.
2. *The Story of the Coming of Life* introduces the history of life on earth from one-celled animals and plants to human beings.
3. *The Story of the Coming of Humans* relates the significance of human beings, their special abilities, and what differentiates them from other life forms.
4. *The Story of Communication in Signs and the Invention of Writing* presents the language arts.
5. *The Story of Numbers and the Invention of Mathematics* include math, geometry and technology and provide a look at human invention in the context of expanding civilization.

Elementary students continue to use specialized didactic materials to aid their learning in each area of the classroom. Additionally, a large component of the elementary program is encouraging students to explore topics that capture their imagination. Elementary Montessori students rarely use textbooks. The approach is largely based on library research with children gathering information, assembling reports, teaching what they have learned to their fellow students, and assembling portfolios and handmade books of their own. Elementary students are taught how to use reference materials, libraries, and the internet to gather information and uncover the facts. Their oral presentations and written research reports grow in sophistication and complexity every year.

Students are assessed individually. Through portfolios, performance and guide observation, each student's academic, emotional, social, artistic and physical progress is tracked. Public Montessori schools also participate in national, state or local assessments or standardized tests. All GWMS students are assessed in accordance with the Colorado Read Act. Beginning in 3rd grade, GWMS also administers the mandatory state assessments to all students in grades 3+.

## **SECTION 6: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Admissions and Enrollment**

Please refer to our website under the "Enrollment" tab to learn more about Jefferson County Public School and Great Work Montessori School's admission and enrollment procedures. Any questions can be directed to the Enrollment Secretary or Head of School.

### **Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:**

7:45-8:00 (Elementary) , 8:00-8:15 (Primary and YCC,NIDO)

2:45-3:00 (Elementary), 3:00-3:15 (Primary and YCC,NIDO)

Parents who have children at more than one level are asked to come to drop-off and pick-up at the later time.

For the safe and efficient arrival and dismissal of all children, please follow the following drop-off and pick-up procedures:

During regular school hours parents will drop-off and pick-up in the loop at the bottom of the drive on the West side of the building. Please approach from Depew, heading East on Center Avenue. Turn right into the driveway of the school, follow the loop around until you are in the loading/unloading zone and wait until you are greeted by a staff member. Your child will be released to an adult who will escort them to their classroom. If your child is in Primary, YCC or Nido, they will need to be signed in and out on the iPad that will be handed to you by the staff member. Parents must remain in the car at all times. All children will enter and exit the car on the right side of the vehicle. Children should be ready to exit the vehicle when a staff member approaches. If your child is still finishing breakfast, dressing or putting on their shoes when faculty greet your car in the morning, they will respectfully request that you park, finish preparing for the day, and walk your child to the office when they are ready to join their classroom for the day. The youngest child's car seat should be placed on the right side of the car in the case where multiple children are arriving or departing in the same vehicle. We cannot assist with buckling children in, so please get out quickly and safely to assist your child with the buckle if necessary. Families walking to school will say goodbye to their students at the front door. All children will enter the building and walk back to class independently. This will allow the children the opportunity to separate from you rather than being left by you. This is an important difference in the eyes of a young child. Please help us support them in this process by offering a cheerful and brief goodbye at the front door or in the drop-off line.

Please help us keep traffic moving during this busy time. Guides and staff will not engage in conversation or answer questions about the children's day during drop off and pick up. If you need to speak to your child's guide, please call them or email them about the matter, and they will get back to you as soon as possible in accordance with the school and classroom communication guidelines.

**All Students in Nido, Ycc, Primary, and Extended Care must be signed in and signed out each day.** If someone else will be picking up your child, please make sure they are listed in Jeffco connect and that they carry proper photo identification to assure guides that they are allowed to sign your child out for the day.

The Sign-in/out system we will be using is called ATS - it is an online attendance tracking system that was created by the Colorado Department of Human Services. Families will be asked to set up an 8 digit pin in order to sign their child(ren) in and out each day. More information will be provided regarding this process with registration paperwork each year.

For Before and After Care Drop-off/Pick-up, please park and walk to the Multipurpose Room to drop-off/pick-up your child.

Please help us keep traffic moving during this busy time. Guides and staff will not engage in conversation or answer questions about the children's day during drop off and pick up. If you need to speak to your child's guide, please call them or email them about the matter, and they will get back to you as soon as possible in accordance with the school and classroom communication guidelines.

### **Registration Paperwork**

All families will be asked to complete certain paperwork in order to enroll their child. For families with children in Nido, YCC and Primary, the paperwork may be different than that of Elementary in order to follow CDHS Requirements. Registration packets listing the required documents for each age level will be sent to families via email and made available on our website each year prior to Registration Day. Any questions regarding registration paperwork can be directed to our enrollment secretary.

### **Transitions and Playdates**

GWMS will be in contact with newly enrolled families in order to support their transition to GWMS by providing families with opportunities to visit the school, come to community gatherings, come in for a classroom tour, and join us for playdates during the summer months in order to meet and connect with current families. During the school year, there will be meetings provided for families of children who are transitioning to a new level within GWMS. There will also be opportunities for our families that are leaving GWMS to meet with their guide in order to facilitate their transition to a new school if a family requests this meeting.

### **Class Placement**

When a child moves-up to a new level, classroom placement is done by the school administration, with insights from the classroom Guides. Many factors are considered during placement, including classroom balance of year and gender. Parent request for placement in a specific classroom will not be accepted. Rather, parents will have the option to complete an online survey which will afford parents the opportunity to share information about their child that they believe is valuable for the school to consider in regards to classroom placement. Classroom placement will be given to families at Registration.

### **Primary Caregiving & Continuity of Care**

Our school works to uphold primary caregiving and continuity of care practices. We strive to ensure that children have consistent staffing in their classroom as much as we are able to. This allows children to have a bond with their guides, avoid multiple transitions. It is our desire to allow children to stay in a classroom with their peers and guides for at least 2-3 years based on following the three year cycle within each classroom (ages 0-3, 3-6, 6-9, 9-12, etc.).

### **Late Arrival**

On-time arrival at school is very important to a student's successful school experience. A student arriving at school after their designated drop-off window is considered tardy and is recorded as Tardy in Infinite Campus (the school district student database). All children arriving after 8:15am must be escorted into the School Office to check in with staff. Parents must sign the "Late Arrival" sheet that is in the office. Office staff will escort students to their classrooms. Late arrivals are disruptive to guides, other children in the classroom, and office staff. Out of consideration for others, and most importantly, out of consideration for your child(ren) having the best start to his/her day, we ask that you ensure that your child(ren) arrive to school on time on a daily basis.

