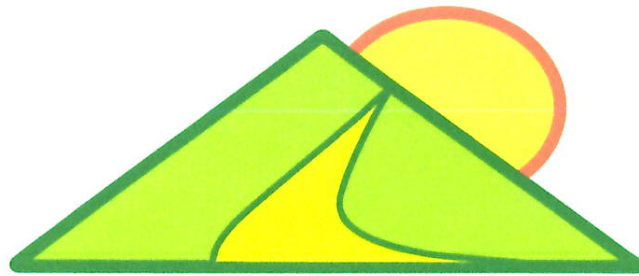


PARENT HANDBOOK
2017 - 2018



CRESTVIEW
MONTESSORI
SCHOOL

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STAFF

Crestview Staff

Ms. Cheryl Winebrenner (Head of School) received her B.A. in English from Kent State University. She received her AMI Montessori Primary Directress Diploma from the Washington Montessori Institute. Before settling in the Washington, D.C. area, she taught in Montessori environments in Texas, Colorado, and Illinois. She has taught in Montessori schools locally for nearly 30 years before opening Crestview Montessori School in 2009. Her two children are Montessori alumni.

Ms. Joelle Tressel (Directress) moved to Washington, D.C from France. An engineer by trade, she previously worked as a Project Manager in Paris. After moving to the United States, she taught French to children. In 2016, she received her AMS Montessori diploma and is now the Directress at Crestview. She and her husband have two children and live in Bethesda.

Ms. Luchelle Stubbs (Classroom Assistant) joined Crestview Montessori School in 2011 after being Ms. Winebrenner's assistant in 2007. Ms. Stubbs received her AMI Assistant certification in 2007 and has been working as a Montessori assistant since that date. Her native country is South Africa and she lives in Gaithersburg with her husband and two children, also Montessori alumni.

Ms. Angela Mariela Vizcarra (Spanish Teacher) came to the United States from Argentina in 2014. She is a Physical Education teacher by training and has worked with Elementary and High School students in her native country. After her arrival in the United States, she has been teaching Spanish in several elementary schools. She and her husband live in Bethesda.

Ms. Karine Muradyan (Music Teacher) came to the United States in 2001 from her home country of Armenia, where she taught for six years as a music teacher at the Quality International School. For the past twelve years, she has been a piano teacher at the International School of Music and at the Academy of Fine Arts. Ms. Muradyan is a music teacher in numerous Montessori Schools in the area, a music director at the Francis Asbury United Methodist Church, and an organist at St. Mary's Armenian Church.

Ms. Rebecca Kramer (Administrator) was Crestview's first Administrator. After graduating from college, she joined the Peace Corps and spent two years in Ghana. Her past work experience is in the field of human resources and project management, as well as being a teaching assistant in a Montessori classroom. Her three children have all been taught by Ms. Winebrenner. She herself attended Montessori school through sixth grade. Rebecca lives in Washington, D.C. with her husband and children.

INTRODUCTION

Crestview Montessori School (Crestview) opened its doors in 2009 and serves children aged 2½ through kindergarten. Our community school reflects its strong belief in Maria Montessori's unique vision of education. Each child is viewed individually while becoming an integrated member of the classroom community. It is our responsibility to observe each child and present the primary curriculum lessons authorized by the Montessori training centers.

Mission Statement

- To prepare a beautiful environment for the young child and to assist each child in connecting to that environment physically, mentally, and emotionally.
- To assist each child in recognizing and developing his or her potential from the materials that Maria Montessori developed which form an integral part of the classroom.
- To recognize that the classroom is a dynamic working environment that changes and adapts to meet the needs of the child.
- To offer a strong academic Montessori curriculum that encourages a lifelong love of learning.

Non-Discrimination Policy

We welcome all prospective students and their families and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in our admission and educational policies.

Admissions decisions are based on factors that include gender and age, as well as the child's comfort level within a Montessori environment. Preference is given to siblings of current students.

