



LHU Board of Directors Regular Meeting

August 28, 2024 6:30 PM
Sterling Montessori Academy and Charter School
202 Treybrooke Drive, Morrisville, NC 27560
Virtual via Google Meet

1. COMMENCEMENT

Call to Order and Board Attendance w/Determination of Quorum
 At 6:33pm

Quorum Present with following Board Members in Attendance:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Present</u>		<u>Name</u>	<u>Present</u>		<u>Name</u>	<u>Present</u>
Katie Brown	x		Kevin Hughes	x		Elizabeth Uzzell	
Kim Elliott	x		Dwayne Jones	x			
Jessi Fasola	x		Keisha Pressley	x			
Ryan Hill	x		Rachel Richardson	x			

Reading of Mission Statement:

“The mission of Sterling Montessori is to create a diverse educational community, grounded in the Montessori philosophy and teaching practices, that fosters curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking in its students. We strive to empower each student to become life-long learners who respect themselves, others, and their environment.”

Conflict of Interest Statement

“At this time, we ask all board members to make a statement to be recorded in the minutes should they know of any conflict of interest or appearance of conflict with respect to any matters coming before them during this meeting. It is the duty of each board member to abstain from discussion and voting on such matters.”



Native Land Acknowledgement

“The LHU Board recognizes that Sterling Montessori sits on the ancestral land of the Tuscarora, Lumbee and Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Tribes. As we strive to become better stewards of the environment, we also strive to provide a more equitable and culturally responsive environment for all students, but especially Black and indigenous students of color.”

Agenda Items:

Including any related consent agenda items or discussion items added to agenda prior to consent vote.

- Closed Session for Grievance Report

Approval of Agenda

At 6:35p, Rachel Richardson moved to approve the agenda. Approved

Name	Ave	Nay	Abs		Name	Ave	Nay	Abs		Name	Ave	Nay	Abs
Katie Brown	x				Kevin Hughes	x				Elizabeth Uzzell			
Kim Elliott	x				Dwayne Jones	x							
Jessi Fasola	x				Keisha Pressley	x							
Ryan Hill	x				Rachel Richardson	M							

2. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Please hold community comments until the end of ALL presentations. Board members may ask clarifying questions at this time of the presenter. Any board member may move to refer further discussion or other action back to the committee, with a vote.

Executive Director’s Report – Gloria

- Presentation of the report content, report included.
- Introduction and staff coming back end of August
- Enrollment #'s 564 K-8 / 48 pk-3 67 / Total 689



- Are we on waitlist? Some grades we are out of waitlist
- Discussion on ADM
 - We can have 580 students in powerschool, but until they are in
 - 8 preschool spots open with 40 participants in a tour today.
 - Aftercare and summer offerings are crucial for attracting and retaining.
- Questions Regarding Enrollment and ADM.
 - Which areas have wait list and the numbers by grade?
 - Have we offered every waitlist spot and, if not, why not?
 - Why the 3 and 4 year olds are not full?
 - What did we understand in June and what is different now?
 - What is the typical pattern for late August unenrollment?
 - Are there any predictable elements of the pattern?
 - How fast are we able to get responses and what communication methods are we using?
 - What is our marketing strategy and how are we “selling” ourselves?
 - Can we make “warm” calls to waitlist families to let them know their waitlist status and offer a tour?
 - Can we confirm with DPI, the waitlist call order? Are we required to offer in exact order of the wait list?
 - Who is involved in filling the vacant seats? Is it all on the operations team or are section directors involved? Are they aware of the impact on the budget?
 - Have we offered more seats than we have space for? And should we ensure we have more offers out than we have seats as the likelihood of all being taken is low.
 - How long are we going to let kids join Sterling?

Communications Committee Report - Ryan Hill

- Not met yet, expect a Sept/Oct Meeting

Finance Committee Report - Kim Elliott

- ADM discussion
- Proposed finance working session for next week, Wednesday, 9/4 in person at school.
- Understanding current Two new policies proposed.
- Was there marketing money in the budget and are there efforts needed for marketing academy spots?



DEI Committee Report - Dwayne Jones

- Shared the intent for student council involvement in the DEI work and understanding how they can be empowered.
- Honor parents' sense of belonging to the community and being part of the initiative for the student advisory council.

Policy Committee Report - Kevin Hughes

- Discussed edits to parent and employee handbook.
- Currently in the consent agenda for approval.
- The board may not need to approve edits that are not substantial, but it has been our practice.
- Committee is looking at referral bonus policy details

Development Committee Report – Keisha Pressley

- Discussed start, stop, continue.
- Continue to work towards the actions in place before the NLI projects
- Notable
- Bill Spruill made a \$1,500 contribution from the Chamber and a thank you note going out.
- We are behind where we were last year due to the coffee chat engagement.
- Consider 1 to 2 small wins that we can focus on.
- Create an introduction with Keisha and the local Chamber for attendance.
 - Keisha attending the next Chamber event
- How will we communicate with NLI on their contact for next actions.
- Pending contractors that are awaiting responses.
- Keisha is going to reconnect with Stephanie to be the point person and shoot for the September regular meeting for presentation.

