

Three Rivers Montessori



Student and Family Handbook 2025–2026 School Year

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01. Arrival & Departure Overview

School Hours: 7:30 AM – 1:45 PM

Students should arrive and be picked up on time. If an emergency occurs and a parent/guardian cannot pick up their child(ren), the office must be contacted as soon as possible at 763-595-1213. If there is a change in the pickup routine, it must be communicated to the office before 12:30 PM. Without notification, the child's typical routine (bus or car pick-up) will be followed.

Student Release Policy:

- Students may only be released to parents or adults listed on the Parent Permission for Child Pickup Form (see Appendix).
- The office must be notified of any alternative pick-up arrangements by the parent/guardian.
- A photo ID is required for all individuals picking up students.
- Students will only be released to persons other than legal parents or guardians if an email from the parent/guardian is provided. Verbal or phone requests cannot be honored.

Signing In and Out:

- If a student arrives late or leaves early, a parent/guardian must sign them in or out at the front desk using the provided computer system.

Dropping Off Items:

- Bring items such as lunch, clothing, or classroom work to the front desk. A staff member will deliver items to the classroom at an appropriate time.

02. Drop-Off Procedures

Drop-off Time: 7:05 AM – 7:25 AM

- All cars must enter via Hwy 10 using 171st Avenue. Do NOT use the access road on Hwy 10 located on the north side of TRM (173rd Avenue), as it causes unsafe backups and delays.
- Cars may enter the drive alley near the playground (turn right off Yale Street near the lower-level lot and follow the alley up toward the upper-level side door).
- Do NOT Park and walk your child up to the building.

- Use BOTH lanes and pull forward as far as possible.
- A TRM staff member will approach your car to assist your child out of the vehicle and into the building. Remain in your vehicle unless assisting with a car seat.
- Exit the drive alley by turning left onto Yale Street back toward Hwy 10. (see Appendix A for map of drop off/pick up location) After 7:25 AM:
- Park in the upper-level lot and walk your child into the building.

After 7:30 AM:

- Park in the upper-level lot, walk your child in, and sign them in with a TRM staff member.

03. Pick-Up Procedures

Pick-up Time: 1:50 PM – 2:05 PM

- Do NOT arrive before 1:50 PM.
- Enter via Hwy 10 and use 171st Avenue.
- Do NOT use the access road on Hwy 10 (173rd Avenue).
- Staff will open the drive alley for pick-up at 1:50 PM. Use both lanes and pull forward as far as possible.
- Display your TRM pick-up sign on your dashboard or hold it up.
- A staff member will:
 - Approach your car if needed.
 - Notify the classroom to send your child to the side door.
 - Walk your child to your vehicle.
- Do not get out of your vehicle.

After 2:05 PM:

- Students will wait in the front office.
 - If no one arrives by 2:15 PM, the child will be placed in the Pathfinders aftercare program and you will be billed accordingly.
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04. Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is essential for academic success at Three Rivers Montessori. Children who are well are expected to attend school every day, arriving on time and ready to learn. In accordance with Minnesota Statute 120A.22, all students between the ages of 7 and 17 are required to receive instruction each year. Additionally, children under the age of 7 who are enrolled in kindergarten, or a higher grade are also subject to this law.

If your child will be absent, arriving late, or leaving early, please notify the attendance office as soon as possible by emailing attendance@threeriversmontessori.org. If your child is absent and the school has not received notification by 8:15 AM, a staff member will contact a parent or guardian. If there is still no communication by 9:30 AM, the absence will be recorded as unexcused.

A student is considered tardy if they arrive after the school day begins at 7:30 AM and before 8:30 AM. A half-day absence is defined as missing more than 60 minutes but less than 4 hours of the school day, while a full-day absence is recorded when a student misses more than 4 hours.

Maintaining consistent attendance ensures that students receive the full benefit of their education and helps support a strong and engaged school community.

05. Pathfinders Child Care Program

Hours:

- After School: 1:45 PM – 5:00 PM
- Please communicate with staff on site if you anticipate any major changes in your usual schedule. Chronic late pick-ups or extreme lateness can result in other penalties, including exclusion from the program.
- Pathfinders follows all school rules and policies regarding behavior and safety.