### **Late Pick-Up**

Please be timely in dropping off and picking up your child as our staffing is figured upon contracted enrollment. All children must be picked up during their respective dismissal times. There is a 15 minute pick-up window for dismissal. Children who are not retrieved by 3:00 for Elementary and 3:15 for Primary and YCC are checked in to After Care and will be billed the daily drop-in rate. Please contact the school if you know you will be unexpectedly late, so that we can reassure your child.

In the event of a child not picked up by the 5:30pm deadline, the after school coordinator will bring the child to the front lobby with the iPad and all contact numbers will be called. Parents will be charged a late fee of \$1/minute that the child is not picked up. *(This fee will be billed to you on the next month's statement)*. If a child is not picked up by 6:00pm and there has been no contact from the parents or emergency contacts, Social Services will be called.

### **Attendance Policy**

Daily attendance is critical to a child's continuity of learning and is the combined responsibility of the parents, the school and the child. The Colorado School Attendance Law requires compulsory school attendance for children age six to seventeen. This law makes parents responsible for their children's attendance and requires schools to keep accurate records of daily attendance and to report annual attendance. Regular attendance makes it possible for guides to meet the goals of the school, and students cannot benefit from their educational experience when they are not present. GWMS students risk loss of re-enrollment priority if they fail to comply with attendance policies.

### **Reporting Absences**

Students are expected to attend school for all days of the established school calendar. When illness, family emergency, or family business requires your child to be absent, parents are expected to use the Flyer App, call 303-953-8900, or email the school at [attendance@greatworkmontessori.org](mailto:attendance@greatworkmontessori.org) to report all absences. Absences must be reported to the office; the office staff will then inform the classroom Guides.

When contacting us to report an absence, please leave the following information:

1. Student's name

2. Student's guide and classroom
3. Date and reason for absence
4. Parent's name
5. Telephone number where you can be reached during the day

Absences resulting from temporary illness, injury, extended disability of the student or family, or emergencies will, under normal circumstances, be excused. Absences due to illness are generally excused. If these absences are frequent, recurrent or prolonged, we will require a note from your medical provider to excuse these absences.

Any absences that are not reported to the school office within 48 hours will be marked as "unexcused." In accordance with Jeffco district policy, "the minimum number of unexcused absences a student may incur before judicial proceedings are initiated to enforce compulsory attendance is four (4) days in one month or ten (10) days during any school year." This is enforced for children ages 6 years and older. Families will be notified of a concern regarding truancy after the third unexcused absence and a Truancy Action Plan will be put in place to ensure the student continues attendance in the school.

### **Excessive Absences Due to Illness**

Students who miss more than 5 consecutive days in a 30 day period due to illness may be required to provide a note from their medical provider to excuse their absences. Students who have accumulated more than 10 absences (combined excused and unexcused), may be required to submit a note from their medical provider to excuse any future absences for the school year.

### **Prearranged Absences Procedure**

Additionally, absences for reasons other than illness, injury or family emergency require a pre-arranged absence form to be considered as excused. This includes absences due to planned doctor or dental appointments. Parents must submit a pre-arranged absence form for ALL appointments, even if they are only partial day, for the absences to be excused. Pre-arranged absence forms are available on our website, on the Parent>Documents page. Personal vacations taken during regularly scheduled school sessions are discouraged and generally not excused. Supplemental work may or may not be provided by the guide or school prior to a vacation, please discuss these situations in advance, so that we can best support your family.

### **Excessive Absences and Enrollment Priority**

Currently enrolled Primary and Elementary students remain enrolled from year to year . YCC students will have to lottery into the Primary program, but will then remain enrolled in future years. Enrollment Priorities are as follows:

1. Staff Children
2. Siblings of currently enrolled students
3. FRL Students in Jeffco

4. Jeffco non-FRL Students
5. FRL non-Jeffco Students
6. Non-FRL, non-Jeffco Students

Since re-enrollment occurs in January, returning student status will be granted to those students who have completed the intent-to-return form issued by the school.

Please refer to the Jeffco schools website for information on Choice Enrollment.

### **Sign-Out During School Hours**

Students are never permitted to leave school during regular hours without permission. No student may go off-campus alone during school hours. Any student leaving the school during these time periods *must be signed out in the office by a parent or guardian*. Students will only be released to individuals who have been designated as "authorized persons to pick-up" the student with original parent signatures on file with the front office. A parent *may only call in to the school to allow a person not listed on their authorized pickup list to pick up their child if they have their family code word*, or they may send an email to the office. Once the code word is given, the designated pick-up person given over the phone will be allowed to pick-up the child that day. Parents are encouraged to then add that person as authorized pick-up in Jeffco Connect.

Due to the disruption to the school, GWMS strongly discourages early sign-out of students during the school day. When it is unavoidable, written notification to the guide and the school office should be sent requesting early dismissal. Other than emergency situations, classes and students should not be interrupted for early dismissal. Please plan to schedule doctor, dentist and all extra-curricular activities for outside school hours. In the unavoidable situation of an early pick-up, parents should plan to arrive with sufficient time for students to be retrieved from their classrooms. Students will not be ready and waiting in the office prior to parent's pick-up. Parents should plan for 10-15 minutes at the school to collect their student. Parents of students who are leaving early must first come to the school office to sign the student out.

### **Authorized pick-up:**

We will not release a child to anyone who is not listed in Jeffco Connect and/or on the student emergency card as authorized to pick-up. All persons, other than parents, that arrive to pick up a child must present a valid photo ID to the front desk and be cleared by a GWMS staff member. In an emergency, notification of a change may be made by telephone. However, identification will be required by the parent calling via a secret code word. This code is for the parents use only and simply allows us to identify you on the phone. Do not give your child's code word to anyone. The person who picks up must bring a photo ID for identification verification.

### **Dress Code**

GWMS recognizes that responsibility for the dress and appearance of students generally rests with individual students and their parents, and that students may wish to express themselves by the manner of their dress and appearance. Students shall not, however, wear clothing or effect an appearance at school or school-sanctioned activities or events that is or will be disruptive to



the educational environment. Standards on student attire are intended to help students concentrate on schoolwork, reduce discipline problems and improve school order and safety. Students also shall not wear clothing or effect an appearance that compromises the maintenance of a safe and orderly school. The following general standards shall also apply:

- Any manner of grooming or apparel, including clothing, jewelry, emblems and/or badges which by virtue of color, arrangement, trademark, or other attribute is associated with, or denotes membership in or affiliation with, any gang or violence, is not allowed. The prohibition of gang/violence-related apparel shall be applied at the discretion of teachers and administrators as the need arises at individual schools. Also please avoid clothing and apparel that has licensed characters on it, such as Disney, superheros etc.
- To avoid injury and disease, shoes, boots, sandals, or other footwear must be worn in school buildings at all times. Indoor shoes with rubber soles are requested to be left at school for regular use.
- Reasonable cleanliness of student clothing is required as a matter of general health and welfare.