Governance Committee - Katie Brown

- Prospective board members moving through the process.
- Two rolling off this fall, this is Kim Elliott's final board meeting
- Kim and Katie have both expressed interest in remaining engaged as advisory board members.



- Keisha has expressed interest in taking the Governance Chair position when Katie rolls off.
- Encourage board members to be involved in two committees.

Strategic Planning Committee Report - Ryan Hill

- Directors are having discussions on the equity audit or if we have the time to invest?
- Next up is our board sessions to be scheduled in September.

Discussion Items:

- Form a search committee for Executive Director
 - Kim Elliott provided an overview of the role of chair.
 - Last time, we used the Spark Hire for initial interviews
 - Involved representatives from all stakeholders
 - Have we involved an agency?
 - In the past, we didn't seem to get the leads that we needed for the value of the spend.
 - If we're looking for someone with a public montessori background, we probably have the resources - but the search committee should add this to their discussion.
 - Recommendation for Executive Committee representative and as many board members as possible to attend initial.

Consent Item – Approval of Search Committee and Chair

At 8:22p, Ryan Hill moved to reinstate the search committee with Elizabeth Uzzell as chair .
Approved

Name	Aye	Nay	Abs		Name	Aye	Nay	Abs		Name	Aye	Nay	Abs
Katie Brown	x				Kevin Hughes	x				Elizabeth Uzzell	x		
Kim Elliott	2				Dwayne Jones	x							
Jessi Fasola	x				Keisha Pressley	x							
Ryan Hill	M				Rachel	x							



				Richardson							
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Community Comments (3 minute time limit)

The Board Secretary will record names of speakers with a brief summary of comments. The board will not directly respond to any comments during this time. Please provide contact information to president@lhuf.org to allow for follow-up by the appropriate officer or committee chair. Formal comments may be emailed to president@lhuf.org ahead of any regular meeting to be considered for agenda/discussion.

- Tiara Smith: Two things mentioned. Can we consider sending waitlist approvals sooner and make sure we consider equity due to families ability to respond. What is the process for going through the process and keeping up with the administration of the responses? Ensure there is an efficient and potential modern approach.
- Katrina DiTomaso: Parent of 2nd and 4th grader. It's been scary to see the turnover and understanding the turnover. The "rock" through all of that was Cathy Constantine and if there is any way she can return in any leadership position it would be desired. It was a big loss. Grateful for the ask for donations. Frustrating as a parent to make the funding efforts happen. What opportunities do parents have to be involved?
- Faith Meeker: When talking about what sells the school. Is the calendar representative of what the community wants? The loss of fall break was a big loss. We have some poor reviews and given the marketing efforts, there may be an opportunity to promote the benefits of Montessori. Didn't know that there was an opportunity for involvement and there is opportunity to join the conversations. It would be good to share how the various family spending in different areas contributes to the school and development.

3. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Consent agenda items are non-controversial items unanimously recommended for approval by all involved parties and have already been reviewed by the board and Executive Director. Any board members or the Executive Director may request to pull items off the consent agenda.

Approval of Consent Agenda Items.

- Approval of June 26, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes
- Approval of July 1, 2024 Special Meeting Minutes
- Approval of July 23, 2024 Special Meeting Minutes



- Approval of July 24, 2024 Special Meeting Minutes
- Approval of July 26, 2024 Emergency Meeting Minutes
- Approval of August 2, 2024 Emergency Meeting Minutes
- Approval of August 10, 2024 Emergency Meeting Minutes
- Approval of 2024-2025 Employee Handbook
- Approval of 2024-2025 Parent Handbook
- Retaining Kim Elliott as an advisory board member

At 8:43p, Rachel Richardson moved to approve Consent Agenda Items. Approved.

