



*One school.*

*One student.*

*One future.*

*We make a difference.*



# Family Handbook

**2017-2018**



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### **Our Vision**

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PRM is a model for the nation as a premier public urban neighborhood school noted for its diverse and peaceful environment, community involvement, and outstanding student outcomes.

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### **Our Mission**

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To offer every neighborhood child a quality Montessori education, collaborating with community partners in a peaceful and environmentally conscious setting that nurtures a love of learning.

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### **Our Motto**

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One school.

One student.

One future.

We make a difference.

PRM

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### **Our Character Program**

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R.O.C.K.S!

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Respect, Ownership, Compassion, Kindness and Safety, Safety, Safety!

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### **This Year's Theme**

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Go Global!

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# GO GLOBAL!

**G**OAL SETTING WITH GRIT! (SEPTEMBER)

**O**RGANIZE, ORGANIZE, ORGANIZE! (OCTOBER)

**G**ROWING IN EVERY WAY! (NOVEMBER)

**L**EARNING NEW WAYS! (DECEMBER)

**O**PPORTUNITIES TO OVERCOME (JANUARY)

**B**RING TOGETHER OUR COMMUNITIES! (FEBRUARY)

**A**PPLY WHAT YOU KNOW! (MARCH)

**L**EAD OTHERS (APRIL)

*\*NOTE IN AUGUST WE WILL DO A KICK-OFF AND IN MAY WE WILL DO A FINAL CELEBRATION*

## **I. Students**

Students are the center of our mission; they are the reason parents and educators collaborate to give the best Montessori education available. Students are powerful individuals who largely control their educational process by the attitudes they bring and decisions they make. **It is important that parents/families prepare their children for success by instilling a positive attitude toward learning.** When students are excited about learning and are successful in their academic pursuits, the school is a joyful place.

We want to facilitate this joy and collaborate with each of you to provide an excellent education using the Montessori Method.

### **A. Student Expectations**

- Exercise your “student power” by working hard to maintain a positive attitude, make proactive decisions, and be a responsible learner.
- Follow the school expectations.
- Follow the classroom expectations.
- Honor your responsibilities.
- Montessori students value friendliness, openness, and helpfulness to each other. These values contribute to a harmonious classroom community where students treat their materials and classmates with respect.
- Montessori students strive for independence. Making good use of class time, by completing assignments and participating in group work, is the first step in this responsibility.
- Montessori students learn responsibility. Completing homework assignments and arriving at school on time are ways in which students demonstrate their drive toward responsibility.

**Always be on your best behavior. Remember, you are representing yourself, your family, and Pleasant Ridge Montessori!**

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be A Problem Solver

### **B. Uniform Policy (Effective on the First Day of School)**

#### **Shirts/Sweaters/ Sweatshirts**

- White, navy, light blue or yellow
- Must have sleeves and a collar; Turtlenecks are acceptable.
- Must be free of labels and graphics
- Shirts must be tucked inside pants/skirts/shorts/etc.
- PRM Spirit Wear may be worn daily.

#### **Jackets**

- Jackets may not be worn in the building

#### **Pants/Jumpers/Skorts/Skirts/Shorts**

- Solid khaki, black or navy (no oversized)
- Jumpers/Skorts/Skirts no shorter than 3 inches above the knee
- Jumpers/Skorts/Skirts must be worn with bloomers, bicycle shorts or other similar undergarment
- Shorts no shorter than 3 inches above the knee
- NO DENIM MATERIAL
- Must be worn at NATURAL waist line

**Shoes**

- No open backs or open toes
- No heels
- No flip flops or Crocs

**Belts**

- Navy
- Black
- Brown

**Hats/Bandanas/Do-rags**

- May NOT be worn

**Consequences**

All faculty/staff will monitor for compliance with the uniform code.

Students wearing apparel that does not comply with the policy will be subject to the following procedures:

- *First Offense* - Student will go to the office to select a uniform from the principal's uniform closet. The uniform must be returned at the end of the day and the student will be given back their clothing. A call will be placed to the parent or guardian and a note will go home reminding the student of the uniform policy.
- *Second Offense* - Student will go to the office to select a uniform from the principal's uniform closet. The student will return the uniform at the end of the day and the student will be given back their clothing. A call will be placed to the parent or guardian and a phone conference will be required.
- *Third Offense* - Student will go to the office to select a uniform from the principal's uniform closet. The student will return the uniform at the end of the day and the student will be given back their clothing. A call will be placed to the parent or guardian, a parent conference will be required, and a consequence will be given at the discretion of the principal.

**C. Homework**

Homework is part of the Montessori curriculum beginning with Kindergarten students.

- Students practice concepts learned at school.
- Parents can monitor their child's academic growth and development.
- Parents and children share the joy of learning.
- Teachers use homework as a diagnostic tool.
- Teachers assess student performance on homework assignments and use information gathered to revise and refine instruction.

Homework that is tied to the curriculum studied and allows practice of material taught in class will be given either daily or weekly, depending on the classroom community's procedures. The total amount of homework given will increase with each level, and teams of teachers will coordinate to ensure that assignments are balanced in time.

Homework will start by Monday, August 28th. Families, please make sure that your child completes homework assignments every day. In the event that no work has been assigned for the evening, please spend at least 30 minutes reading with your child.

#### **D. Care of Textbooks, Library Books and Technology**

Scholars and parents are responsible for all textbooks and library books issued during the school year. If books are lost the full replacement cost will be charged. A fine will be charged for a damaged book. Scholars are also responsible for the use of technology throughout the school day. If technology is purposefully damaged, the student will be fined the cost of fixing the piece of technology. Sixth grade scholars are assigned tablets to use throughout the school day. They are responsible for carrying them from class-to-class, and they should be returned without damage at the end of each school day.