### **Clothing**

We ask that each Elementary family provide 1 full sets of clothing that are seasonally appropriate for children to change into in case of accidents or spills. We also ask that each family provide their child with rubber-soled shoes to be worn while inside the classroom. These shoes will stay at school and cannot go back and forth each day. Please let us know if you need assistance obtaining these items.

### **Diapering and Toileting Procedures**

We aim to empower children to develop self sufficiency in caring for themselves and their environment, both human and physical. At this age toileting awareness is an integral part of that independence.

In our young children's community the children will wear cotton underpants as they work towards that goal. Children are not expected to be "toilet trained" upon entering our community. Rather they will gain toilet independence in this thoughtfully prepared environment. We plan to provide and launder the underpants we use in the community.

In the NIdo/YCC the staff follows the following procedures while helping your child toward bathroom independence:

1. Communicate to child that they need to be changed
2. Teacher places gloves on their hands and prepares wash cloth
3. Child is asked to remove shoes, socks, pants and under garments with help from adult as needed
4. Soiled clothes are placed in a wet bag, underpants in a lidded bin
5. Child is gently wiped to remove all BM and urine
6. Child is offered the opportunity to sit on the toilet
7. Child is inspected to ensure genital area is clean

8. Wash cloth is placed in BM bucket containing bleach and water in locked or inaccessible cabinet
9. If a child needs diaper cream the child must have an over-the-counter medication form signed by both the parent and child's physician. NO DIAPER CREAM MAY BE SHARED
10. Gloves are removed
11. Child chooses a clean pair of undergarments and if needed is assisted in dressing themselves in clean attire
12. Area is disinfected and child and adult's hands are washed

In the Primary Community, typically developing children should be toilet independent, but it is understandable that accidents will happen. When they do the staff follows the following procedure:

1. Children are escorted to the bathroom
2. Teacher places gloves on his/her hands
3. Children are provided with clothes to change into and a bag to place soiled clothes into
4. Child is instructed to change his or her clothing – teacher assists when needed
5. Child washes his/her hands
6. Soiled clothing bag is hung out of reach of all children
7. Bathroom is disinfected after child is finished
8. Area where child had accident is disinfected
9. Gloves are removed
10. Teacher washes his/her hands

### **Toys and Treasures**

Please do not allow your child to bring unnecessary items from home. This includes jewelry, money, candy, and toys. Their presence is distracting to our classroom environments as well as a choking hazard. We ask that you respect our learning environment and teach your child to do the same, by leaving all toys and treasures at home.

## **SECTION 7: SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS**

We strive for open communication with our community. We appreciate your thoughts and ideas and encourage you to discuss them with the appropriate person(s).

### **Contact and Emergency Information**

Please keep your child's emergency information up-to-date in Jeffco Connect. In case of an emergency, we must be able to contact parents as quickly as possible. If a home, business or cellular telephone number or email address is changed, it needs to be reported in Jeffco Connect immediately.

### **General Communications**

Our main form of communication will be through an App called Flyer. Parents who do not have a smartphone or tablet, can use public devices in our library during school hours. In addition, parents may request hard copies of all communications sent through Flyer. If you request such communications, please send an email to [ashleyh@greatworkmontessori.org](mailto:ashleyh@greatworkmontessori.org) stating your request.

### **Electronic Communication: Email, Website, Blogs**

Electronic communication through Jeffco Connect/School Messenger is the primary method the school uses for communication of logistics to families. Information may also be found on the GWMS website at <http://greatworkmontessori.org>. During a busy school day, please feel free to leave a message with the main office for guides or correspond via email. All administrative and teaching staff email addresses are listed on the school website. All parent communications sent to guides will be responded to within 24 hours of receipt of the email.

### **Office Hours**

School office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Please feel free to call or visit regarding any topic, question, or concern you may have that is not included in this handbook. However, guides will not be called to the telephone before or during class time. Messages will be given to the guide. Emergency calls will be handled immediately by office staff.

### **Classroom Communication**

For the most effective communication regarding classroom or individual issues, please talk to your child's Guide. If you need to talk with your child's guide at any time, please do not hesitate to call the office and leave a message for the guide or send them an email. A child's behavior at school can be affected in many ways by changes or difficulties at home. In the event that a significant change occurs in your home, please inform us. All information will be regarded as confidential. Common causes of distress are either or both parents being away from home, the illness of a relative, any hospitalization, accident, or death in the family, a recent move, or death of a pet. Children often act as barometers of family well-being. So that we can offer a little extra TLC when an occasional upset occurs, please keep the lines of communication open.

Arrival and departure times are not appropriate parent-Guide discussion times. Please do not try to engage the guides or students in conversations during this time. Guides may still be preparing the classroom for daily activities or directing their attention to the students. Children separate from parents more readily and prepare themselves for the classroom routine if an efficient and consistent parental departure is practiced.

### **Use of Interpreters/ Home Language**

If a family is in need of an interpreter for any events including parent-teacher conferences, parent education evenings, registration day, and any other events throughout the year, one will be made available for their use either through Jeffco or through one of our staff members as they are requested by the family. We will also provide all written material and communications in the family's home language should the family request that this be done in order for them to understand all communication. Should we have a classroom where 60% of children have

different home language than English, and the majority of them are speaking the same language, a bilingual staff member, fluent in this language will be assigned to that classroom as a part of that teaching team.

### **Holiday Celebrations**

GWMS acknowledges that holidays and celebrations are an exciting part of a child's life, and they sometimes want to share that excitement at school. As a school, we are mindful to honor this social need while minimizing distractions from the classroom and remembering that not all members of the community celebrate the same holidays. The school will typically send gentle reminders to children and families about holidays when the potential for distraction and/or hurt feelings can be high. As a school, we come together as a community to celebrate at various points throughout the year.

## **SECTION 8: HEALTH**

Our goal is to do everything possible to contribute to a school promoting healthy and joyful development. Fundamental to this is physical health. Because many childhood illnesses are contagious, we ask that parents work with the school to support the maintenance of a healthy environment. In doing this we require the following, as well as your signature on our Health Policy Agreement:

GWMS complies with Jeffco School District, The Colorado Health Department and The Colorado Department of Human Services approved policies and regulations, and complies with all applicable federal and state laws concerning student welfare, safety and health, including, without limitation, Board policies and laws addressing the reporting of child abuse, accident prevention and disaster response and any state regulations governing the operation of school facilities.