Name	Aye	Nay	Abs		Name	Aye	Nay	Abs		Name	Aye	Nay	Abs
Katie Brown	x				Kevin Hughes	x				Elizabeth Uzzell	x		
Kim Elliott	x				Dwayne Jones	x							
Jessi Fasola	x				Keisha Pressley	x							
Ryan Hill	x				Rachel Richardson	m							

Consent Item – Closed Session

To prevent the disclosure of privileged or confidential information that is protected [N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(1)]

At 8:45p, Kevin moved to enter the closed session . Approved

Name	Aye	Nay	Abs		Name	Aye	Nay	Abs		Name	Aye	Nay	Abs
Katie Brown	x				Kevin Hughes	M				Elizabeth Uzzell	x		
Kim Elliott	x				Dwayne Jones	x							
Jessi Fasola	x				Keisha Pressley	x							



Ryan Hill	x				Rachel Richardson	x						
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8. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:43p, Rachel Richardson moved to adjourn. Approved

Name	Aye	Nay	Abs		Name	Aye	Nay	Abs		Name	Aye	Nay	Abs
Katie Brown	x				Kevin Hughes	x				Elizabeth Uzzell	M		
Kim Elliott	x				Dwayne Jones	x				Robert Wolfe			
Jessi Fasola	x				Keisha Pressley	x				Lan Zhu			
Ryan Hill	x				Rachel Richardson	x							

Attendance:

Full Name	First Seen	Time in Call
+1 512-***-**-29	8/28/2024 19:57	0:47:48
+1 919-***-**-87	8/28/2024 18:45	0:05:22



LAURA HOLLAND UZZELL FOUNDATION

A nonprofit organization

Andrea Williams	8/28/2024 18:32	2:12:44
Carroll Krause	8/28/2024 18:30	2:14:05
Dwayne Jones	8/28/2024 18:30	3:12:32
Elizabeth Uzzell	8/28/2024 19:40	2:02:56
Faith Meeker	8/28/2024 18:30	2:14:15
Fay Masterson	8/28/2024 18:50	1:54:29
First Born Legacy	8/28/2024 18:30	2:14:07
Gloria Jones	8/28/2024 18:30	2:14:15
Hunter Golden	8/28/2024 18:30	2:14:23
Jason Olson	8/28/2024 18:31	1:25:01
Jessi Fasola	8/28/2024 18:30	3:12:32
Katie Brown	8/28/2024 18:30	3:12:27
Katrina DiTomasso	8/28/2024 19:40	1:05:09
Keisha Pressley	8/28/2024 18:30	3:12:35

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LAURA HOLLAND UZZELL FOUNDATION

A nonprofit organization

Kevin Hughes	8/28/2024 18:30	3:14:52
Kim Elliott	8/28/2024 18:30	4:18:26
Leslie Hamilton	8/28/2024 18:30	2:13:59
Michael Hanas	8/28/2024 18:55	1:39:19
Rachel Richardson	8/28/2024 18:31	3:12:14
Robert Wolfe	8/28/2024 18:36	1:45:44
Ryan Hill	8/28/2024 18:30	4:18:26
Susan English	8/28/2024 18:30	2:14:14
Sydney Golden	8/28/2024 18:31	2:13:58
Tiara Smith	8/28/2024 18:31	2:09:51

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Regular Monthly Meeting Report

Committee Actions:

None.

Minutes from August 20, 2023 Meeting:

Attendance and Call To Order

(In-Person)

Chair: Jessi Fasola Board Members: Kim Elliott

Others: Betty Warren, Gloria Jones, Denise Kimball

Meeting was called to order at 9:15

- **Overall Review**

- **ADM**

- Understanding new calculation policy - *not funded on growth!* We are funded on 633 this year and will be funded *next year* on the greater of the first two months this year.

- Current Enrollment Data - 35 seats open

- **Solar Panels** - we spent \$327k - \$170k more than we originally approved. There is a chance to get a credit of \$97k, and we are in discussions with our CPAs.

- **Promissory Notes** - we need to change our wording to make it harder to leave without repayment

- **Salaries** - scales have been increased according to the state budget; we will increase Sterling's Director and Manager scales by 3.6% to match teacher increases.

-

- **Sign-on bonuses** - **need to write new policy** - bonuses are paid out in November and February (½ each time); if employee leaves before the end of the school year in which the bonus payments were received, they will repay a prorated amount equal to the months remaining in the year.

- **Teacher List** - Openings - we cannot sustain 96 staff

- We need to talk about moving staff around and the staffing structure of MS.

- We also **need a new policy** on addressing when a current teacher moves to a new scale and how to credit time from their previous scale to their new scale; e.g., a TA who has worked for 23 years is now licensed and becomes a lead - how much credit do we give them on the new scale?

- **2024-2025 Budget Review**

- **ADM** - funded on 633

- **County Funding** - 2% increase; 620 ADM is our hopeful estimate

- **PRCs** - Gloria is meeting to discuss the other PRCs available to us

- There are three PRCs that we have simply waived in the past; we are verifying what is needed to apply this year (due date September)
- **Tuition Revenue** - lower than in previous years - 115 3YOs & 4YOs vs. 128 in years past
- **Other Income** - lower because of the land sale money from last year (\$179k)
- **Personnel** - includes all positions with scale and step increases; don't know about insurance & retirement until everyone is hired
 - Hold on 5th ECPA, Floater, and Interventionist until we get confirmation on ADM
- **Instructional** - lower this year because we bought chrome books last year
 - Professional Development - tweaked the 2023-25 budget
- **Office and Admin** - mimics last year
- **Facilities** - mimics last year
- **Surplus** - already obligated \$77k for solar panels
- **DCR** - **.98**

Closure and Next Steps:

Meeting was adjourned at 11:43; Any follow-up actions noted above.