#### **E. Backpacks/Book-bags**

Students need backpacks/book-bags to carry books and school supplies between home and the school. Being organized is an important part of being prepared for learning.

Helpful tips:

- Put school supplies, lunch money, and completed homework in your child's backpack every evening. Then place the bag by the door so you're ready to go in the morning.
- Put your child's name on the backpack in a visible place.
- Please check your child's backpack every evening. Remember, written communication is the primary method of contact between the school and parents. Check daily for the following:
  - Graded papers
  - Homework assignments
  - Field experience notifications
  - Calendar changes
  - Updates
  - Teacher Newsletters (the first Wednesday every other month)
  - Principal Newsletter (first Wednesday of each month)

#### **F. School Supplies**

Every teacher sends home a school supply list. Part of being prepared for class every day involves having all supplies that the teachers have requested. Please make sure your child has everything he or she needs to be successful for school. Please check with the teacher if you are unsure of your child's school supply needs.

#### **G. Personal Items**

Students should not bring personal items such as the following:

- Toys
- Games
- Audio/visual equipment
- Video games
- Radios
- CD players
- iPods and other MP3 Players
- Expensive jewelry
- Iwatches and other smart watches that may act as communication devices

These items are a distraction to the learning environment. If a staff member sees a student with such items at PRM, the item(s) will be taken and held in the office until retrieved by the parent/guardian.

The PRM staff will not be held responsible for items lost or stolen, **and there will be no investigation of prohibited personal items reported lost or stolen.**

## **H. Cell Phone Policy**

Pleasant Ridge Montessori School and staff are not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones. **Consequently, we will not investigate lost or stolen cell phones.**

The use of cell phones during school hours is prohibited.

- Cell phones may not be visible during school hours.
- Students must keep cell phones turned off during the entire school day, including lunchtime and during mandatory after-school intervention.
- **Cell phones that are left on will be confiscated, and can be picked up after school by a parent or guardian in the main office.**

## **I. Medication**

The school staff cannot administer medicine or pain relievers of any type without the expressed written consent of both the parent and the physician. Students who need to take prescribed medication must have a “Dispensing Medication Form” that has been signed by both the physician and parent on file in the office before the medication can be brought to school. Medication to be administered at school must remain in the office.

## **J. Counseling Services**

Counseling services are provided for our students with our partner Children’s Home, and with the assistance of our School Resource Coordinator and School Psychologist. Parent/Guardian permission is required for students to work with the counselor. Talk with your teacher if you have concerns and would like to refer your child to counseling services.

## **K. Birthday Celebrations**

Parents who wish to send treats to share with their child’s classmates should follow the **homeroom teacher’s policy** concerning the distribution of treats.

Please be mindful of our students’ feelings when delivering invitations to birthday parties. Invitations should not be delivered at school unless **every child in the class** is invited to the party.

## **II. Transportation/Attendance**

### **A. Yellow Bus Transportation Eligibility**

A CPS street guide and quadrant information is available on-line at the CPS website (<http://www.cps-k12.org/slg/school-lookup.asp>). All PRM students in grades K–6 who reside more than 1 mile from the school are eligible for yellow bus transportation. Students not using scheduled yellow bus transportation will be removed from the service roster after two weeks of non-use. If you have any questions about transportation, please call the Transportation Office at (513) 363-0330. Preschool students are not eligible for yellow bus transportation.

### **B. Bus Safety**

A safe, efficient, and equitable transportation service requires teamwork from pupils, parents, school bus contractors, drivers, teachers, and administrators. In order to provide for safe and efficient transportation service, the following plan has been established.

**Pupil behavior that distracts the driver jeopardizes the safety and welfare of all passengers. Therefore, misbehavior on the part of pupils shall be sufficient reason for refusing transportation services to those individuals.**

**Parents should see that their children arrive at the bus stop well before the scheduled pick-up time to avoid missing the bus. Parents are reminded that responsibility for the supervision of their children between the home and the bus stop and while waiting for the bus arrival rests with the parent or legal guardian (BP 3541.2).**

One of the primary obligations of the school bus driver is to maintain order. A disorderly bus is an unsafe bus. Drivers will issue verbal warnings when appropriate. Continued misconduct on the bus will result in the bus driver filing a conduct report for administration action. A copy of the conduct report will be sent home with the student. **Remember, while pupils are being transported the school bus driver is responsible for supervision.**

### **C. Bus Suspension Reminder Chart**

- Referral #1 - Warning and written conduct report sent to parent
- Referral #2 - Warning and written conduct report sent to parent and conference with student
- Referral #3 - Removal from the bus for 3 days
- Referral #4 - Removal from the bus for 5 days
- Referral #5 - Removal from the bus for 10 days
- Referral #6 - Removal from the bus for the remainder of the school year

A student may be suspended from the bus immediately by the administration for any violation that jeopardizes the safety of anyone on the bus. Violation of the district code of conduct while riding is also cause for suspension/expulsion from school. The school bus driver cannot suspend a student from the bus.

**SUSPENSION FROM THE BUS IS NOT NECESSARILY SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL. PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSPORTING THEIR CHILDREN TO AND FROM SCHOOL WHILE UNDER BUS SUSPENSION.**

If incidents involve the police, either to remove a student from a bus or to restore order, the following procedure will be applied: Students will be **suspended immediately** from future bus service pending a conference to be held at the school that includes all students involved in the bus incident, their parents, the school administrator, and a representative from the bus vendor.

### **D. Transportation Changes**

Please notify the office in advance or advise the teacher if there will be a change in your child's transportation. If no notification is received, your child will follow his/her regular method of getting home each day.