THE CLASSROOM

The Primary Classroom Composition

Classroom staff is comprised of a Montessori trained Director and an Assistant, and our maximum class size is limited to 25 students. Maria Montessori chose the word “director” or “directress” instead of “teacher” as the name of the person leading the classroom. She believed this person guided and directed the children, and held the responsibility of linking each child to this specially prepared environment. The children in the classroom range in ages from 2½ through 6. Approximately one-third of the classroom is comprised of the oldest children – the kindergarten children who have been with the directress for the past two or three years. This group of children is considered to be the leaders of the classroom. The second group of children includes those children who are in their second or third year. The newest children to the class are the youngest. A child entering our classroom at 2½ or 3 years of age comes into a classroom known as a “primary” class.

Curriculum

Maria Montessori wrote and talked of sensitive periods in a child's life, and the materials in the classroom were developed for the child to be in that classroom from the age of 2½ through the age of 6. The curriculum for each child in the Montessori classroom is the same, with room to allow for individuality and creativity. Each succeeding year builds on the past year.

A child typically enters our school at 2½ or 3 years of age and works in these specific areas:

Practical Life - The child engages in activities that include care of self and care of the environment. The child's work with these materials helps strengthen small motor skills and helps build concentration needed in the academic areas.

Sensorial - These materials help the child refine his/her sensory impressions and powers of observation.

Language - Writing and reading are explored using a phonetic program of individual sounds in language. Materials, such as sandpaper letters and moveable alphabet, help connect the child with writing and reading.

Mathematics - Activities include number rods, golden beads, and number chains.

Geography and Culture - The child is introduced to various continents, countries, states, and land and water forms.

Foreign Language Studies

One morning a week, Señora Angela, a native of Argentina, exposes the children of Crestview to the Spanish language. The youngest children hear the language and see the language lessons being given. Gradually, as their comfort level increases, they join the small group lessons. Señora Angela joins the classroom for the full morning, working with small groups of children – speaking solely in Spanish.

Outdoor Environment

We believe that our outdoor environment is just as important as the work that is being done in our indoor classroom. Children learn through doing, and we have set up the outdoor space to allow for that learning. Children are able to choose from a variety of activities: from sliding to soccer to garden work. Children are adding leftover snack food to the composter, removing water from our rain barrels to water our garden plants and flowers, and cutting flowers in the garden to bring inside and place in vases on tables. Every opportunity for outdoor work is explored no matter the weather.

Daily Classroom Schedule

The table on the next page is a graphic representation of the daily schedule children of different ages at Crestview Montessori School follow.

DAILY CLASSROOM SCHEDULE

| Half-day Program | Three year olds, with nap | Pre-Kindergarten Program | Kindergarten Program | | |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--|
| Work period following the Montessori curriculum. Lessons and independent work in all areas of the classroom: Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Math, Geography, Science, Art, Music, and Spanish. | | | | 8:45am – 11:15am | |
| | | | | 11:15am – 11:20am | |
| Music is played and signifies end of morning. Children assemble at the ellipse for group time. | | | | 11:20am – 11:30am | |
| | | | | 11:30am – 11:40am | |
| Group time: general conversations, birthday celebrations, reading stories, poems, singing, and movement activities. | | | | 11:40am – 12:20pm | |
| | | | | 12:20pm – 12:05pm | |
| Children get coats on and prepare to go outside. | | | | 12:05pm – 12:15pm | |
| | | | | 12:15pm – 12:25pm | |
| Outdoor play, weather permitting. | | | | 12:25pm – 1:15pm | |
| | | | | 1:15pm – 1:30pm | |
| Children prepare classroom for lunch; then go outside. | | | | 1:30pm – 1:45pm | |
| | | | | 1:45pm – 2:45pm | |
| Children prepare classroom for lunch; then go outside. | | | | 2:45pm – 2:55pm | |
| | | | | | |
| Half-day children are dismissed. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Outside bell rings; children clean up the garden and take a walk around the school building. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Children enter the school building, change shoes, hang up coats, wash hands, and gather at the ellipse. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Lunch: children unpack, eat, and pack away uneaten lunches. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Afternoon community chores. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Afternoon work period. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Prepare to go home. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Wake napping children and prepare to go home. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Nap/rest time. If child awakes prior to 2:45pm, he/she joins the class. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

NOTE: Morning arrival begins at 8:45am
 Afternoon dismissal occurs between 2:55 and 3:05pm

Kindergarten Program

The kindergarten year in a Montessori program is a dynamic one for the child and the Directress. The two have built a solid relationship of trust and understanding. The Directress has watched and observed the child begin as a dependent child and transform into a capable leader in the classroom. As it is at the heart of the Montessori program, all children accepted into Crestview are expected to continue through their kindergarten year.