Next Meeting TBD.



DEI Committee

Regular Monthly Meeting Report - August 2024

DEI Mission: Sterling Montessori values diversity, prioritizes equity, and commits to being an inclusive school community which is critical to meeting our Montessori mission and affirming the full humanity of all community members. ([Our DEI Pledge](#))

Minutes from August 5th, Meeting:

Attendance and Call To Order

Virtual via Google Meet

Chair: Dwayne Jones

Board Members Present: Dwayne Jones, Keisha Pressley

Others:

Meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm

Strategic Refocusing

- Refocusing to increase student and parental involvement through genuine/ positive engagement to foster more inclusivity
- Shifting our DEI efforts to include a stronger focus on "Belonging" was discussed, potentially through a more centralized *Student Success and Belonging Program*. This program seeks to build a more inclusive environment by fostering a sense of belonging, which research shows can improve students' academic performance.

Student Council Involvement

- A student advisory committee can ensure that student-focused concerns are addressed.
- This initiative aims to empower students by giving them a voice in shaping their learning environment.



- Some initial ideas included minimizing adult-oriented metrics and offering tangible incentives, such as bracelets for students and teachers or custom decals designed by the students for their computers, desks, etc.

Parental Involvement

- **School Advisory Council**
 - The Executive Director will establish a School Advisory Council to facilitate input and cooperation between parents and school officials on school programs and activities. This council aims to provide a platform for parents to engage more deeply with school affairs. How can the Board and/ or DEI committee assist with this initiative, given our focus on fostering inclusive and collaborative environments?

Discussion Items

- Consider an initiative to develop a student advisory committee and come up with 2-3 preset goals, allowing students to contribute additional goals for each semester.
- There is a need and opportunity for increased professional development, now that the contract with Peaceful Schools is no longer in place
- It is noted that the DEI committee will recommend consultants at the next meeting, based on the following [list](#) of prospective candidates. From there, the director team is expected to engage in initial discussions/ consultations for a final determination.
- Explore the possible need for structural changes within the DEI committee - as there may be more opportunities for strategic refocusing within the context of our strategic plan development

Meeting was adjourned at 4:42pm.



Policy Committee

August 1, 2024 Meeting:

Attendance and Call To Order

Virtual via Google Meets

Chair: Kevin Hughes

Board Members: Keisha Pressley, Ryan Hill, Dwayne Jones

Others: Denise Kimball, Cinwain Garner

Meeting was called to order at 12:00pm.

Agenda

- PHB/EHD edits
- Referral Bonuses

Discussion Items:

PHB/EHB Edits

- Denise and Cinwain are making edits to PHB/EHB primarily to incorporate changes discussed
- Denise will present edits to the full board for a vote at next BOD meeting.

Referral Bonuses

- Should Sterling offer referral bonuses for classroom teachers? If so, when should those bonuses pay out?
- Policy Committee believes a bonus plan will encourage staff to activate their networks for job openings.
- Discussion over payment of the bonus. The general sentiment is we should pay a large portion once the referred candidate is hired and actually begins teaching. Discussion of offering ½ of the bonus payout after 90 days of teaching, and the remainder at the end of the school year.
- Kevin will draft a policy for review at an upcoming Policy committee meeting.



August Meeting Agenda Items

- Referral Bonus
- Review of School policy on contacting 911 for student or staff emergencies

Closure and Next Steps:

- Next meeting scheduled for September 5 at 12:00

Recommended Board Action

- Approval of PHB/EHB edits

Meeting was adjourned at 1:03pm.

Minutes from August 7, 2024 Meeting:

Attendance and Call To Order

Virtual via Google Meets

Chair: Keisha Pressley

Board Members: Jessi Fasola

Sterling Staff: Stephanie Deming

Meeting was called to order at 12:02pm.