**According to legal guidelines we cannot and will not accept verbal notification of changes from a child. Please put such notices in writing to avoid confusion.** The note should indicate the exact change of plans.

*Note: Temporary yellow bus route changes are NOT available. Yellow bus service route deviations are made on a permanent basis only.*

### **A. Arrival and Dismissal/Drop-off and Pick-up Procedure**

#### **Arrival Procedures**

Morning arrival for all students begins at 7:30am. **Students will not be admitted or supervised before 7:30am.** All students are expected to be in the school building by 7:45am. If a student arrives after 7:50am, he/she must be escorted to the office for a tardy slip.

### **Arrival by bus:**

If your child rides the bus to school in the morning, he/she will be dropped off in the front of the building at the curb. One bus will unload at a time. All children will exit the bus in an orderly fashion and enter the school building through the main doors. The students will be supervised by an adult staff member while outside. Upon entering the building, an adult staff member will direct the children.

- **Kindergarten** children will be directed to their classrooms (located on the ground floor).
- **Students ages 6–9 and 9-12** will be directed to the cafeteria for breakfast.

### **Arrival by car:**

Our carline will enter the drive way and go around the back of the building this year. In the morning, please stop **at the back Community Learning Center Entrance door** to drop off your child. If your child is a **preschooler**, an Instructional Para Professional(IPP) will approach your car with a sign-in sheet. Pre-school children **MUST** be signed in by the adult dropping off the child. Signing your pre-school child in and out of school is a state mandate. **ALL** adults need to be aware of this and have patience while waiting to drop off children in the car line.

If you have a child in kindergarten, ages 6-9, and ages 9-12, an IPP will open your door and your child may exit your car and enter the school building independently. Upon entering, there will be an adult staff member to direct your child.

- Preschool Parents: Please help your child get his/her seatbelt off and wait for an adult staff member to open your child's car door. You will be asked to sign your child into school by placing your initials next to your child's name. IF you walk your child to school, please sign your child in with an adult. Your child will then be escorted into school and to his/her classroom.

All parents, PLEASE remain in your vehicle at all times.

If you drive your child to school but choose not to use the car line, you are welcome to park across the street in the church parking lot and walk with your child across Montgomery Road to the front door.

### **Walkers:**

Your child may enter the school building between 7:30am and 7:50am. Your child will be directed to the proper location to begin his/her day. Children will not be allowed to enter the building due to the fact that there is no staff available to supervise the children until 7:30 a.m. ***Please do not drop your children off before 7:30 a.m.***

### **Late Arrivals:**

If your child arrives at school after 7:50 a.m., the doors will be closed. You will need to park your car and walk your child to the office for a tardy slip. Breakfast is closed at 7:50 a.m.

### **Dismissal Procedures for Half Day Preschool:**

Dismissal for half day preschool will begin at 10:35am and end at 10:45am.

A car line will form around the front circle for dismissal. **Please remain in your vehicle.** A teacher or other staff member will bring your child to your car and open the car door for him/her. You will be asked to sign your initials next to your child's name. The adult picking up your child will be responsible for making sure that your child is secured in his/her car seat or booster.

It is extremely important that your child is picked up between 10:35 and 10:45. We will take any children still waiting at 10:45 to the office for dismissal. You will have to park your car and come in to sign your child out.

At the beginning of the school year, you will be asked to give us a list of people that are able to pick up your child. We will not release your child to anyone that does not appear on your list. You must send a written note if you would like someone added.

**Dismissal Procedures for Full Day Preschool:**

Preschool children must be signed out at dismissal time. You may park in the church parking lot across the street or the side parking lot if there are any spots available, and then walk to the circle to pick up your child.

**Afternoon Dismissal Procedures for K, ages 6-9 and 9-12**

**At the beginning of the year, you will receive a form from your classroom teacher asking you to identify your dismissal plans. A consistent dismissal plan must be in place for each child, and cannot change daily. IF THERE IS A CHANGE IN THESE PLANS, IT MUST BE COMMUNICATED IN WRITING TO THE CLASSROOM TEACHER. PHONE CALLS TO THE CLASSROOM WILL NOT BE ALLOWED.**

Dismissal of all children will take place between 2:10 and 2:30. If your child is not picked up by 2:30, he/she will be taken to the office for dismissal. At that time, you must park and come into the office to sign out your child for dismissal. Please make sure that you communicate any changes in dismissal procedure to your child's classroom teacher, in writing. Early dismissals must be communicated, in advance, with your classroom teacher.

**Car:**

Cars should enter the drive way and circle around to the back of the building. Please do not pass other cars and stay in the car line. Your child will be brought to the gym beginning at 2:10 p.m. Staff will come to your car and ask you who you are picking up and then will call into the gym for your child to be brought out to your car. Please stay in your vehicle.

**After School Programs that Transport Students**

If your child is being picked up by an after school program that transports students in a van or small bus, they will be directed to pick up your child in the circle. Your child will be escorted to the circle by a staff member and placed in the correct vehicle.

**Walkers:**

Staff members will bring your child outside with his/her class beginning at 2:10. Your child is expected to remain with the staff until you, or the individual you have designated to walk with your child, arrives. If your child has permission to walk home by his/herself, please note that in your beginning of the year information.

**Bus:**

Kindergarten, ages 6-9 and 9-12 will be escorted to the bus by a staff member. Your child is expected to remain in his/her bus line until direction is given to board his/her bus.

**After-School Activities:**

If your child is participating in after school club or activity here at PRM, this must be communicated in writing to the classroom teacher. At the end of the day, your child will be walked to meet the supervisor of the after school club at dismissal on the designated days.