The school has a quiet area in the school office available to those students who become ill or injured at school, or who require medication during the school day. If a child has a fever or requires medical treatment, the parent/guardian is called to pick up the child as soon as possible. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached by phone, the next person listed as an emergency contact will be called. Minor bumps, bruises or scrapes are treated by our staff. Parents are notified by phone or in writing of any accident or injury requiring an incident report from the office or supervising adult. Any accident involving a preschool or childcare student that requires emergency medical treatment is reported to the Colorado Department of Human Services and we ask that the family bring in a note from their physician stating the child was treated and is clear to return to school.

GWMS has an onsite clinic aide. In addition, office staff and teaching staff are trained in First Aid, CPR and medication administration by our Nurse Consultant who delegates her authority to perform such tasks to appropriately trained staff.

## **Medications**

All medications must be checked into the office and administered by trained personnel. A *Medication Administration* form must be completed by a parent/guardian and signed by a physician. Medications, including over-the-counter items, must be in the original pharmacy or drugstore packaging. The student's name must be on the store packaging.

All medications, including over-the-counter drugs, must be brought by a parent to the school office. Under no circumstances may any medication be given to a student to bring to school; parents must deliver the medication to the school office.

In addition, the following medication administration procedures will be followed:

- No medication of any kind will be dispensed without doctor's permission. Please check with your child's healthcare provider to see if a dosage schedule can be arranged outside of school hours.
- Parents are responsible for providing all medications and supplies to the school.
- Any medication dispensed to your child at school must be prescribed in writing by a doctor. All medication must remain in the original container bearing the original label that shows:
  - Child's name
  - Physician's name, telephone number and signature
  - Date authorized
  - Name of medication and dosage
  - Time of day medications is to be given
  - Route of medication
  - Length of time the medication is to be given
  - Reason for medication
  - Side effects or reaction to watch for
  - Special instructions
  - Nebulized medications and emergency injections (EpiPen) require an Individualized Anaphylaxis Plan.
- Children may not transport medication to and from school. This includes medication left in a diaper bag, backpack or lunchbox.
- All medication needs to be brought to the administration area. This is where it will be stored and administered.
- Please notify your child's lead guide that it has been signed in and placed in the office.
- Over-the-counter medication will be dispensed only if an "Over-The-Counter Medication Form" has been signed by your child's doctor. Parents will be notified before dispensing any over-the-counter medication.

- Any medication error will be documented on a Medical Error Report and reported to the child's parents, nurse consultant, Director, and health care provider (as appropriate). Poison Control will be notified if any medication is given to the wrong child or there is an overdose of medication.
- Medications that have expired will be returned to the parent. If it is not picked up within one week, medication will be disposed of per program medication administration procedure.

Except in cases where a student has a physician approved self-carry order, medication cannot be kept in a student's possession, nor can a student self-administer the medication at school.

### **Reporting Illnesses**

Although we encourage and expect regular attendance, in an effort to maintain the good health of all our students, please refrain from bringing your child to school if s/he is sick. This will reduce the overall number of illnesses among the students.

*If your child is taken to an emergency room for any reason 48 hours prior to their attendance, we require written information, and a copy of the physician report (high fever, stitches, etc).*

If a child exhibits any of the symptoms listed in the Health Policy Agreement at school, a parent/guardian/emergency contact is notified to come and pick the student up within 45 minutes of the call. If a child is sent home after 10:00 am, they may not return the following day unless accompanied by a physician's note stating they are able to return.

Failure to pick up the child within 45 minutes of notification may result in hospitalization of the child and notification of appropriate social services authorities. Children may not return to school until they have been symptom free for 24 hours or have received a note from the physician stating that the child may return sooner. A child who is too ill to play outside or attend extra-curricular activities (i.e. soccer etc.) should not be brought to school. Exceptions to this policy, made by the Head of School with the recommendation of the student's physician, are made for children with conditions such as cold-induced asthma.

### **Contagious Illnesses**

Parents of children who have been exposed to or contracted a contagious disease must notify the school as soon as possible. The school may inform other parents of the situation as necessary so that precautions can be taken for their children's health. Please follow the procedures for contagious illness so that exposure can be kept to a minimum:

- **Fever.** Any temperature of 100 or higher is an indication of contagious illness. Should a child be recorded with such a fever, he/she will not be admitted until symptom free for 24 hours, without the use of medication. A child may also be sent home with a low-grade temperature accompanied by other symptoms including but not limited to diarrhea, rash, and lethargy.
- **Strep Throat.** Medication (prescribed antibiotics) must be administered to the child for 24 hours before he/she returns to school.

- Vomiting. Any child who vomits during the course of the school day or who vomited at home in the 24 hours prior to the school day will be sent home immediately.
- Diarrhea. If a child has two or more loose stools (unformed or watery) in a day, he/she must stay home until 24 hours after the diarrhea stops. A child with diarrhea may be admitted to class only with a written statement from the doctor stating the cause of the diarrhea and that it is not contagious. Children who regularly have soft stools when cutting new teeth may be admitted on a special condition that no other symptoms are present. Children with soft stools caused by antibiotic medication with a note from a doctor stating the cause will be admitted.
- Rash. In the event that a child has a rash, it will be up to the discretion of the classroom staff as to whether or not the child can be admitted to school or remain at school. A mild rash will be closely monitored. Rashes that appear suddenly, spread quickly on a child's skin, open up and pus or bleed, or are accompanied by a fever or other symptoms will require a doctor's note before the child can be admitted into the school. *This note will need to dictate the cause of the rash, the treatment, and clarify that the child is not contagious and can be allowed at the school.*

### **Communicable Illnesses**

The diagnosis of a child with a communicable illness must be reported to the school immediately. If warranted, the school then notifies the State Department of Public Health or the local health department, all staff members and all parents/guardians of the children in the care of the school. Illnesses such as measles, mumps, hepatitis, strep throat, diphtheria, rubella, salmonella, influenza, tuberculosis, meningitis and shigellosis are considered communicable and should be reported immediately.

### **Hearing, Vision & Dental screenings**

Our school provides Hearing and Vision screenings for our families of children ages 3 and up through Jefferson County Schools. We are working to locate a provider who can support dental screenings and currently have a resource list for families who do not have their own dentist for their child/children. If any concerns are noted during screenings, families will be notified and will be provided with resources upon request.

### **Developmental Concerns & Referrals**

Our program works with families to help identify any needs of children that are not being currently met. Our Learning Services Team (which includes an Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Pathologist, School Psychologist, and Special Education Specialist) work with children and guides to provide children with an environment that will help them to be successful. This includes working with children one on one or in small groups during the school year whether or not they have been identified as having any developmental concerns, working with children who have an IFSP, IEP, ILP or other individualized plan to make sure their plan is being met, as well as helping families with seeking community resource support if needed including Child Find, having conversations with their Pediatrician, etc. If a family has a developmental concern about their child, they are welcome to begin conversations with their guide in order to get support for their child at the earliest time possible.