Kindergarten Criteria

Our Kindergarten Program (8:45 am - 3:00 pm) is open to children turning five by September 1st. For those families who request it, Crestview will consider early admission to the kindergarten program for children who turn five (5) between September 2nd and October 15th. If requested, the Directress will contact the family directly to decide the best course of action for the individual child. The final decision rests with the Head of School. There is no appeals process. Children entering kindergarten under early admission are not guaranteed 1st grade admission into a public or private school the following year. Parents will need to contact the future school directly to make such a request.

A child transferring from another Montessori school may be accepted into Crestview's kindergarten program at the discretion of the Directress.

Afternoon Program at Crestview

When the children return to the classroom from having been outdoors for a bit of time, they prepare for lunch. A "setting" has already been reserved for each child, but the children wash their hands, remove foods from their lunch boxes, settle in, and begin to eat lunches. Classroom teachers eat alongside the children. When a child finishes eating his lunch, he packs away uneaten food, tidies up his area, and is free to do an activity.

When lunch is over, there are collective chores to be done in the classroom, such as floor sweeping, sharpening pencils, refilling paper supplies, and loading the classroom dishwasher and washing machine. All older afternoon children help with these chores for a few minutes before we begin our afternoon classroom period. Once the afternoon program is underway, children have a combination of working with the Assistant, as well as the Directress in the classroom. Kindergarten children primarily work with the Directress in the afternoon.

Screen Time Policy

Our children are surrounded by technology. Computers, tablets, and smart phones are in most of our homes. The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommendations about the amount of screen time for young children, and that recommendation has changed over the last several years. Crestview Montessori believes in limiting the amount of screen time of the young child. We have a very "hands on" approach and want the child to be actively engaged with the Montessori materials that are available to each child in our classroom. These materials engage the different senses and help to build their brains and bodies.

As a result of our strong belief, Crestview Montessori does not have computers in the classroom. If a child researches a topic, that research is done through a variety of books in our carefully cultivated school library and rotated public library books.

On a rare occasion, a computer or tablet might be accessed for information not readily available. Sometimes, a parent will share their holiday customs by showing a short movie on a computer to the classroom children. A few times a year, Crestview also hosts “movie and pizza nights” and children’s movies are shown during those events. And on our “pajama day” we curl up in pajamas, with blankets and pillows to get cozy with a suitable children’s movie.

Discipline

The Montessori program nurtures self-discipline. This develops over a period of several years. Self-discipline is built on a basis of respect: respect for oneself, for others, and for our school environment, both inside and outside. The adults and children set limits for behavior based on the group’s needs for a safe and mutually respectful community.

If a child has difficulty following the rules of the community, the response will be age-appropriate. Personal attention, distraction, substitution and/or removal from the situation are typical approaches. Many instances resolve themselves as the student, within the bounds of safety and common sense, experiences the logical consequences of his/her actions (i.e., wiping up after throwing a paint can on the floor).

If the child disregards the rules of the classroom community, the Directress seeks the underlying causes in order to help the child understand the inappropriateness of his/her actions and to find a constructive alternative. If such behavior occurs repeatedly, the Directress may request the Head of School to observe before the parents are contacted for their support and cooperation.

Occasionally, a child may go through a phase in his/her development that manifests in a form of physical hurting of others. This might include, although is not limited to, biting, kicking, scratching, and pinching. Crestview staff responds promptly to such situations, striving to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all children in our care. In each instance of such behavior, Crestview staff will remove the child causing harm from the situation and verbally reinforce that such behavior is neither kind nor acceptable. Staff will at the same time focus on calming and reassuring the child who got hurt. An incident report is written as soon as the situation is settled and the child causing physical harm will be sent home for the day.

If necessary, the Directress and/or Head of School will schedule a meeting with parents.