**Changes in Dismissal Plans:** We will not call into the classroom throughout the school day with changes in dismissal procedure due to the amount of interruptions to instruction. Classroom teachers are fully engaged in instruction throughout the school day, and may not receive email or voice mail messages that are left for them. ***Consequently, any changes in dismissal/after-school plans for your child must be communicated to the classroom teacher in writing.***

**Early Dismissals:** Classroom instruction continues until the close of the school day. Early dismissals are for unavoidable emergencies only, and should rarely occur. **Communication of needed early dismissals should be communicated to the classroom teacher in writing so that the child is prepared for early dismissal. We will not call into the classrooms to interrupt instruction for unannounced early dismissals.** If you arrive before dismissal, we ask that you would wait outside for the children or in your car until the children dismiss at 2:15 p.m.

**Parking:** The church parking lot across the street allows us to use their parking lot. You may park, and walk across the street to pick up your child. This area is not to be utilized as another carline. You must pull into a parking spot and walk across the street to pick up your child; no children will be dismissed to walk across the street by themselves. Please follow these procedures so that we are able to continue to use the church parking lot. ***You may not drop off or pick up students on Montgomery Road right in front of the school.*** This is a safety hazard and violates traffic laws. ***Children will not be allowed to dismiss to a car parked on Montgomery Road for any reason.***

**Late Pick Up:** School dismisses promptly at 2:15. All children must be picked up at this time. ***There are no staff members available to supervise children after dismissal.*** No exceptions can be made to this. If you need information regarding available after school care options, please see the attached form.

## **B. Bike, Scooter, Skateboard, etc. Safety (Municipal Code)**

### Cincinnati Municipal Code

#### Sec. 506-5. Bicycles, Operation by Minors.

Minors 15 years of age or less may be permitted to ride bicycles on sidewalks where the buildings do not have the paved portion of the sidewalk; provided that, when approaching a pedestrian or other person lawfully using the sidewalk, any such minor riding on the sidewalk shall give audible warning by means of a bell or horn and shall yield the use of the sidewalk to such pedestrian or other persons dismounting if necessary to do so.

#### Sec. 505-13. Protective Equipment. Bicycles, Scooters, Skateboards, Roller Skates and In-Line Skates.

1. No person 15 years of age and under shall operate a bicycle, skateboard, or scooter or ride as a passenger on such device, or wear roller skates or in-line skates, within the city of Cincinnati on any public or non-residential property, unless such person is wearing a protective helmet on his or her head, with the chin strap fastened under the chin. Such helmet shall be fitted to the size of the operator and shall meet or exceed the standards set by ANSI (American National Standards Institute), CPSC (Consumer Product Safety Commission), or SNELL (Snell Memorial Foundation). This ordinance shall not apply to any person riding a bicycle, skateboard or scooter as the operator or passenger or wearing roller skates or in-line skates on any property which is a single family residence.
2. No person who is 15 years of age and under shall violate Section 505-13B.
3. The penalty for a violation of this ordinance shall be as follows:
  - a. First offense: written warning
  - b. Second offense: written warning and the juvenile shall view a safety video within 45 days. Failure to view the video within 45 days shall result in a minor misdemeanor citation

- c. Third and all subsequent offenses: minor misdemeanor. If aggravating circumstances are present, such as a traffic accident or a near accident or there are accompanying criminal or traffic charges against the minor, the officer shall issue a citation rather than a warning.
4. For purposes of this Section "bicycle" shall have the same meaning as defined in Section 501-1-B.

### **G. Attendance**

All children are expected to be in attendance each day unless they are ill or a family emergency arises. Parents/Guardians, please call the school or teacher before 10:00 a.m. on the day your child is out of school. Please remember that a written note explaining the absence is required when your child returns to school.

Children are required by law to attend school and arrive on time every day. Parents are required to provide, within three (3) days, a written explanation of each absence. The student will be considered unexcused unless a written note is provided within 3 days. Notes should contain the following: 1) the date written, 2) the date of the absence, 3) the reason for absence, 4) home and work/cell phone number, and 5) the parent or guardian signature. **Phone calls to notify teachers of absences are appreciated but do not replace the written note.** Please call your child's teacher directly to notify them of absences.

Students with excessive absences will be referred to the School Social Worker. The PRM School Social Worker works with students and families to make sure that students attend school regularly and on time every day. The PRM School Social Worker can connect parents/guardians with community agencies, services, and programs that can help make school attendance more regular. The PRM School Social Worker also makes court referrals when students are habitually or chronically tardy and/or absent.

In accordance with PRM School Policy and State of Ohio Law

- Habitual truancy means 5 consecutive unexcused absences, 7 unexcused absences in one month, and/or 12 unexcused absences in one school year.
- Chronic truancy means 7 consecutive unexcused absences, 10 unexcused absences in one month, and/or 15 unexcused absences in one school year.

Ohio Law (SB 181) allows for fines of up to \$500.00 and can require parents to perform up to 70 hours of community service if their child is habitually truant.

### **H. Tardiness**

Classes convene at 7:50 a.m. Late arrivals have a 5-minute grace period to arrive in class, before being marked tardy. Instruction begins at 7:55 a.m. If a child arrives after 7:55 a.m., he/she must report to the office for a tardy slip and then go directly to his or her classroom. The teacher and/or IPP (Instructional Para-Professional) will keep the tardy slip with the class records.

### **I. Early Dismissal**

In order to leave school during the school day, a student must bring a note to the teacher requesting early dismissal and must be signed out at the main office. In order to maintain a safe atmosphere, **A PHOTO ID WILL BE REQUIRED TO SIGN A STUDENT OUT FROM PRM.** If your name is not on the Emergency/Medical Information Card you will NOT be allowed to sign the child out without prior written notice from the parent.

### **J. Sudden Illness**

If a child becomes sick at school, we will notify the parent or guardian immediately. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, we will use the emergency contact information you have provided.