Agenda

- **Recap 2023-2024 Giving Stats (as of 6/4/24)**
 - Board 100%
 - Admin 93%
 - Staff 84%
 - Community 36%

Development Balance: ~\$88,703

2022/24 Income/Spending

\$ 5,827	\$ 4,370	19,665	\$ 7,961	\$ 9,079	\$ 1,271	1,650	-	\$ (1,651)	\$ (4,005)	\$ (11,049)	\$ (3,528)
					COME	49,823				PENDING	(20,233)
11.70%	8.77%	39.47%	15.98%	18.22%	2.55%						
Matching Contributions	Check - Fund Contributions	De-	al	ndraising	est	n		sorships	velopment	SA	to

ACTION ITEMS

- Regrouping for 24/25 Annual Fundraising:
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Donation from Bill Spruill of \$1,500. Jessi will send him a thank you note on behalf of the board.
 - For 2024/25, we need to give people concrete action items (rather than just holding the funds in our “treasure chest”). Could be barn-raising for Strategic Planning; Outdoor environment improvements, etc.
 - Consider 1-2 wins from our smaller list that we could action on .
- 2024 Annual Report Completed and posted on the Sterling site

- Includes information on Strategic Planning; NLI Outdoor Environment work; Professional Development (AMS Meeting); Specials and the usual Development overview.

- Continue the National Day of Giving - Will Continue
- Stephanie will create an introduction between Keisha and Wendy who coordinates programs , events, and membership for the Chamber. Keisha will be added to step in for events that Stephanie is unable to attend. First event 9/12 (Coffee Connections).

Discussion Items:

1. Where do we currently stand? What projects are in flux and urgent?
2. How do we communicate with NLI and other partners about what is occurring?
3. Is the video still in the budget for video production?

Closure and Next Steps:

- 1. Stephanie to connect with Sam and Ryan.**
- 2. Stephanie to connect with Gloria regarding direction so that there is alignment and role assignments. There are still some pending contractors waiting on a reply as to if projects will start, stop, or continue.**

Meeting was adjourned at 12:32p.



Governance Committee

Regular Monthly Meeting Report - August 2024

Committee Actions and Recommendations:

- Two prospective new board members are working their way through the application process; no action is needed at this time.
- Two board members rolling off this fall (Kim Elliott and Katie Brown) have expressed interest in remaining involved with the LHU board via advisory roles.
- Keisha Pressley has expressed interest in becoming Governance chair with Katie Brown rolls off.
- Development committee is seeking direction during this time of transition.
- Current board members should continue to recruit from their networks for possible LHU board candidates.
- All board members should commit to serving on at least two committees.

DRAFT



Minutes from August 7th, 2024 Meeting:

Attendance and Call To Order

Virtual via Google Meet

Chair: Katie Brown

Board Members Present: Elizabeth Uzzell, Jessi Fasola, Kim Elliott, Keisha Pressley

Meeting was called to order at: 4:02pm

Recruiting / Succession planning

✚ Current LHU Board Interest Matrix

- Discussion of Susan English's interview
 - Schedule follow up conversation with Katie and Kim to address outstanding questions
- New applicant: Daphne Coulter
 - Has finance background
 - Jessi and Katie will interview her

✚ Current LHU Board Member Information


- Kim rolling off this month
 - Advisory role?
- Katie rolling off in November
 - Also advisory role?
- Need to identify next governance chair
 - Keisha has expressed interest
- Review Charter Board Partners board composition matrix
- Discuss board recruitment strategy
 - Need for financial expertise, policy/legal, education; also seeking south Asian representation to better mirror our school community
 - Ideas: publish notice in ParentSquare, "why I serve" blurb in the newsletter from current board members
- Discuss committee membership



Committees

- Development–Keisha and Jessi met with Stephanie today
 - How effectively can development efforts proceed during this leadership transition?
 - What should this committee be focused on right now?
 - Should this committee work in conjunction with strategic planning?
 - Discuss with full board at August meeting

Board Calendar

- Tabled for September
 - Any changes to board calendar?
 -  LHU Strategic Calendar

Meeting was adjourned at 4:57pm

DRAFT



Minutes and Board Report from August 12, 2024 Meeting:

Attendance and Call To Order

Virtual via Google Meets

Chair: Ryan Hill

Board Members: Dwayne Jones, Katie Brown, Elizabeth Uzzell, Jessi Fasola, Kim Elliott

Others: Kim Elliott

Meeting was called to order at 4:00pm.

Discussion Items:

- Re-engaging our process as a board. Sam will not attend but I have some tentative dates from Sam for board discussions this fall.
 - DEI/ABAR discussions with the board.
 - DEI/ABAR committee update (Student success and belonging and access)
 - What questions should the board answer as it relates to our strategic plan?
- Discuss the Communications Framework
 - Status
 - Photographer: Need more professional photos?
 - Design: Stephanie may be willing to take this on. Need to decide next steps.
 - Present to the board after content finalized and before design.
- Discuss AMS Accreditation
 - We should put a pin in it but not let go of it.
 - Status was asked in the staff meeting. Stephanie was on the last phone call and AMS said that if we were all staffed by August. They would not be able to plan a visit for 12 to 18 months. Liz is on this.
 - Pipeline, retention and training as a focus for our strategic conversation.
 - The work done til now does not go away.
 - Still have the responsibility and meetings for the committees. Question to the directors? They are waiting for instruction.
- NLI / NCSU Outdoor work



- Development to take lead on NLI.
- Stephanie gave an update on NLI.