## **Immunizations and Colorado Immunization Law**

Immunization requirements, as stated in Colorado law, are strictly enforced for all Jeffco School District students. Students new to the school district or new to our school are given 14 days from the date of notification of immunization requirement (in the registration packet) to comply with these requirements.

## **Allergies and Individual Health Plans (IHP's)**

Students with health concerns that may be life threatening, such as peanut, nut and food allergies, severe asthma, etc. will require an Individual Health Plan. Please bring these issues to the attention of the office as soon as possible so that a plan can be put in place in conjunction with our area nurse consultant. Health Plans are developed by our nurse consultant and your health care provider to assist us in assuring that the health needs of your child are met within the school environment. This information is strictly confidential. Staff will be advised on a "need to know" basis. Nuts: While GWMS is not a nut free school, we do have students with severe nut allergies in our school. Lead Guides will communicate this information to parents at the beginning of the year or when it is available. If your child is in a classroom with a student who has a nut allergy, please follow the guidelines for community as communicated by the guide.

## **Health Notifications and Protocols**

Guiding Principles: At GWMS, we communicate with parents/guardians regarding communicable illnesses and lice. The frequency of communication varies by level and regulations applicable to that level and varies based on type of illness.

## **Lice Screening Procedures and Notifications**

At GWMS we recognize that lice is a common nuisance and not an immediate health threat. We take routine steps to prevent the spread of lice by vacuuming the classrooms daily and discouraging the sharing of personal items such as hair brushes, hats and hair accessories. We are observant for signs of lice and check students as needed. If a student is found to have lice in a primary classroom, both primary classroom email lists will be notified and parents will be asked to check their children for lice, to treat if found, and to notify the school.

We rely on effective monitoring at home and timely notification to the school in order to provide timely notifications to our school community. Weekly checks at home are suggested and prompt treatment and notification of the school, child's carpool, recent playdates and sleepovers is expected.

In the event a student is found to have lice while at school:

- The office will call the parent and offer early dismissal so that treatment may begin right away. Students may stay until the end of the regular school day, but will need to be treated prior to returning to school the following day.
- Worn items from the student's cubby/locker will be sent home to be cleaned. Information regarding lice management is available from the office staff and may be sent home with the student.



### **Classroom Notifications and Protocols:**

Upon the first notification of lice within the prior 30 day period, the school will send out an email notification to the classroom email list of the affected student. Routine cleaning procedures will continue to be followed including daily vacuuming of the classroom and routine washing of the classroom work rugs. Affected students' worn items from their cubby/locker should be sent home by the guide.

If the threshold of three (3) cases within 30 days is reached within a classroom, another email will be sent to the classroom email list in which it is requested that all students with hair length below the ears or longer be sent to school with their hair up in a bun or ponytail until further notice. In addition to daily vacuuming, work rugs will be washed at least on a weekly basis until no live lice have been identified or reported within the classroom population for at least two (2) weeks.

If the threshold of five (5) cases within 30 days is reached within a classroom, items from cubbies will be sent home to be cleaned. Work rugs will be washed. Work rugs will be washed at least on a weekly basis until no live lice have been identified or reported within the classroom population for at least two (2) weeks.

## **SECTION 9: SAFETY, SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES**

GWMS prioritizes the health and safety of students and staff. In addition to policies and procedures related to pickup and drop-off outlined above in Section 4 and those related to Health as outlined above in Section 6, here are additional policies and procedures that protect safety and security, and procedures for emergencies.

### **Adult-to-Child Ratios**

State licensure ratios of children to adults will be adhered to at all times to ensure child safety. AML requires Primary classrooms of 26-35 children with one guide and 2 classroom assistants. In Nido we strive for a 1:4 ratio. In YCC we maintain a ratio of 1:5 at all times. In Primary, we maintain a ratio of 1:10 at all times. In Elementary, we have one guide and one assistant per classroom.

### **Security Doors**

*PARENTS MAY USE ONLY THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO ACCESS THE BUILDING.* All other doors will remain locked from the outside at all times.

### **Student presence and absence**

Upon arrival and departure, all Nido, YCC and Primary students must be signed in and out by a parent or guardian on the iPads available by using their ATS system pin. Teachers are responsible for knowing where children are at all times. Regular head counts are used

throughout the day, including before and after school transitions, inside and outside of the classroom. Student and staff attendance is monitored on the attendance board in the main office.

**For state licensing requirements and for the safety of all children please be sure to sign your child(ren) in or out when you drop off and pick up your child.**

### **Locating a Lost Child**

In the extremely unlikely event that a child were ever not in the place that they were expected to be. Teachers would first check in and around all the areas within their classroom and surrounding area. If the child was not found, the Head of School would be notified immediately and implement our search plan. Parents would be informed of the circumstances and police would be notified if after a short period of time, the child is not found. Teachers post outside their classroom a daily schedule of children's activities and whereabouts from arrival to dismissal. This schedule is also available in the office.

### **Visitors**

Visitors are welcome, and must sign-in and out at the front desk. When visiting, all guests to the school will be required to provide a state issued photo ID (i.e., driver's license), wear a visitor badge and be under the direct supervision of staff and faculty.

### **Emergencies**

Emergency safety procedures are developed by the administration and are reviewed annually. The procedures strive to incorporate the Standard Response Protocol, best practices, and the uniqueness of our facilities. The procedures are practiced routinely throughout the school year by students and staff via safety drills. Annually, these safety drills include monthly fire drills in addition to lockout, lockdown, and shelter-in-place drills that are practiced at least once per year in collaboration with Jeffco Safety and Security.

These safety drills are essential in our efforts to continuously improve our planning and preparation for true emergencies. Most drills are unannounced, but all students and staff receive instruction prior to the first of each type of drill every year. In addition to the safety drills which we practice on an annual basis, tri-annually we practice an evacuation drill during which the entire campus is evacuated off campus to our Off-Site Evacuation Location.

In the event of a situation that required all school buildings to evacuate the area, then our plan is to utilize school district transportation services to transport us to an off-site location that would be determined at that time.

Reunification - In a true evacuation emergency, parents and guardians will be notified once students are escorted to safety. Notifications would be sent to the parent/guardian cell numbers listed in Jeffco Connect. Students will remain in the care of school and/or district officials and/or police until an authorized adult retrieves the child at the reunification site.

**If a serious injury or emergency arises at school**, we will contact you immediately upon securing the safety of children and staff and the following procedures will occur: If your child is injured at school, your lead guide will provide you with an injury report. If the injury is of a serious nature, families will be contacted via phone. In the case that 911 must be called, GWMS will first call 911 then contact families.

### **Emergency Contact Information**

One way that parents support optimal management of an emergency at school is to ensure that the school has up-to-date emergency contact information. Please keep your Jeffco Connect account up to date. Also make sure that you have selected the appropriate types of communication. We recommend that you select all, but it is up to you.