Thank you, parents, for keeping the emergency contact information up to date. We need to be able to contact you if your child ever becomes sick or injured while at the school. If a parent is out of town, and their child becomes ill, the care provider needs written documentation that he/she may act on the parent's behalf.

### **K. Changes in After School Plans/Telephone Calls to Students**

*Phone calls and messages to students will be limited to conveying changes in plans related to emergencies only. Otherwise, changes in after school plans, transportation arrangements, etc. need to be conveyed to the teacher with a written notice at the beginning of the school day.* PRM staff cannot legally accept verbal notification of changes in after school plans from students. **If the school has not been notified of changes in writing, the usual dismissal routine will be followed.**

### **L. Inclement Weather**

“Snow days” (no-school days) are inconvenient for many parents, so the superintendent closes or delays schools only when absolutely necessary. The superintendent and her team aim to make decisions about school closings or delays prior to 5 a.m. so this website and the news media can relay the information to parents in time for child-care decisions to be made.

Two-Hour Delay:

- Yellow buses (which transport elementary school students only) will pick up students at morning bus stops two hours later than normal.
- Students who are driven to school by parents should try to arrive at schools as near to normal times as possible. Walkers should arrive as near to normal times as possible, weather conditions permitting. School staff will be in the buildings at regularly scheduled start times to supervise students. No new material will be covered; teachers will use this opportunity for review and enrichment.
- No preschool bus service will be available.
- Afternoon dismissal will occur at each elementary school's normal time.

## **III. General Information**

### **A. Breakfast and Lunch Programs**

Breakfast and Lunch

- Is free to all students.
- Breakfast will be served from 7:30 to 8:15 a.m.
- Students ages 6-9 and 9-12 should report straight to the cafeteria for breakfast and ages 3-6 should report to their homeroom.

### **B. Instructional Fees**

The Cincinnati Public Schools assess each child an annual fee to help defray the cost of instructional materials. The fees are assessed on a sliding scale based upon family income, grade level, and the number of children per family. **CPS does not accept checks for payment.** Please send the CPS form and **cash or money orders made payable to PRM** to your child's homeroom teacher by August 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Non-payment of instructional fees forfeits your child's involvement in non-instructional field experiences.** Unpaid fees accumulate until a student graduates, at which time they must be paid in order for the diploma to be

released. If a student transfers to another Cincinnati Public School, the school will hold the student's transcript until the obligations are paid. Final report cards will be held until fees are paid.

### **C. Field Experiences**

Field study is an integral part of Montessori education. Field studies are usually scheduled by individual teachers and Teams. Checking backpacks on a daily basis will keep you advised of upcoming outings. **Please return signed permission slips and required fees promptly.** Opportunities for parents to chaperone are often extended on field experience notifications. Chaperoning a field experience is a wonderful way to share a unique learning experience with your child.

### **D. Emergency Drills**

The safety of all students is a primary concern at PRM. Consequently, PRM students participate in numerous drills throughout the school year so they will be prepared in case of an emergency.

- **Fire drills** require students to exit the building by **walking quickly and silently** in single file lines. It is important that students **remain calm and walk** in order to prevent the tripping hazards that can occur with panic and running. **Silence** is required so students can hear instructions clearly. When the drill is over students are to re-enter the building in the same manner.
- **Tornado drills** require students to travel quickly and silently to the ground level of the school building, then kneel on the floor with heads touching the wall and hands covering their heads. Students remain in this position until staff members tell them that the drill has ended.
- **Shelter-in-place** requires that all students and staff members move to the highest floor in the building until the outside emergency has been resolved. Parents, please explain to your children the need to be prepared if an emergency arises and encourage them to follow drill procedures with full cooperation.
- **Lockdown drills** seal a school, preventing anyone from entering or leaving the building during an emergency situation. During a lockdown, students usually are kept inside classrooms and out of hallways and common areas. Main doors, and if necessary, classroom doors, are locked and windows secured.
- **Searches** The Cincinnati Public School District is committed to providing a quality education for students in an environment that is conducive to learning and protects the health and safety of the entire school community. Since 1994, when the Cincinnati Board of Education approved a policy on the use of security devices including metal detectors, the district has found that searches have drastically reduced the number of incidences of weapons in our schools.

To protect your child's rights, searches may only be conducted under two conditions:

1. **Random or Systematic Searches.** These searches are conducted in a random and systematic manner, without specific suspicion, to keep students from bringing contraband or weapons to school. The method of the search is predetermined and random in nature, prohibiting race and gender bias. Once the random method is selected and the search is begun, it is not changed unless reasonable suspicion occurs. If reasonable suspicion is aroused, then the action listed below under "Reasonable Suspicion" will be taken. Some examples of random search methods include: locker searches, students caught in a hall sweep, selected classrooms, and vehicles in the parking lot.
2. **Reasonable Suspicion.** This type of search is conducted when there is reasonable evidence pointing to a specific individual (s) who may be in violation of criminal statutes or school rules. The following types of searches are examples of Reasonable Suspicion Searches: lockers, personal; limited clothing; pat down; request to empty pockets, purses, backpacks, boxes, etc.; or vehicle.

School administrators and security personnel are fully trained in the proper use of metal detection equipment. All searches are conducted within the guidelines of the law and the Board of Education's policy 5144.1, "Rights of Privacy."

If students fail to cooperate with a search, they will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action.

#### **E. "In" and "Out" Days**

Weather permitting, students take recess outside every day before or after lunch. Students will be required to wear a coat or jacket of some type when the temperature is below 50° Fahrenheit. Rainy days are designated as "in" days, as are days when the temperature is below 28° Fahrenheit. Wind chill is not a factor.

#### **F. Newsletters**

Classroom teachers send newsletters home the first Wednesday in September, November, January, March and May.