Closure and Next Steps:

Meeting was adjourned at 5:08p.

Up Next:

- Revisit the Board Member survey for a session dates (2.5 hr virtual sessions)
- Board discussion to discuss the investment for our barn raising event and the date.



STERLING
MONTESSORI
EST. 1997

PARENT HANDBOOK

UPDATED 05/17/24

Sterling Montessori Academy and Charter School follows all CDC and DHHS guidelines and requirements. This may, at times, alter the usual policies and procedures in place.

The mission of Sterling Montessori is to create a diverse educational community, grounded in the Montessori philosophy and teaching practices, that fosters curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking in its students. We strive to empower each student to become life-long learners who respect themselves, others and their environment.

PARENT HANDBOOK
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Welcome
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Sterling Montessori Charter
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Stewardship
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Evaluation and Progress
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PARENT HANDBOOK

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Expectations for incoming Academy Students

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Student Retention and Acceleration

Student Information Sheets

Health/Medical Records and Immunizations

29 Required Docs: Pre-schoolers through Eighth Grade

Returned Check (NSF)

WITHDRAWAL

Welcome

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Sterling Montessori is to create a diverse educational community, grounded in the Montessori philosophy and teaching practices, that fosters curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking in its students. We strive to empower each student to become life-long learners who respect themselves, others and their environment.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Sterling Montessori follows the philosophy and teaching practices based on the Montessori Method developed by Dr. Maria Montessori (1870- 1952). Montessori education emphasizes learning through all five senses.

Children learn at their own pace with a goal of nurturing a natural desire for knowledge, understanding, and respect. A child's work at Sterling Montessori is an exciting process of discovery leading to concentration, motivation, self-discipline, and a love of learning.

Montessori classrooms have three-year multi-age groups (ages 3-6, 6-9, 9-12, and 12-15) together, forming communities in which the older children spontaneously share their knowledge with the younger children. The Montessori method of education is a child centered educational approach based on scientific observations of children. Children develop physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively in order to thrive in the real

world.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Sterling Montessori...

nurtures in its children a lifelong love of learning and respect for themselves and others, in a peaceful environment follows the philosophy and curriculum of Maria Montessori as the cornerstone of the educational programs. The Montessori curriculum is scientifically based and meets the requirements of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and the Office of Charter Schools

has an aesthetically pleasing campus and is an interactive extension of the classroom by offering a prepared and sustainable environment for children

has prepared environments that are developmentally appropriate and provide hands-on learning, freedom of choice, a mixed-age classroom, the absence of rewards and punishments, uninterrupted work periods, and individualized instruction that supports each child's growth

views diversity as a strength where every individual is welcomed, treated with respect, and supported in their own educational journey. Our diverse population is celebrated and enriches our students' cultural education so that they learn to value differences and listen respectfully to a variety of ideas as a step towards supporting a more peaceful world

understands that to follow a child with learning differences might require additional expertise and implementing a specialized learning plan in addition to the Montessori curriculum

is a community where the voices of children, parents, and staff are valued and all members are active participants in creating an ideal learning environment for all

in pursuit of our mission and goals, is a financially sustainable institution, whose leadership models transparency, accountability, and professionalism for its staff

VISION

Sterling Montessori is a model charter school that demonstrates how the Montessori Method and a commitment to academic excellence helps students reach their full potential. We envision a sustainable, accessible, and diverse institution that graduates thriving students who are engaged in lifelong learning and are empowered to become positive, contributing members of their immediate and global communities.

HISTORY OF STERLING MONTESSORI

In 1989, Andrea Faurot and Charles Uzzell founded the Cary Montessori School, which served children ages 3-6 years old. After several site changes to accommodate growth, the school settled into a building at 201 High House

Road in Cary. As parents/guardians began requesting additional grades, a temporary site was selected to accommodate elementary children. The current campus was built in 1997.

In 1997 the state of North Carolina approved the first group of charter schools. Thanks to a generous contribution by Laura Holland Uzzell (LHU), the Sterling Montessori Charter was granted by the state in the spring of 1997. We held our first attendance lottery in April of that year. The school served approximately 200 children in its first year as a combination academy and charter school.

SCHOOL STRUCTURE

Our school consists of two separate educational entities. The Academy serves preschool children ages 3-5 and is a tuition based program. The Charter School serves children ages 5-14, which includes Kindergarten through 8th grade.

Montessori methods and philosophies.