## **SECTION 10: RESTORATIVE PARTNERSHIP PROCESS**

GWMS' goal is to help each student attain the independence and self-confidence needed to become self-disciplined. In so doing, the school will provide a community with structure and order that aids them in the development of self-discipline. Behavior is based on cooperation, logical and natural consequences, fairness, consistency, and the belief that all people have the ability to look at themselves honestly, and to change their behavior and grow. GWMS' common goal is the creation of a supportive educational environment where an enthusiasm for learning is fostered. There are certain rights, responsibilities, and consequences that contribute to that environment.

### **Philosophy and Understanding**

At Great Work Montessori, we are committed to educating the whole child. That commitment means that we work to ensure that **each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults**. It also means that we work to ensure that **each student is engaged in his or her learning and connected to the community**. To support these goals, we employ the practices of Positive Discipline, Restorative Justice, and mindfulness in our response to misbehavior.

These approaches go beyond intervention in misbehavior. All human interaction relies heavily on interpreting behavior to identify the needs of others in relation to our own, and it can be used as a signal for the root needs of others in our community. In other words, we observe behavior as a way of communicating core needs that are currently unmet.

We encourage you to learn more about Positive Discipline by visiting <https://www.positivediscipline.org/>. You can also learn more about restorative practices at <http://restorativesolutions.us/>.

Our restorative response will always meet 5 criteria:

1. It should help children feel a sense of connection to the community. (Belonging & Significance)
2. It is mutually respectful and encouraging. (Kind & Firm)
3. It is effective long-term and considers the child's attitude about themselves.
4. It teaches important social and practical life skills, contributing to respect for home, school, and community.
5. It invites children to discover how capable they are and encourages constructive autonomy.

Based in the philosophies of Restorative Practices, Positive Discipline, and mindfulness; our response to misbehavior is rooted in one fundamental question: **Are we helping to give the child a lovelier version of what they can be?** This question focuses on allowing everyone affected to seize the opportunity to define their responsibility and respond out of respect for themselves, one another, their community, and the situation.

Traditional practices of punitive discipline ask questions such as:

*What rule was broken? Who broke the rule? How should we punish them?*

A restorative framework prefers the questions:

*What harm has been done? Who is responsible for that harm, and how can it be repaired?*

When a child struggles with behavior, we first act to ensure physical safety of everyone involved and then assess the behavior for its root cause, or the unmet need it communicates. Based on this assessment, our responses may include one or more of the following restorative solutions:

- Behavior Agreements
- Restorative Conversations
- Positive Time-Off
- Self-Guided Regulation Tools
- Class Meeting Agenda
- Behavior Plans
- Changes of Environment
- Positive Redirection
- Seeking Solutions (4 Rs)
- Mindfulness Practice

Following the use of these tools for restoration, we consider the child's re-entry of paramount importance to their sense of security and belonging and to continued harmony in the community. Depending on the child and the scenario, this re-entry process may include a casual conversation to welcome the child back into the environment or a class meeting to involve all members of the community. Central to our use of restorative solutions is the documentation of the tools used, their effectiveness and long-term viability.

So, what do we mean by *harm*? Traditionally, we may think of harm in strictly physical terms—pain and discomfort. But harm can also take less tangible forms—emotional distress from purposelessness, insignificance, helplessness, disrespect, exclusion, and judgment. These

types of harm—especially during the child’s sensitive period for forming identity—are of equal importance to our restorative community, and so we seek to restore all forms of harm. It is also important to note that in schools, harm can affect one other person, an entire classroom, an entire school, or a larger community. Recognition of this potential serves to inform our response and ensure that it is comprehensive in its approach to repair.

\*See JeffCo Family Handbook(Code of Conduct) for district discipline policies.

## **SECTION 11: FOOD AT SCHOOL**

### **School Lunch Program**

We ask that each child bring a healthy, balanced lunch each day.

GWMS offers a Food Pantry Program for families who need support with providing healthy lunches for their students. Food will be distributed in the Great Room each week. Families do not need to apply to participate in this program.

Children will be supported in class to learn appropriate and healthy choices to pack for lunch. We do not have refrigerator space or microwaves, so please send lunch containers with ice packs and hot food in thermoses.

Please note that the State guidelines require that we ensure children get a balanced meal, including a fruit, a vegetable, and a protein source. Please keep this in mind when preparing your child’s lunch. The Montessori methodology of learning emphasizes practical life skills that children obtain as they progress through various developmental stages. One of these skills is proper nutrition; including the planning, preparation, and clean-up of a meal. We feel that each family should decide what the child is eating, to reflect their own beliefs, dietary choices, and preferences. Similarly important, each family can also monitor how well the child is eating based on what comes back in the lunch container.

#### **Please DO NOT send:**

- Carbonated Beverages (even if all natural)
- Juice beverages
- Sweetened Milk based beverages
- Squeezable yogurt products (yogurt in a container with a spoon is fine)
- Candy or dessert

If children come to school with these items, we will set them in a safe place and return them at the end of the day. We strongly encourage bringing foods that do not contain excessive sugar, salt, or chemical additives.

On occasion, a student does not have a lunch from home with them at school. When this happens, GWMS will make an effort to reach parents and provide them with the opportunity to supply a lunch for any child who does not have a lunch for that day. If GWMS is unable to reach the child's parent or at the parent's request, the child will be provided a Prepared Lunch.

For the safety of all, under no circumstances will children be permitted to share another child's lunch food or "trade" with another child. We encourage each family to involve their child as they plan and prepare the daily lunch menu. *Please label* your child's lunch box and container from home.

### **Classroom Snack**

In the Primary, YCC, and Nido classrooms, snack is provided daily. Snack is meant to be a nutritious refreshment, not a substitute for a balanced breakfast. Attempts to avoid allergens will be made, or parents will be given the opportunity to provide an alternative snack for their children. The guides will share snack menus for their classrooms. In Elementary, children will need to bring their own morning and afternoon snack, as needed.

Great Work Montessori School requires that any food intended to be shared with classmates and staff, be commercially prepared. This policy follows state guidelines and is expressly concerned with homemade foods. It is not meant to limit the preparation of foods or treats related directly to the school curriculum.

### **Birthday Snacks**

We are eager to share in the celebration of your child's birthday. On their birthday, students will have the opportunity to prepare a special snack to share with the entire class. These snacks will be shared out at different times, so please see your child's orientation information to learn more.

### **Food—Other**

Students are not to bring any items for sale such as cookies, candy bars, popcorn balls, etc. for fundraising projects into school without permission from the head of school. School fundraising projects must be pre-approved by the Head of School and are limited throughout the school year.