Each week, the principal will make a robo-call with reminders for the week.

A monthly newsletter from the principal will be sent home the first Wednesday of each month. A monthly stakeholders report will be emailed to each family that has an email address in Power School.

The PTO and School Resource Coordinator will publish monthly calendars, and send home monthly newsletters.

Many publications and updates are published on the Internet. To access this information, log onto the web page <http://pridge.cps-k12.org/>. Look for the link to PRMRocks.org to learn more about PRM.

#### **G. Lost and Found**

Lost articles will be placed in a basket on the first floor next to the Media Center. Please check there for your child's missing things. **Please put your child's name and room number on all of his/her belongings.** Please check monthly at the PTO meetings for lost articles. Unclaimed items will be donated following each PTO meeting.

### **IV. Parents/Guardians**

#### **A. Guidelines for Calling a Staff Member**

When calling a staff member, be sure to leave your name, your child's name, the reason for your call, and your phone number(s) with the person taking the message. A message will be placed in the staff member's mailbox so that your call can be returned after school. Please refer to the staff directory for your teacher's classroom phone number if you would like to leave a message on his/her voicemail.

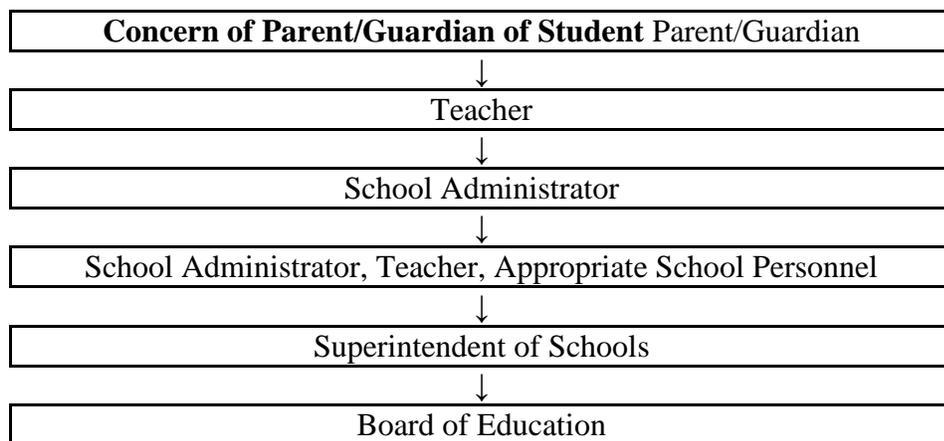
**Note:** Staff members frequently have meetings after school and may not receive messages until the following day but your call will be returned.

#### **B. Chain of Communication**

Class related issues, such as grades or assignments, should always begin with the classroom teacher. If such an issue remains unresolved, the parent can contact the Principal. The Principal is the final adjudicator on all academic situations and disputes. The Principal will be involved in matters that deal with the broader academic policy of the school or if the parent /guardian requests the principal's attention to the matter.

We understand that there are many reasons that you might need to contact your child’s teacher by phone, e-mail or notes. We have established reasonable time frames for teachers to respond:

- For calls, e-mails or notes regarding the child’s physical or emotional state, you can expect the teacher to reply within one business day.
- For calls, e-mails or notes regarding the child’s work or miscellaneous concerns, you can expect the teacher to reply within two business days.



If you do not hear from your teacher, please call the main office and leave a message for the principal.

### **C. Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Communication is an essential part of the Montessori education program. We feel it is **very** important for parents to keep in close contact with their child’s teacher concerning his/her progress. Some parents like to “drop by” the school and try to “catch” the teacher for an impromptu conference; however, unscheduled conferences keep teachers from fulfilling their teaching duties and interrupt the educational process for all students. **Please** remember to **schedule** a conference or observation in **advance** so a time that is convenient for all can be established; at least 24 hour notice is required according to Board Policy. Three conference days are scheduled annually, and are printed on the PRM quarterly calendar; however, **conferences may be scheduled at any time that is agreeable to both the parent and teacher.** All PRM parents are expected to attend parent-teacher conferences.

### **D. Parent Organizations**

#### **Pleasant Ridge Montessori Foundation**

This board is comprised of parents, teachers, alumni and community members who are interested in fundraising. The foundation raises money through fundraising, grant writing, and donations. The meeting schedule is printed on the PRM Foundation website, <http://www.supportprm.org> .

#### **Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)**

An important goal of the PTO is to support the staff and students of PRM by planning and sponsoring activities throughout the year. The meeting schedule is printed on the PRM website, <http://pridge.cps-k12.org> . Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm in the Media Center. All parents and staff members are encouraged to attend.

### **E. Parent Volunteers and Volunteer Tutors**

Parent volunteers are welcomed at PRM! If you are interested in volunteering at school please call 513.363.4445 for our Tutor and Volunteer Coordinator. Your interest and involvement are always encouraged and appreciated. Volunteer Orientations will be held throughout the year.

## **V. Pleasant Ridge Montessori Community**

### **A. Our Community Learning Center**

The goal of Community Learning Centers is to support student achievement, revitalize neighborhoods, and maximize the community's return on their financial investment. The success of the schools and the success of the city are inextricably linked. One cannot be successful without the other.

A school that is a Community Learning Center aims to reconnect students and staff with their community, returning to an era when schools truly were the centers of community life. A Community Learning Center offers services and programs tailored to each community's individual needs.

If you are interested in utilizing the building for a community event or activity, please contact our School Resource Coordinator to complete a building permit and learn about any rental fees that may apply. She can be reached at 363-4429.