[Registration & Handbook:](#)

Please view the Pathfinders Handbook on the TRM website for complete details on registration, pricing, processes, and procedures. Contact: pathfinders@threeriversmontessori.org

06. Safety Drills

Safety drills are an important part of our preparedness plan and are conducted throughout the school year to ensure that students and staff are ready in the event of an emergency. The school holds five fire drills, five lockdown drills, and one tornado drill each year. All students and staff participate in these drills unless an exemption has been formally requested.

During fire drills, everyone evacuates the building using designated exits and gathers at a predetermined location. These evacuations are timed to improve response efficiency. Lockdown drills involve securing the building, during which no one may enter or exit. If a drill occurs during drop-off, parents must remain in their vehicles until the building is reopened. Tornado drills involve moving to a designated shelter area, where students and staff sit on the floor and cover their heads and necks.

In the event of an actual emergency, the campus will be closed to everyone except authorized personnel. Students will not be released until school administration and law enforcement confirm that it is safe to do so. TRM will provide timely updates and instructions through text messages, email, social media, phone calls, and local media.

For a more detailed look at our school's emergency preparedness plans please visit our website to view policies 801 Crisis Management Policy and 802 Emergency Procedures Policy.

07. School Closures & Winter Weather

School closures at TRM are determined in alignment with the Elk River School District (ISD 728). If ISD 728 cancels or delays school due to extreme weather, TRM will do the same. Notifications of closures or delays will be communicated via TRM alerts, email, Facebook, and local news outlets such as WCCO.

In cases of extreme cold, TRM refers to the National Weather Service. If a wind chill warning is issued—indicating that exposed skin may become frostbitten in under 15 minutes—TRM will likely cancel school. However, under a wind chill advisory, school will generally remain open, as students properly dressed for the weather can safely wait for transportation. Ultimately, parents and guardians may use their discretion in determining if their child should attend school during extreme weather. To excuse an absence under these circumstances, please notify the school prior to the start of the day.

For outdoor recess, students will stay indoors when the RealFeel temperature is 10°F or lower. If your child has a medical condition that requires them to stay indoors in different conditions, please provide written documentation from a doctor so accommodations can be made.

All students should come to school with appropriate winter gear, including multiple layers, insulating and breathable materials like wool or polypropylene, wind- and waterproof outerwear, wool socks, well-fitting boots, a hat, and mittens (which are warmer than gloves). In extreme cold, all exposed skin should be covered. Be sure to label all personal clothing items such as backpacks, mittens, hats, and boots.

If your child's school bus is more than 15 minutes late in the morning, have your child return home and call Vision Transportation at 763-441-4420 for assistance or updates.

08. Student Wellness

Clothing should be:

- Comfortable, washable, weather-appropriate play clothes.
- Easy to manage for restroom independence.

Illness:

- Stay home if fever (100°F+), vomiting, diarrhea, or unidentified rash.
- Return after 24 hours symptom-free (without medication).
- Report illness daily.

Handwashing:

- Emphasized throughout the day.
- Students are asked to wash their hands before any mealtime.

Medication Policy:

Three Rivers Montessori requires proper authorization for any medication administered during school hours. All medications must be FDA-approved; herbal remedies, dietary supplements, essential oils, or other alternative treatments cannot be administered by school personnel. Prescription medications must be brought directly to the front desk by a parent or guardian, accompanied by a completed Medication Administration Form, which is available at the office.

Medications must be picked up by the parent/guardian once discontinued or they will be properly disposed of.

For field trips, staff coordinate with health personnel to ensure daily and emergency medications are accessible and administered as needed. Please contact the school office with any specific medical requirements before scheduled field trips.

Health personnel are not available after school during Pathfinders activities. Students who require inhalers after hours must check them out at the end of the school day and return them the following morning or bring one from home when returning for evening events.

09. Nutrition & Food Policy

Three Rivers Montessori is committed to supporting student health and academic success through proper nutrition. All students are provided with free breakfast and lunch each school day. Meals are catered by Premier Kitchen Catering and include hot, cold, vegetarian, and gluten-free options to meet diverse dietary needs. We strongly encourage all families to complete the Application for Educational Benefits each school year, regardless of income level, as this information helps determine additional funding for educational support services through state compensatory aid.

Families are required to order meals in advance using the monthly order form available on the TRM website. Timely submission ensures your child receives meals that meet their preferences and dietary restrictions.

To maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all students, TRM follows strict food safety protocols. We are a peanut-safe school, and we ask families not to send foods containing peanuts or other high-risk allergens. For class celebrations and special occasions, only store-bought, pre-packaged snacks may be brought in, and an ingredient list must be available. Homemade foods are not permitted to be shared with students.

By promoting consistent access to healthy meals and reinforcing nutrition education, TRM fosters a school culture that prioritizes student well-being, focus, and learning readiness.

Meals:

- Free breakfast and lunch provided to all students.

- Catered by Premier Kitchen Catering: hot, cold, vegetarian, and gluten-free options.

Free & Reduced Application:

- Required yearly for all families to support school funding. Applications can be found on our school website.

Ordering:

- Monthly order forms on TRM website (reminder emails are sent out as well)
 - Orders placed after the deadline for that months order will not be guaranteed their selection will be available.
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10. Celebrations & Birthdays

- Each classroom has unique traditions.
 - Notify the teacher if you do not celebrate birthdays.
 - Please coordinate with your child(s) teacher with any plans for bringing in treats.
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11. Field Trips

Teachers may schedule field trips throughout the year to enhance classroom learning experiences. All students must have parent or guardian consent to participate in any off-campus event. If a student cannot attend a field trip, an alternative educational activity will be provided whenever possible. Financial assistance is available for families who may need support—please contact the school office for more information. Details about each field trip will be communicated in advance by the classroom teacher or administration.

12. Immunization & Screening

Immunization Law (MN Statute 121A.15):

- Required records must include month/day/year.
- Exemption allowed with notarized form.

Early Childhood Screening:

- Free and required before kindergarten.
 - Includes developmental check, vision, hearing, height, weight, and immunization review. For more details, please reach out to TRM administration.
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13. Environmental Health & Safety

Latex Allergies

Because some individuals are allergic to latex, TRM minimizes the use of latex containing products, particularly balloons, which are a common trigger. Latex is a fluid from rubber trees and is processed into many items, including balloons. When balloons pop, they can release latex particles that may cause allergic reactions. In severe cases, exposure can lead to life-threatening symptoms such as shock, breathing difficulties, or loss of blood pressure. To maintain a safe environment, latex balloons are not allowed. However, Mylar balloons, which have a metallic appearance, are permitted. If you're unsure of a balloon's material, do not bring it to school. Please notify the office if your child has a latex allergy.

Pesticide Use Notification

TRM does not currently use pesticides. However, should this change, the school will maintain a schedule of applications available for review and will notify families in advance. The law also requires notification that the long-term health effects on children from pesticide exposure may not be fully known. For questions about air quality or pesticide use, contact the TRM office.

Asbestos

TRM does not have any asbestos in the building. The school follows an ongoing Operations and Maintenance program that includes monitoring and surveillance to ensure safety and compliance.

Lead in Water Plan

As mandated by the 2023 Minnesota legislation (MN Statutes 121A.335), TRM has created and implemented a plan to ensure water quality. The plan includes testing

for lead in drinking water, documentation of routine maintenance procedures, and compliance by July 2024. A certified company conducts the testing.

14. School Guidelines

Scooters, Skateboards, In-line Skates, and Roller Tennis Shoes

These items are not allowed for use on school property due to safety concerns. Roller shoes must remain in walk-only mode. TRM is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items. Nuisance items may be confiscated and returned later.

Nuisance and Hazardous Items

Toys, trading cards, and electronic devices are not permitted if they disrupt learning or are deemed unsafe. Electronic devices must remain powered off and stored in backpacks. Any disruptive item may be confiscated and returned later. TRM is not responsible for items that are lost, stolen, or damaged.

Student Cell Phones and Wearable Technology

Cell phones and wearable technology such as smartwatches must remain turned off and stored in the student's backpack during the school day. These items may not be used for communication, recording, gaming, or accessing the internet during school hours. TRM staff may confiscate any device used inappropriately and return it at the end of the day. Repeat offenses may require a parent/guardian to retrieve the device. TRM is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen devices.

Searching Student Storage Areas

Student storage areas (e.g., cubbies, hooks, and drawers) are school property and may be searched at the discretion of school staff. Backpacks may also be searched by administration if necessary.

Dress Code

Clothing must meet health, safety, and decency standards. Head coverings may be worn for special events, medical, or religious reasons. For physical education, closed-toed tennis shoes are required. Winter clothing such as coats, hats, gloves, and boots are essential for outdoor recess.