### **Gum**

We at GWMS are proud of our beautiful classrooms. We want to respect and preserve this beautiful asset. We therefore respectfully request that there be no gum chewing in the school. If there is a medical reason for a child to have gum in school, this must be pre-approved and documented in a 504 or other such plan.

### **Food Allergy Guidelines**

Potentially life-threatening food allergies of one kind or another exist in most classrooms at the school. The school cannot guarantee that a student will not have an allergic reaction while at school and the school makes no representation to provide a nut-free or allergen-free

environment. Individual notices will be sent out to each classroom that has a severe allergy. If your child is in a classroom with a student who has a life-threatening food allergy, please follow the guidelines for community/birthday snacks. Group snack is offered in the Primary classrooms. No nuts or products containing nuts are served for group snack if there is a known nut allergic student in the classroom. All lunches and snacks are consumed in the classroom and the same tables that are used for work are used for lunch. The option of a nut-free table at lunch is offered to students with nut allergies. The school does not restrict the content of student lunches and can make no representation that a nut-free environment is provided. Staff clean the tables before and after lunch with a food surface sanitizer. Staff that supervise lunch in the classroom receive training from the nurse consultant on emergency medications for allergies.

GWMS requests that any food items that are brought into the school to be shared for special events during school hours such as birthdays and holidays, be commercially prepared, labeled as to the allergen content, and free of the known allergens in the classroom community. However, the school cannot guarantee compliance with this request. We recommend that students with potentially life-threatening allergies keep extra, safe snacks at school that can be consumed. Arrangements for keeping safe snacks at school can be made directly with the Clinic Aide or classroom guide.

### **Food Sensitivities**

We recognize that we live in an age of increased awareness regarding individual food sensitivities. If parents have concerns regarding group snack or special occasions, parents have the option to send a supply of snacks for their child to consume in these instances. Please speak with the Guide of the classroom to make these arrangements. If there is a significant health concern, i.e. celiac disease or a life-threatening allergy, please notify the Clinic Aide through Jeffco Connect.

## **SECTION 12: PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **Watch Me Work Events**

These events occur throughout the year and are meant to give the children an opportunity to share their work with their families. This also gives the families a chance to relate to the many activities in which the children are engaged in a Montessori environment. Please use this time to focus on your child.

This time is not intended for one on one conferencing with guides and/or socializing with other families. Please do not bring mobile infants, toddlers or siblings; it will hinder your ability to focus on the child you are there to see, and the classroom environment may not be prepared for babies or toddlers. Please respect the peaceful work environment of our classrooms by using quiet voices and graceful movements.

### **Classroom Observations**

Parents and other adults may sign up for 20 minute classroom observations. These observations offer the observer the opportunity to view the children at work during their work cycle. You may consult with your child's guide to find a time to visit when it will be most meaningful for you and your child. The school may limit the number of visits and time of visits in order to insure that the educational program for each child is not disrupted. Prior to entering the classroom, observers will be given Observation Guidelines to read. These observations must be scheduled ahead of time by calling the office. Classroom Observations will begin on the second Tuesday of October and run through the end of April.

### **Conferences**

Conferences occur twice a year in various formats depending on your child's program. These conferences afford an opportunity for parents and students at the all levels to meet with their child(ren)'s classroom guides to discuss all aspects of their student's whole child development. Sign-ups are done online and announcements of sign-up times are announced ahead of time in the newsletter and through email.

### **Community Council**

Our Community Council is made up of community members that help to support our school by doing outreach, coordinating school events and family education evenings, and helping families to get involved in bettering our school and our community as a whole. For more information, please contact our Director of Community Integration. Training will be provided for family members who become council members or who are volunteering.

### **GWMS School Board Involvement**

Our school has a School Board that meets quarterly and is in charge of the fiduciary side of the school. This board is made up of staff, community members, and parents and the community votes on the members. Families are welcome to come to the meetings and listen to where the school stands financially. Training will be provided for all board members regarding their roles before they begin. For more information, please see our website or ask our Head of School.

### **Volunteering**

The school could not operate smoothly without community volunteers. We strongly encourage parent volunteerism and offer many opportunities according to your individual time, talent and interest areas. Please indicate your areas of interest the time of registration or by reaching out to our Director of Community Integration at any time.

### **Fundraising**

Great Work Montessori School was developed as a charter school. A charter school is a public school operated by a group of parents, educators and/or community leaders as a semi-autonomous school of choice. The charter school is governed by a contract between the charter school and the authorizer, in our case the Jefferson County School District.



Like all public schools, charter schools receive per pupil funding from the state of Colorado. However, charter schools face a distinct challenge - they typically must self-fund certain aspects of their operations, including facilities' costs, which alone can run up to 25% of the cost of operating the school. As a Montessori school we face the additional challenge of outfitting authentic Montessori classrooms, which requires an investment in specially designed Montessori curriculum materials that can run in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Charter schools, Great Work Montessori School included, must often seek to raise funds from private foundations and individual donors and families to supplement their revenue. Great Work Montessori School actively pursues grant opportunities and conducts ongoing fundraising campaigns with a focus on raising supplemental funds to support its operation. The school secures grant funds and donations to aid in funding certain materials for its classrooms and library, supporting physical education and enrichment programs, as well as providing well qualified Guides in all of its classrooms.

Parent help in this area is essential. We seek parent donations annually to help us afford high quality, full-time Guides in all of our classrooms. Guides, who provide teaching assistance, are essential in supporting classroom management and helping meet the unique needs of each student. Staffing each classroom with full time Guides helps us realize our highest goal – that each child in our community reaches their full potential.

Your generous support allows us to offer the best possible educational experience to our students and ensure the stability of our financial operation. GWMS is a 501 (c) (3) corporation and a Colorado not-for-profit corporation. Therefore, your gift is tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

### **Quality Improvement Plan**

GWMS is constantly working to ensure that we provide high quality education and care for all ages we serve. There is always something for us to improve upon each year. We welcome feedback from families on what we can do better and we use this feedback from family surveys to inform our Quality Improvement Plan. The Quality Improvement Plan will be available to families, staff, stakeholders and community members on our website and will be sent to families each spring for the following School Year in one of our monthly newsletters.

## **SECTION 13: GENERAL PROCEDURES**

### **Going Out**

These are child-initiated and child-led small elementary group trips away from the school building. Going-out experiences help the children in developing life skills that facilitate transition into the world. The children are involved in organizing the event from start to completion. They use the resources of the community in preparation for the going-out experience. They initiate

the research, make the needed phone calls, set appointments if necessary, obtain and arrange drivers, and complete the appropriate paperwork (forms, permission slips, etc.). A signed Going Out permission form will be sent home prior to the date of the event.

Upon return from the trip, they may present their experience and findings to the class, or incorporate learning into their work. These trips will be scheduled during the school day and not during child care hours.