The following are some general guidelines of Montessori discipline that parents should seek to apply at home as well as at School (Montessori books are available for loan in the office):

- “Hold the child to standard”: s/he will rise to expectations
- Behavior: Think Satisfaction & Motivation vs. Gratification & Manipulation
- Separate the “Denial”/”Hurt”/and “Suffering” of growing up from real deprivation
- Making Reward Internal, not External
- To maintain strong, effective discipline, seek consistency and clarity
- Catch children “doing something right”
- Engage, interest the child
- Involve, stimulate the child
- Redirect the child from destructive, negative behavior
- Be respectful. Maintain unconditional love. Love is not a “bargaining chip”!
- Use humor to support and defuse, not to deflate. Sarcasm bites and hurts.

- Let natural consequences flow from inappropriate behavior

Rest Period

Children that take naps at Crestview will take the rest shortly after lunch, as close to 1:15pm as possible. It is the policy of Crestview that once a child wakes up, the child joins the classroom for the remainder of the afternoon.

Parent Involvement and Conferences

Parent involvement is crucial to the success of your child's experience at Crestview. A traditional Montessori school, such as ours, is rooted in a philosophy of learning that is quite different from other preschool environments. You are invited to share time with your child in the classroom throughout the year. Especially for those new to Montessori, the classroom functions quite differently from a typical school setting, and knowing how your child is learning throughout the day is quite beneficial for both child and family. We invite parents to help with art projects in the classroom, share their favorite recipe, tell us about their hobby, or share their cultural holiday with the class. If possible, please call the office to schedule a time to visit in the classroom between October and April.

In the Fall we have Special Friend Morning, and in January we have a Parent Morning. The dates and times for both of these special events are indicated on the school calendar included in the June mailing, and are available on the Crestview website.

Parents should plan to attend the Back-to-School Night in September as well as both Parent Curriculum Nights scheduled during the school year. The Curriculum Night held in November focuses on language, the one in February is on math.

Additionally, there are two scheduled conferences with parents during the school year: one in the Fall, and a second in the Spring. We hope both parents can attend these conferences. Conferences will be managed via Bloomz and a message will be sent to all parents two weeks before the conference date with the details. Please refer to the school calendar in the summer mailing as well as on our website for specific conference dates. Additional conferences by phone or in person may be scheduled at the request of parents or the Directress.

Reports

At the end of each academic year, a written report outlining the academic strides your child has made will be sent to you by mail. This report will highlight Montessori curriculum advances made by your child throughout the year, as well as a written summary. Look for this report in late June.

Giving Back to the Community

It has been a tradition at Crestview to aid in the understanding children may have about their world by being given an opportunity to give back to those less fortunate. We have chosen to give to S.O.M.E (So Others Might Eat), a non-profit organization in Washington, DC that assists homeless men, women, and children get back on their feet. We ask all families to contribute in the form of a "shoebox" during the winter holiday, consisting of personal necessities such as a winter scarf, gloves, toothbrush, soap, etc.

In May, we again collect similar items for its “Summer Bag” program. Shopping for these items with your child can be a wonderful learning tool in the process of helping our children learn more about those in need in our community. We thank you in advance for your support of this organization.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS

Arrival and Dismissal

Parents are required to sign their child in and out, every day, at arrival and dismissal.

Arrival begins at 8:45 am and ends at 9:00 am. While we are receiving children who are walking and children arriving by cars, we ask parents to be patient as we make sure all children get inside the back door safely. At 9:00 am, we lock the back door for security purposes. Children arriving after this time will be marked “tardy”; parents are asked to call the office and a staff member will meet you and your child at our back door.

Arrival (By Car) – Arrivals by car begin at the school’s sidewalk along Berkley Street. Pull all the way up to the back gate to allow for multiple cars to stop on Berkley. A staff member will come to your car to take your child’s hand and walk inside the back gate, entering the school building through our back door. Do not leave your child outside your car unattended.

Arrival (Walking) – Please stand with your child at the back gate at the entrance to the children’s garden. Wait for a staff member to take your child’s hand. Do not leave your child until a staff member has his/her hand.

Dismissal occurs in the children’s garden. Dismissal for the Morning Primary Program ends at 12:05 pm. Dismissal for the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Program ends at 3:05 pm.

Dismissal (By Car) – Please pull your car up to the rear gate on Berkley Street and wait for a Crestview staff member to escort your child to the car. In inclement weather, the children will stay inside and be escorted one-by-one to the cars at the rear gate on Berkley Street.