### **B. Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)**

Pleasant Ridge Montessori (PRM) is a team-based school. Team based schools are required to establish an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). ILTs are composed of at least 60 percent teachers. A Team Leader represents each team of teachers. The principal, two parents, and two non-teaching staff members are also included on the ILT. During the school year, the ILT makes decisions about issues that hold the potential to impact instruction; these issues can be items such as proposed changes to the school program or calendar. The ILT also approves the school budget, and makes recommendations for spending funds that are allocated from the Central Office on a per-student basis. The Local School Decision Making Committee (LSDMC) must approve budget decisions recommended by the ILT.

### **C. Local School Decision Making Committee (LSDMC)**

The LSDMC is the primary governing body for the school and is comprised of four major constituency groups: parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, including the principal, and community members, with a minimum of 12 members. Each group has equal representation and, therefore, equal voice in the decision-making process. One Partner in Education representative also has a seat on the LSDMC.

The LSDMC sets school goals, develops a plan for meeting those goals, and monitors progress toward goal attainment by conducting mid-year and end-of-year assessments. The LSDMC makes school budget decisions, submits changes in the local school's program, and participates in the selection of the principal. The LSDMC meeting schedule is printed on the PRM quarterly calendar. For your convenience, additional information is available on-line at <http://lsdmc.cps-k12.org>

### **D. PRM Calendar**

The Pleasant Ridge Montessori School Calendar is another primary method of communication between the schoolhouse and home. All school-wide events are presented. You will receive a weekly reminder with the link for the school-wide calendar and a hard copy of the calendar at the beginning of each month. You can also find the school's calendar on [prmrocks.org](http://prmrocks.org).

## **VII. Discipline (Positive School Culture)**

### **A. The Montessori Approach to Discipline**

Without a doubt, we all agree that children are our most valuable gifts and that we want the best for them. The Montessori approach to education is designed to lead the child toward self-discipline. We try to prevent behavior problems by teaching responsibility. The Montessori Method's purpose is to affect positive changes in behavior through lesson planning and teaching. Through the nurturing and sensitivity of the Montessori

Method, we hope to prepare students to ultimately function as assets to society. With this goal in mind, it is important that methods of discipline used at home and at the school work together to achieve this common goal.

Maria Montessori said, “*The undisciplined child enters into discipline by working in the company of others; not by being told he is naughty.*” Discipline is a learning experience, and less of a punitive experience, if appropriately handled. Children naturally want to follow rules if the adult clearly defines the rules and then invites the child to assume responsibility for his or her behavior. Assuming responsibility for behavior is to understand expectations for conduct and meet those expectations **OR** accept the consequences for violating rules. At PRM it is important that students **clearly** understand school rules and possible consequences for violating them.

## **B. Positive Behavior Intervention Support Plan**

Each school in Cincinnati Public Schools works to develop a plan to support the behavioral needs of the school community. The plan shall include rules for student conduct in the form of school-wide *expectations* for behavior across all school settings, *consequences* for violating the expectations, *positive recognition* for those who exceed expectations and will outline *responsibilities* of parents, teachers, administration and staff. The plan will be aligned with current district strategies, and approved annually by members of the entire staff.

### **Expectations:**

Explicitly teaching procedures and expectations promote a peaceful community; consistently implementing expectations and re-teaching expectations ensure a peaceful community. It is the responsibility of every adult in the building to positively enforce the expectations.

The expectations for each area of the building are to show *Responsibility, Respectfulness* and *Problem-Solving* in our school community.

The first full week of school, teachers and IPP’s will together to teach the expectations of the school community. The week of September 1st, the whole school community will engage in a rotation schedule to visit each of the areas of the school and explicitly teach the expectations of each common area in the building.

PRM ROCKS is PRM’s character education program that focuses on the character traits of Respect, Ownership, Compassion, Kindness, and Safe Behavior. This year in order to reinforce positive character traits characteristics, we will focus on a different character trait each month, and we will connect this to our school-wide Olympic Theme to Go for Gold!

- o August/September: Safety /Responsibility (PBIS Lessons for Expectations)
- o October: Respect
- o November/December: Ownership
- o January: Compassion
- o February: Kindness
- o March/April/May: Safety, Safety, Safety

### **Consequences**

When a child does not fulfill one of the school-wide or classroom expectations, it is the responsibility of each adult to help that moment become a teachable moment. Consistent, natural and fair consequences for each student help the children learn behaviors that create a peaceful community. Before referring students to administration, it is the responsibility of the adults in the classroom community to try and help the child learn and “regroup”.

The **3-6** Team will have a developmentally appropriate ownership chart with visuals to encourage positive behaviors, including kindness, respect, responsibility and problem solving.

To help students take ownership of their behavior, each **6-9 classroom** will have an Ownership Chart posted with the following categories:

- Purple- AMAZING LEADER
  - Kindness towards others
  - Taking initiative to benefit others or community
- Blue – Good Citizen
  - Be Respectful, Responsible, and a Problem-Solver
- Tan- Neutral Starting Point Each Day (Maybe a visual not a word, picture of a school or house)
  - Show up to school on time
  - Wearing uniform (can bounce back up to Neutral if you go change into a uniform)
- Green – Bounce Back (1 bounce back per week to get on leadership team)
  - Category One from the district’s Code of Conduct
- Yellow – Learning Moment (Reflection to be signed by the student and teacher)
  - Category One from the district’s Code of Conduct
- Pink – Teacher’s Conference (short form 3x)
  - Category One from the district’s Code of Conduct
- Red – Office Conference (Office Referral)
  - Three short forms
  - Category 2 or 3 infraction

The **6-9** team will use the chart as a visual reminder. (Behaviors are tracked through the entire school day, i.e. core classrooms, specials, transitions, lunch/recess using a clipboard; this information will be shared with when needed.) Children can move down a category when demonstrating Category One from the district’s Code of Conduct. Student names and consequences should be listed on the clipboard or on the chart using student initials.