Sterling Montessori Academy is...

an American Montessori Society (AMS) Member school. Sterling Montessori follows the AMS educational guidelines.
licensed by the State of North Carolina, Division of Child Development and Early Education, as a childcare and preschool facility.
a full day, Montessori preschool program ~~which offers an optional summer camp.~~
overseen by the LHU Board of Directors, a non profit organization.
committed to offering parent education in

Sterling Montessori Charter School is...

an AMS (American Montessori Society) Member school.
Sterling Montessori follows the AMS educational guidelines.
a full day, ten-month, Montessori kindergarten, elementary and middle school educational program.
chartered by the State of North Carolina as a public charter school. Sterling Montessori meets or exceeds all North Carolina State Standards.
overseen by the LHU Board of Directors, a non-profit organization.
committed to offering parent education in the Montessori method and philosophies.

LAURA HOLLAND UZZELL (LHU) BOARD

The LHU Board meetings are open to the public. A community comment section is an item on the agenda, and anyone is welcome to address the Board. Advance notice is appreciated, but not required. In the interest of time management, the President of the Board reserves the right to limit the time granted to each individual, so that the regularly scheduled Board business can be conducted. For more extensive discussions, including those where a Board decision is requested, please contact the LHU board to request time on the agenda. If you would like to contact individual board members, please visit [Sterling's website](#) for board members contact information.

The LHU Board welcomes anyone who is interested in serving on the board to submit a letter of interest and resume or curriculum vitae to the President of the Board, president@lhuf.org, for consideration.

PARENT, FACULTY, STUDENT ASSOCIATION (PFSA)

The Parent, Faculty, Student Association (PFSA) is a very important part of Sterling Montessori. The PFSA strives to support the students, teachers and staff of the Sterling Montessori community, with the goal of enriching the children's Montessori education.

Parents/guardians volunteer time and talents and, working with Sterling's Development Director, [raise funds](#) to support various programs. To stay informed and connected, visit [Sterling's Parent, Faculty, Student Association](#) page located on Sterling's [website](#).

Learn about our monthly meetings, get [event](#) reminders, and remain up-to- date on Sterling-related topics.



STEWARDSHIP

Sterling's Strategic Plan outlines the importance of stewardship to support growth and sustainability through strong development and public relations in order to meet the long term needs of the community. As a charter school, our operating budget relies not just on federal and state support, but also the generous donations of our community, both individual and corporate. Throughout the school year, there will be many opportunities for all to get involved in raising funds for school-wide initiatives and classroom projects. Working with both the Development Office and PFSA, donations can be made in time, money, in-kind gifts, stock donations, corporate partnerships/sponsorships and more! We thank you in advance for your development partnership.

Our complete Donated Stock Policy (Page 36) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.

CURRICULUM AND EVALUATION

Sterling Montessori's curriculum is based on the philosophy of Maria Montessori. Sterling Montessori meets and exceeds state and national standards in all curricular areas. Teachers evaluate student progress through careful and constant observation, one cornerstone of the Montessori Method. This allows each student's education to be individualized.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)

MTSS stands for Multi Tiered System of Supports. It is a framework, a way of thinking, a mindset through which we can highlight student needs, risks and opportunities and then identify the next steps to employ in service to the student. MTSS is used to provide targeted support to struggling students. It focuses on the "whole child." MTSS supports academic growth and achievement, behavioral growth and development, social and emotional needs and absenteeism. It is an integrated continuum that is varied, differentiated, organized and child centered. Students fluidly move between a seamless support system.

It is a data-based problem-solving process to make educational decisions regarding student outcomes across levels, content areas and tiers. It is a Four Step Problem Solving Rubric:

1. Defining goals and objectives- What is the problem?
2. Identification of obstacles- Why is it occurring?
3. Developing an evidence-based plan and strategies to meet goals- What are we going to do about it?
4. An evaluation plan to monitor effectiveness- Is it working?

WHO IS IN MTSS?

All students ~~are considered to be in~~ Tier One ~~of receive the~~ Multi-Tiered Systems of Support ~~where~~ through high fidelity Montessori curriculum and instruction ~~are~~ as the core focus.

SECTION 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments ACT of 2008 prohibits discrimination against students and employees on the basis of a disabling condition. All individuals determined to have a disability are protected by this law. 504/ADA cases in schools involve students who are not found to be in need of special education, but, instead, have various types of diagnosed physical or mental impairments that are shown to substantially limit one or more of the student's major life activities. These activities include, but are not limited to, areas such as learning, concentration, walking, seeing, breathing, hearing, lifting, bending, and performing manual tasks. Additionally, the major life activities include the operation of "major bodily functions/systems" such as the immune, neurological, or respiratory system. Review Board Policy: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities for issues of concern.

If you are new to our school and your child has a 504 Plan, please contact our 504 Coordinator in order to share and discuss their plan.

HOW DO WE PROGRESS MONITOR AND ASSESS ALL STUDENTS?