Dismissal (Walking) – Please stand to the side of the gate and wait for a staff member to bring your child to you. Priority dismissal will be given to caregivers who are walking to Crestview to pick up a child.

Please note that Berkley Street is quite narrow and sloped in some areas and the space for arrival and dismissal is limited. In order to ensure safety and efficiency, we kindly ask that you remain in your car and please refrain from having lengthy conversations with other parents in this location.

Early Dismissal/Change in Routine

If you are planning an earlier-than-expected pick-up for your child, please let the school office know as soon as possible, either by email, phone, text, or a note in the morning. Verbal messages to staff members during arrival must be avoided to ensure the safety of the students.

Further, children will only be dismissed to adults noted on their “Caregiver Pick-up Authorization Form” as an approved person. Even grandparents do not get a “special pass” so please avoid potentially embarrassing situations by either calling or emailing the school with any changes.

Attendance and Tardiness

Children are expected to attend school every day, unless home with an illness or out of town. Records of attendance will be kept for each child. Family vacations are not considered excused absences and should as much as possible be planned to coincide with school closings.

The morning time in a Montessori classroom consists of greetings and beginning lessons. The Directress and Assistant take time to connect with each individual child and get them engaged in the classroom. A child who arrives late may find the Directress unable to make that connection and, therefore, the child loses precious time joining the classroom. Please respect the short time that your child is with us and make the effort to get your child to school on time. Arriving after 9:05 am is considered “tardy” and will be noted on your child’s attendance record.

Late Fees

Students at Crestview attend class for a specific time every day. Parents and caregivers must take care to respect the time of the child, as well as the time of the teachers and staff at Crestview, by agreeing to drop off and pick up their child on time each and every day. **Chronic lateness is not acceptable at Crestview, and will be addressed with the individual family promptly.**

- Morning arrival for all children is between 8:45am – 9:00am
- Dismissal for our morning program is between 11:55am – 12:05pm
- Dismissal for our afternoon program is between 2:55pm – 3:05pm

Children stop play and line up at the beginning of our dismissal window. Any remaining children will be brought inside after the 10 minute window passes, and will remain inside until their parent/caregiver comes inside to retrieve the child. Families will be charged a late fee if late pickups exceed two (2) in a calendar year. **An initial \$10 late fee will be assessed if the parent/caregiver arrives after the dismissal window, and a \$5 flat fee for each 5 minutes of lateness thereafter.** A bill will be sent via email within five (5) days, and will need to be paid within fifteen (15) days from the date on the bill. End of the year reports will be held until all unpaid fees are paid in full.

Health and Safety

For the safety and security of the children and staff, doors in the front and back are locked after arrival.

Emergency Preparedness

Crestview follows the Emergency Preparedness policy of Montgomery County Public Schools. In the event of a catastrophic event, “Emergency Preparedness Boxes” have been prepared and are updated every August with emergency supplies, food, and water, and sufficient blankets for every child. Crestview staff members have taken the training to become better prepared to handle a variety of emergency situations. **It is critical**

that your Emergency Card be kept current throughout the school year. Job, address, phone numbers, and caregiver changes are just some of the critical information items that need to be provided to the Crestview office as soon as possible.

Crestview practices monthly fire drills and two evacuation drills per year. For fire drills, we leave our building and go next door to the Gandhi Library grounds. For evacuation, we retreat to the basement. All drills are done very matter-of-factly with students on the two designated occasions. We do not want to cause any anxiety; we merely want to prepare your children.

For some emergencies, our instructions have been to shelter-in-place and our classroom has been equipped for such circumstances. **In the event of a true emergency and provided electricity is still available, Crestview staff will send out emails immediately to all parents, as well as try to post emergency information on our website.**

Should there be an emergency in the classroom, in addition to the front and back door, there are two emergency doors accessible from inside the school. In this case, children will be escorted out of the building and onto the Gandhi Library grounds adjacent to Crestview.

State Medical Forms and Vaccinations

All children are required by laws in the State of Maryland to have complete medical forms necessary for admission into school by the first day of school. The required vaccinations based on your child's age are available from your child's pediatrician. All children at Crestview are required to be fully vaccinated or to submit medical or religious waivers. These forms are able to be downloaded from our website.