The **9-12** Team will display the positive choice chart in each classroom as a visual reminder. The positive choice plan will consist of individual charts that recognize positive choices for each student. The students are responsible for their own monthly chart and their choices. The goal is to reinforce the positive behaviors by acknowledging the positive choices made by students. 9-12 Team uses the clipboard to track student behaviors and send the clipboard to specials, lunch, and recess.

Each team will use an age appropriate, floor wide reflection. Reflections will be provided by each team.

Possible consequences teachers can implement for students who are in pink:

- Phone Call Home
- Time Out with Reflection in a Buddy Classroom
- Parent Conference with Teacher
- Walk the perimeter at recess—do not make students sit out or stand during recess, they must be walking the perimeter; max 10 laps, parent needs to be contacted
- Writing Assignment
- Naturally Occurring Consequences – i.e. clean up mess, make apology note, etc.
- Detention
- Behavior contract
- Classroom restitution

- o Changing seat
- o Loss of privilege
- o Phone conference
- o Time out in classroom
- o Peer mediation
- o Reteaching
- o Lunch/Recess DT
- o Whole group consequences may be used at the discretion of the teacher to support learning as a community.
- o Other possibilities listed in the district Code of Conduct

After three short forms and behavioral interventions/consequences along with parent/guardian contact for Category One behavior, a referral will be completed for the 4<sup>th</sup> infraction.

Category Two Behaviors (i.e. fighting, sexual misconduct, harassment/intimidation, profanity) and Category Three Behaviors (i.e. assault to staff, students) should result in immediate long forms.

ISS (Inspiring Student Success) is a place that is still meant to turn misbehavior into “teachable moments”, without distracting the learning environment in each of the classroom communities. While in ISS, students may engage in the following activities:

- o Writing statements regarding what happened
- o Completing Behavior Reflections
- o Conflict Resolution with other students involved
- o Warned/Counseled by Administration
- o Work from teacher so that student does not fall behind: ISS monitor will notify teacher of ISS time/consequence at time of infraction so teacher can send work
- o Activities that re-teach the expected behavior (PBIS lessons)

If a student has been assigned ISS on the day of a field experience, he or she will not be eligible to attend/participate in the field experience. Related, alternative work will be assigned.

A discipline report will be sent electronically to the staff each day, regarding outcome of any referrals turned into administration.

**Positive Recognition:**

**Students**

*Caught Being Good:*

- o All staff in the entire school house will have “Caught Being Good” Coupons and will be used at teacher discretion.
- o Staff will give out coupons to any student who they see “doing a good job”.
- o Students will fill out the coupon and put it in a classroom jar.
- o Teachers will draw names and reward with incentives in line with individual classroom behavior plans.

*Classroom Positive Recognition:*

Each classroom will need to have its own classroom *recognition* plan in order for students to receive immediate, positive feedback and peer support. An email explaining the positive recognition plan in place for your

classroom should be emailed to your administrator by August 25<sup>th</sup>. Below are examples; teachers may develop their own plan.

- Star chart
- Fill the Bucket
- Classroom good deed chain or vine
- Bulletin board
- Class honor roll
- High five award
- What a Character
- Rocks Box

#### *LeaderSHIP Team:*

- Teachers maintain a clipboard that travels with the class to document behavior (and reinforce the Ownership Chart).
- If a 6-9 student maintains an entire week of positive behavior, he/she has earned a spot on the Leadership Team. If a 9-12 student maintains an entire month of positive behavior, he/she has earned a spot on the Leadership Team. (Less than 4 marks)
- 6-9: Leadership Students will get their lanyard from his/her teacher in the classroom.
- Students who remain on the team for an entire month will have a LEADERSHIP lunch at the turnover rate for their level (6-9 monthly, 9-12 monthly).

#### *Restart Assemblies*

As student leaders of PRM, the sixth grade classroom communities will propose some Fun Friday themes on select Fridays throughout the school year.

#### *Community Meetings*

For our students to better understand each other and communicate appropriately, community building meetings will be held in each classroom. Students will have modeling of appropriate behavior and expectations for community meetings from volunteers at the beginning of each year and will continue to go through meetings all year. Meetings should include thoughtful acknowledgements, greeting, and classroom discussion. Meetings are to be at least as frequent as listed below:

3-6: Daily

6-9: Twice weekly, incorporating advisory requirements from the district

9-12: Once per week, incorporating advisory requirements from the district

#### **Staff**

*You Made a Difference Award* -At the staff meeting, the principal will reward two individuals who have contributed to whole school community and made a difference at PRM.

*Go Bold Go Global Award* - At each staff meeting, the Go Global Award, will be passed to another staff member who will keep it in his/her work area for everyone to see. If the staff member is not present at the staff meeting (i.e. IPP's and Support Staff), it will still be announced and given to them the following morning.

## **School Wide Morale Building/Incentives**

*School-wide Go Global Theme:* Discussion and activities during community meetings encouraging positive virtues and characteristics.

*Spirit Wear Fridays:* It is encouraged to wear PRM Spirit Wear or PRM Colors on Friday.

### **C. PRM Parent/Student/School Agreement**

General expectations for parent, student, and staff behavior are outlined in the PRM Parent/Student/School Agreement. Parents, please read and discuss the agreement with your children. After doing so, please sign the agreement along with your child, and return the signature page to your child's homeroom teacher by September 1st. We also ask that you talk with your children about the importance of demonstrating respectful behavior and maintaining a positive attitude while at school. In a Montessori classroom, it is necessary for children to develop self-discipline in order to further their learning.

Please sign and return the Parent/Student/Teacher Agreement by September 1<sup>st</sup>.