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Student Photographs and Videos

Students may be photographed or recorded for newsletters, social media, the school website, or yearbooks. Families can opt out by completing the Photo Release Form included in the enrollment packet.

15. Student Support Services

Special Education

Three Rivers Montessori (TRM) provides a full continuum of special education services to students who are identified with a disability and who meet eligibility criteria under one of the 13 federal disability categories. These categories are:

- Autism spectrum disorder
- Developmental delay (birth to age 7)

- Emotional or behavioral disorders
 - Specific learning disabilities
 - Speech or language impairments
 - Other health disabilities
 - Developmental cognitive disabilities (mild-moderate)
 - Developmental cognitive disabilities (moderate-severe)
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- Physical impairments
 - Deaf and hard of hearing
 - Deaf blindness
 - Blind or visually impaired
 - Traumatic brain injury

Eligibility is determined through a comprehensive evaluation conducted by a team of professionals in collaboration with the child's parents/guardians. Once a student is identified as eligible, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed. The IEP outlines the student's present levels of performance, measurable annual goals, and the specific services and supports required to meet those goals. Services may include academic instruction, speech/language therapy, occupational or physical therapy, social work services, and more. TRM is committed to providing education in the least restrictive environment (LRE), meaning students will be included in the general education setting as much as possible while still receiving the support they need.

Section 504

Students with disabilities who do not qualify for special education services under IDEA may still receive accommodations and support through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities and ensures that students with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activities have equal access to education. This may include accommodations such as preferential seating, extended time on tests, or modified assignments, depending on individual needs. A 504 Plan outlines the specific accommodations and is developed collaboratively by school staff and families. For more information or to initiate an evaluation, contact your child's teacher or the Executive Director.

16. Visitors & Volunteers

All visitors must sign in and out at the front desk with a valid state ID. Classroom visit must be pre-arranged to ensure minimal disruption to learning and alignment with the Montessori normalization process.

Criminal Background Checks

In accordance with Minnesota state law (MN Stat. §123B.03 Subd. 1(e)), Three Rivers Montessori (TRM) is required to inform families about our policy on criminal history background checks.

To promote a safe and secure school environment, TRM requires criminal background checks for all employees and individuals who provide services to the school. This includes, but is not limited to:

- All TRM staff and faculty
- School board members
- Substitute teachers
- Contracted service providers (e.g., janitorial, food service, transportation)
- Regular volunteers or individuals who may have unsupervised access to students

TRM also reserves the right to conduct background checks at its discretion for individuals involved in school operations, even if their role does not explicitly require one by law.

Families seeking more information about the school's full background check policy are encouraged to contact the school office.

17. Communication & Testing

Concerns and Complaints Procedure

Begin by speaking with your child's teacher. If unresolved, contact the schools Administrative Assistant for further assistance.

State and District Testing

Students participate in classroom, district, and state assessments. Key tests include:

- FastBridge (Grades K–6): Measures academic growth, identifies needs, and monitors progress.
- MCAs (Grades 3–6): State tests for reading, math, and science (5th grade only).
- ACCESS for ELLs: For English learners in K–12, assessing listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- Alternate assessments: Available for students with significant cognitive disabilities as determined by an IEP team.

Testing Preparation & Conduct

To ensure optimal performance during standardized assessments, TRM recommends that students get a full night's sleep and eat a nutritious breakfast on testing days. Familiarity with testing formats and procedures is encouraged through participation in practice tests provided by teachers. Families can support this by creating a quiet, organized study space at home and helping students feel confident and prepared.

All TRM students and staff are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. During assessments, students must do their own work, refrain from discussing or sharing test content, and avoid the use of unauthorized aids. Violations such as cheating or disruptive behavior may result in disciplinary consequences. Educators receive annual training to ensure that testing environments are secure and that procedures are consistently followed throughout the school year.

Parents can also support their child's success by encouraging positive test-taking strategies, reducing anxiety through open conversations, and emphasizing the importance of doing one's best.

Students should get adequate sleep, eat breakfast, and participate in practice tests. TRM expects all students to demonstrate integrity during assessments and prohibits cheating or dishonesty.

Closing Statement:

Three Rivers Montessori is proud to support every child and family in our learning community. As a small charter school guided by Minnesota State standards and our authorizer's goals, we are committed to creatively supporting each child's development as a capable, compassionate citizen. Thank you for choosing TRM as your educational partner.

Appendix A