Illness

Young children are susceptible to illness, especially when they spend time in close contact with other young children, and children in a Montessori environment share all the materials of the classroom. We encourage frequent hand washing as it is the best way to prevent the spreading of germs. Additionally, children are encouraged to sneeze into their elbow, and wash their hands after using tissues in the classroom.

We continue to take every precaution to keep illness out of our classroom and ask that you as parents take extra care in the decision-making process when sending your child to school. Also, we try to go outside in all kinds of weather, unless it is pouring rain/snow or a wind/weather advisory has been issued. If your child is too sick to participate in outdoor recess, he/she should remain at home.

Your child should remain at home if they have:

- A fever, vomiting, or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- A sore throat with coughing
- Visible signs of a cold (in a child too young to practice consistent nose-wiping)
- Untreated head lice
- Been on an antibiotic less than 24 hours
- A condition that is contagious to others
- A headache that lasts or returns

- An earache or discharge from the ear
- Redness, swelling, or drainage of the eye (possible pink eye)

A child must stay home for 24 hours after starting antibiotics and/or from having a fever. If a child returns to school too soon, that choice can potentially expose the ill child (when most vulnerable) to further complications or another illness. If parents faithfully follow these guidelines for the benefit of all the children, there will be fewer sick children and staff.

Also, we ask that you notify us right away when your child has been diagnosed with a communicable illness, such as strep throat, chicken pox, flu, or head lice so that we can inform other families. Information on the specific illness and how to deal with it will be emailed to all parents as soon as we are made aware.

If your child becomes unwell at school, or we notice upon arrival that they are not well, we will contact you by phone with the details of their symptoms and, if we believe it's in the best interest of your child to leave school, he/she will need to be picked up within the hour.

Weather

We plan to go outside as frequently as possible – unless it is pouring rain/snow or a wind/weather advisory has been issued. Children will stay very busy in the garden and play area, so please be sure that they are dressed appropriately. In damp weather, your child should have rain boots. In wintry weather, your child must have snow boots, a hat, and mittens. There is no such thing as “bad weather” when it comes to children having an opportunity to be in our outdoor environment – only inappropriate clothing.

Snow/School Closing

With the possibility of weather related closings in the Washington, DC area, this year again we have four (4) emergency days built into our calendar in order to avoid needing to extend the school year. Should the school be closed for more than four (4) days due to emergency weather conditions, the school year will be extended for each extra day closed. Should the school be closed for exactly four days due to inclement weather conditions, the school year will end on June 12th, 2018.

In an event those days are not used at all or are used partially before Spring Break, they will be taken back on the dates highlighted in purple in our 2017-18 calendar. By Spring Break, which occurs at the end of March, our region should be fairly certain that there would be no more snow conditions. The unused inclement weather days will be taken back in the following manner:

Scenario 1) No inclement weather days were used before Spring Break:

In that case, the Spring break will be extended by one day and Crestview will re-open on April 4th. Also, the Memorial Day weekend will be extended by one day and Crestview will re-open on May 30th. Finally, the last two days of school will be moved to June 7th and June 8th, which will then become our Sprinkler and Movie days, respectively.

Scenario 2) Crestview will have been closed for one day due to inclement weather before Spring Break:

In that case, Crestview will re-open on April 3rd after the Spring Break. Memorial Day weekend will be extended by one day and Crestview will re-open on May 30th. The last two days of school will be moved to June 7th and June 8th.

Scenario 3) Crestview will have been closed for two days before Spring Break:

In that case, Crestview will re-open on April 3rd after Spring Break, and on May 29th after Memorial Day weekend. The last two days of school will be moved to June 7th and June 8th.

Scenario 4) Crestview will have been closed for three days before Spring Break:

In that case, Crestview re-open on April 3rd after Spring Break, on May 29th after Memorial Day weekend, and the last two days of school will be June 8th and June 11th.

We will no longer strictly follow Montgomery County emergency school closings. Our decision to close, stay open, or have a delayed opening, will depend on the weather conditions in the vicinity of the school as well as the staff's ability to arrive at Crestview safely.