### **Transportation**

GWMS does not provide transportation for students at this time. Transportation for Going Out will be provided by volunteer parents who sign a permission form and provide their ID and insurance information beforehand.

### **Gifts at School**

Children may not receive flowers, balloons, or other outside gifts at school. Please send these wonderful surprises to the student's home, so that other children do not feel left out. Also, please send invitations for parties and other events directly to home addresses if not everyone in the class is invited.

### **Student Fees**

An annual fee is charged to families of students in all classrooms. Fees fund supplemental activities or materials that are outside those required to be delivered by the curriculum. These items may include supplemental classroom materials, technology, and student driven events. GWMS offers a payment plan for families who request it, and fee waiver for families who qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch.

### **Telephone Use**

Students are allowed to use the school telephone with the expressed permission of their Guide or the main office. Cellular telephones are not to be used by students during school hours unless medically necessary as part of a student's Individual Health Plan.

Any cellular telephone possessed by a student must be kept with the student's personal possessions and turned off during the school day. Any student not adhering to this policy may have a cellular phone confiscated by a faculty or staff member to be returned to the parent or guardian. The school or its employees cannot be responsible for any personally owned telephone or its operation.

### **TV/Video Viewing**

GWMS does not use TV or videos unless showing something for educational purposes that correlate with the current subject of study.

### **Jeffco Connect for Payments**

Parents have the option of paying for items such as tuition, fees, and trip fees via debit or credit card on Jeffco Connect.

**Lost and Found**

GWMS operates a Lost and Found out of the Clinic Aid Office. Please remember to label all your child’s personal items (jackets, sweaters, boots, hats, mittens, water bottles etc.) with his/her name so they can be returned if lost or forgotten on the playground. Labeled items are much more likely to find their way to your child. All unlabeled personal items will be stored in the office for up to one month. On the last school day of each month any unclaimed items will be donated. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Recess and Weather**

GWMS Weather Guidelines

Temperature	Time	Attire
Below 18 Degrees (or if wind chill factor is below 18 degrees)	Children do not go outside	Children do not go outside
18-31 Degrees (or if wind chill factor is 18-31 degrees)	20 Minutes	Hats, mittens and zipped coats
32-39 Degrees (or wind chill factor is 32-39 degrees)	Sunny & dry - 25-30 minutes Wet & cloudy - 20 minutes	Hats, mittens and zipped coats
40-90 Degrees	Regular outside/playground schedule subject to non-restrictive weather	Any attire comfortable for the weather
90-95 Degrees	Up to 15 minutes	Hats and sunscreen
95 Degrees and above	Children do not go outside	Children do not go outside

Children are not permitted to be outdoors in the following conditions:

- o Temperatures above 95 degrees
- o Temperatures below 18 degrees
- o When tornado warnings are present/tornado sirens are signaling
- o When severe thunderstorm warnings are issued for Jefferson county
- o When lightning is observed or thunder is heard
- o When severe air quality warnings are issued for the metro area
- o When winds are blowing faster than 15 mph gusts

In the event that outside time is not permitted for any of the above reasons, we will ensure that the children's needs for gross motor play are met with indoor recess activities.

### **Acknowledgement of Risk**

Please understand that your child is enrolled at a school that utilizes the traditional Montessori Method and materials. These materials include items made from wood, metal, glass, clay and ceramics. The Primary community also includes items that are small enough to be swallowed or inhaled. These materials are present in your child's environment and your child may interact with these materials throughout the course of the day after having been given a carefully presented lesson on how to use them. Furthermore, please understand that each classroom has a Montessori certified lead teacher that is trained on the proper use of these materials. Any concerns around this policy should be directed to the director prior to enrolling your child in the school.

### **Body Safety Rules**

All GWMS Staff have been trained in body safety and we implement the following body-safety rules:

1. You are in charge of your body.
2. No one is allowed to touch your private parts.
3. You are not allowed to touch someone else's private body parts.
4. We keep our clothes and shoes on at school at all times.
5. You get to choose who you hug, and who hugs you. Other people get to choose the same. Consent goes both ways.

## **APPENDIX A: CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PREVENTION**

As a licensed facility in Jefferson County, Great Work Montessori School makes every effort to provide a safe and healthy environment for all of its students. Our staff members have been trained with the Parenting Safe Children course provided by Feather Berkower and we also provide a training for families to attend each year.

As part of the licensing provisions, Colorado Law requires that child care providers and teachers report all known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. If you believe that your child has been abused, you should seek immediate assistance from the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-264-5437 or visit the website: <http://co4kids.org/> to learn more about how to prevent child abuse and neglect.

For additional information regarding licensing, or if you have concerns about a child care facility, or you would like to review a licensed facilities file please consult the Colorado Department of Human Services, Department of Child Care at 1575 Sherman Street, First Floor, Denver, Colorado 80203-1714 or call 303-866-5958.

Our license information is the following:

1705117 - Nido, YCC and Primary families

1705372 - Elementary Before & Aftercare and Elementary Summer Camp

## **APPENDIX B: GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

Where an action or decision is considered to be unfair or inappropriate, there is the right to raise a concern and have it considered seriously – such a concern is known as a grievance.

### **Principles of the Grievance Process**

The process of raising and resolving a grievance, through both informal and formal procedures, should embody the following guidelines:

1. There should always be mutual respect between all parties – respect by parents for teachers/staff as professionals, their experience and their expertise; respect by teachers/staff for parent’s special relationship with their child.
2. The process allows all parties to exercise responsibility with respect to the actual needs of the child with consideration to be given to the child’s best interests and allowing for the child’s developmental stages.
3. The principles of Montessori education are to be upheld and the process should enhance the understanding of this education as it relates to the child’s needs.

4. All input/contributions are to be listened to respectfully and attentively by others in the process i.e., participants in the process require a sense of 'having been heard'.
5. Matters raised should be dealt with as soon as practicable.
6. The process should be kept simple but effective.

The School welcomes the airing of a grievance in a responsible and constructive manner.

The procedure for filing concerns is as follows:

1. The parties will make every attempt to communicate the concern directly to the teacher, the Head of School, or the parent(s) for resolution. An appointment should be set up where the concern can be expressed in private. Care should be taken to express concerns calmly and respectfully so that an environment conducive to resolution can exist. Concerns should be brought forward in a timely manner.
2. If the parties are unable to come to a resolution, they may file their concern, in writing, with the Head of School.
3. In cases where the concern has been addressed with the Head of School, and any party remains dissatisfied with the decisions made to resolve the conflict at this level, that party may take their concerns to the Board of Directors.
4. The Board may hear arguments from the parties, review prior decisions and evidence, and make such inquiry as it deems necessary. The Board will make a timely and final decision on the matter.