If the weather forecast calls for inclement weather conditions, we will notify parents and staff by 6:30 am, via email, of Crestview's decision to remain open, stay closed, or open late. We will also post emergency inclement weather announcements on the main page of our website by 6:30 am.

Snack

All children will be offered snack during the morning session. Snack is chosen by the child, and typically consists of a protein, whole grain crackers, and a fruit or vegetable. Occasionally, a child may become too "busy" in the morning to stop work and have snack, and although this doesn't happen often, we do not interrupt the child's work to ask them to sit for snack. Snack is always optional; therefore, we will not force a child to eat.

Throughout the year, we will periodically ask by email that each family provide snack and flowers for one week. We are very specific as to the type of food we will accept to accommodate for our students with allergies, but there is plenty of room for variety with daily fruits and vegetables that we do hope the children will be able to sample. Each child's family will be responsible for snack about four times a year.

Lunches

Children in the afternoon programs will bring their "waste-free" lunch and eat at tables in the classroom. Lunch is a wonderful opportunity for grace and courtesy, and it is a nice break from the rigorous morning at work. Children store their lunches in the classroom refrigerator. All children will use a school placemat and glass for drinking filtered water. Ideally, lunch will be a balanced meal that will allow your child to have the energy and concentration in the afternoon work session. State regulations say that no microwaves are allowed for heating up food for students, so please plan accordingly. **Candy, "go-gurts," and juice boxes are not allowed in lunches and will be returned if sent by accident.** Packing a waste-free lunch should include utensils, cloth napkins, and reusable containers that your child can open and close easily without the help of an adult.

Nut-Free Environment

Crestview strives to be a nut-free school. We do not serve peanuts or tree nuts in our school and ask parents to keep all nut products out of your child's lunch. Anaphylaxis due to nut allergies involves restriction of the airway, and is an issue with students in our classroom. Although Crestview staff is trained in the use of EpiPens, we do not want to have any child go through the unnecessary trauma of this potential situation and want to support those children with a safer environment. As a school, we have successfully switched to sunflower butter (made from sunflower seeds) to serve during snack.

Birthday Celebrations

Over the years we have found that children enjoy celebrating their birthday in the classroom. The birthday is marked by a special "birthday crown" made by the child at school and is worn during the festivities.

Additionally, we have a celebratory snack (cookies made by the family) and decaffeinated iced tea (prepared by the children at school) that is shared among all children in the classroom.

The recipe for the cookies excludes dairy products, eggs, and nuts and is available on our website. The recipe will need to be followed exactly to keep the cookies consistently allergen-free. The single candy dot that goes in the center is available from the Crestview office, and is optional. You will need to make enough cookies for each child in the classroom to have one; please refer to the latest student directory for the current number of children in the classroom.

When a child's birthday occurs in the summer, we will celebrate your child's "half-birthday" at the appropriate time during the school year.

Dress Code

While there is no formal dress code at Crestview, we expect students to wear appropriate attire for a day of learning. Shoes that light up, watches, and jewelry can be distracting to not only your child but others as well. Flips-flops and rubber-soled shoes are a tripping hazard on our hardwood floors and, therefore, should not be worn to school (no Crocs.) Shoes that work best are simply a second pair of clean shoes that children can put on and take off themselves, and remain at school. Children new to using the toilet should wear pants that are easily pulled up and down to further encourage independence. Crestview is a working classroom, so occasionally water gets spilled or paint gets on clothing. Children bring a full change of clothes on their first day at school that will remain here throughout the year. As the weather changes, we will send home the extra change of clothing to be exchanged for a set of clothing more suitable to the current weather.

Toilet Independence

All children are expected to be fully toilet trained before entering Crestview. If your child is not fully toilet trained, please talk to the Directress before school begins. Occasionally, children not fully toilet trained are accepted on a case-by-case basis. Accidents occasionally occur, and extra clothing will be kept at school for all children.

THE OFFICE

Communication

Our office opens in the morning at 9:00 am. If your child is sick or unable to come to school, please send an email to our school at email address info@crestviewmontessori.com by 9:00 am so the information is communicated to all staff. All emails sent to that address are seen by office staff only and are kept confidential and disclosed only as necessary to other staff.

If there are issues related to your child that would be more appropriate for a conversation, please call the school to schedule a phone appointment with Ms. Winebrenner or Ms. Tressel.

Communication that relates to tuition or payments can either be mailed to: 4916 Redford Road, Bethesda, MD 20816, or brought in person to the office.

Our school phone is a “smart phone”; therefore, texting is also available. All emails and texts will be answered. For safety and efficiency, Crestview staff will not be able to talk to you at pick-up or drop-off about issues relating to your child. However, when warranted, Crestview staff will contact you to schedule a time to speak about any appropriate matters.

Tuition Invoices

Invoices will be mailed twice a year: in mid-October and mid-April. Please note all check payments must be received in the office by the dates listed on your contract. Late fees will be assessed after five (5) days at the rate of \$50 per day. If a tuition payment is not received after those five (5) days, said contract may be cancelled without notice.

Website

NEW! Crestview’s website www.CrestviewMontessori.com has been updated. Under “Parents” we include this Parent Handbook, school forms, and snack and birthday celebration information. School closings and emergency information will also be posted on the home page when appropriate.

Newsletters

NEW! Beginning in September 2017, Crestview families will receive classroom news via [Bloomz](#). We have found that parents often ask us about the daily happenings inside the classroom, and what specifically the children are working on, while students are excited to share what happened but don’t always have the language to describe it. We believe that this tool will help make those connections more clear. We will include photos, recipes, and special events that we hope will encourage a greater dialogue between you and your child. Please note: As per our school policy, no children will ever be identified by name. The app will need to be downloaded to your smart phone or computer using a code that will be provided via email in September.

Picture Day

This year Picture Day is May 16th, 2018. A local photographer from our community, Alison McGibbon, will again be taking pictures of your children and making them available for purchase online. Parents will receive more information in the Spring.

Reenrollment for 2018-2019

Current Crestview families have first priority when it comes to reenrollment and new sibling enrollment. Your family will be sent a letter on December 1, 2017 inquiring of your intentions for the 2018-2019 school year. If you reply that you would like to reenroll your child, or if you have siblings you would like to enroll, a contract will be sent to you in mid-January. All contracts must be accompanied by a \$1000 non-refundable deposit that will be applied towards the 2018-2019 year's tuition.

As interest in our school continues to grow, it is crucial that families take care in returning this information to the office on time and without delay. Contracts for new families will be sent out mid-February. We want to make sure all current families who plan to continue are given first priority.

Summer Mailing

On the last day of the school year, a complete packet of information will be given to you. It will include forms necessary for your child to attend school in the Fall. All forms are due in the office **by August 1st**. If all paperwork is not received in time for school to begin, due to the laws of the State of Maryland, your child will not be able to start school on time. Since many children will need a physical with their pediatrician, we would encourage you to make your appointment as soon as possible as doctors' offices tend to get very busy during the summer months.

Letters of Recommendation

Upon leaving Crestview for elementary school, we are often asked to write recommendation letters for various private and public schools in the area. Ms. Tressel is pleased to do this for her departing kindergarten students. For students wishing to leave Crestview Montessori School for another primary program (prior to first grade), there will be a \$100 fee per student.

Accreditation

Since its opening in 2009, Crestview earned a highly respected accreditation with AMI. We were one of only 8 schools in the state of Maryland with this superior level of distinction.

As of July 2016, Crestview is a full member school of the American Montessori Society (AMS). Crestview is also a member of Montessori Schools of Maryland (MSM). Crestview is a member of the North American Montessori Teachers Association (NAMTA). Crestview meets all county and state requirements for a private school and is accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Calendar

School will begin on September 5th, 2017. The school year end will depend on the number of inclement weather days used during the year – please refer to the 2017-18 school year calendar, included in the June mailing and available online. If updates are made to the calendar throughout the year, an email notification will be sent to your email address on file letting you know an updated version is available online for download.

**We welcome you and your family
to a year of discovery and growth
as part of the
Crestview Montessori School
community.**



Crestview Montessori School

Mailing Address

4916 Redford Road
Bethesda, MD 20816

School Location

4728 Western Avenue
Bethesda, MD 20816
301.910.4728

www.CrestviewMontessori.com
info@crestviewmontessori.com