Daily Observations - Formal and Informal Montessori Three-Period Lessons with Materials Easy CBM for Reading and Math

Moby Max for Reading and Math Beginning of Grade (BOG), End of Grade (EOG) and End of Course (EOC) Tests

Parent Handbook 3
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MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS (ML)

Any new student enrolled in Sterling Montessori's Charter School will have a Primary Language Survey filled out for them by their parent/guardian. If a language other than English is listed on the survey, then the student will be administered an English Language screener (W-APT) within the first 30 days of the school year. The screener will assess whether the child is identified as an Multilingual Learner. If the student is identified as an Multilingual Learner (ML), the teachers will work with the child in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing and how they relate to the English Language. The teacher and ML Coordinator will create an ML Plan for the student which will focus on specific areas of English Language development and skills for the school year. This plan will be shared with the parents/guardians. ML Learners are administered the ACCESS test in late February/early March to assess their English language skills. The results of this test determine if a student remains an ML or exits the program. The school receives the ACCESS scores at the end of May/early June. Once scores are returned, they are shared with the teachers and parents/guardians. If a child is exited from the ML program, they are monitored over a 2 year period to be sure they are being successful within their classroom and are solid with their understanding and usage of the English Language.

BEGINNING OF GRADE TESTING POLICY

All 3rd Grade students must take the BOG Reading Assessment which must be administered within the first fifteen days of the new school year.

EVALUATION AND PROGRESS

Individual progress is monitored by each teacher. This helps inform lesson planning based upon a student's mastery of skills. Progress is reported to parents/guardians four times a year; two of these are shared during fall and spring conferences with parents/guardians, and progress reports are sent home in January and June.

END OF GRADE (EOG) TESTING POLICY

All students in grades 3 through 8 must take state-mandated EOG tests in math and reading each year. These tests are administered during the last 10 days of the school year. Students in grades 5 and 8 will also take a science EOG. Students who take NC Math I must take the Math I End of Course test. Sterling Montessori sends home a test calendar for the school year in August, so parents/guardians are aware of all the test dates for the school year and can plan accordingly. This test calendar is also posted on our school's website.

TUTORING

~~Some students may be identified as benefiting from receiving additional tutoring on individual subject topics, study skills or any other areas that will help them achieve success. In order to meet these needs, Sterling Montessori offers after-hours tutoring support provided by our qualified teachers or support staff.~~

Our complete Tutoring Policy (Page 169 PHB) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.

CREDIT BY DEMONSTRATED MASTERY

The purpose of Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) is to allow a student that is very advanced in a subject to earn credit for a high school course without having to take the in class semester or year-long course. The student already understands the concepts and content of the course and has shown they are ready to move on to a higher level. If a parent feels their child needs to go through the CDM process, they first meet with their child's teacher, section director, and CDM coordinator. If they agree that this is the right course of action, the parent fills out a CDM application. There are 2 phases to the CDM process. In phase I the student takes an assessment and must score at a required level to move on and phase II consists of the student creating an artifact that shows deep understanding and mastery of the content of the course. The student works with a CDM team through this process and if the child passes phase I and successfully completes phase II, the student passes the course.

~~**ACCELERATED-ADVANCED MATH PLACEMENT**~~

The Middle School at Sterling Montessori offers one course, Math I. All students in 8th grade now take Math I.

NORTH CAROLINA VIRTUAL PUBLIC SCHOOL (NCVPS)

If the class is currently being taught at Sterling Montessori, preference is that qualified students will take an in-person class.

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READ TO ACHIEVE



SA Read to Achieve legislative initiative is a part of the Excellent Public Schools Act. Under this state law, third grade students who are not reading at grade level by the end of third grade will receive special assistance, including summer reading camp and other interventions to make sure that they can achieve their reading goals in preparation for fourth-grade.

THIRD GRADE READING PROFICIENCY

According to Statute, students in the third grade shall be retained if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency by reading at or above the third grade level as demonstrated by the results of the state-approved standardized test of reading comprehension administered to third grade students. The charter school shall provide reading interventions to retained students to remediate reading deficiency, which may include 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted, evidence-based reading instruction, accelerated reading classes, transition classes containing third and fourth grade students, and summer reading camps.

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN SERVICES

Sterling Montessori provides special education and related services according to the federal mandates of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the regulations of the North Carolina Public School Law, Article 9. The school provides a continuum of services to meet the individual needs of students. The Public Schools of North Carolina, **Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) Division**, provides local units with detailed procedures for the delivery of special education services. These rules and regulations are detailed in the Parents Right Handbook.

PROJECT CHILD FIND

Under the IDEA Child Find mandate, all school districts including Charter schools must identify, locate and evaluate all children with

disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. After identifying children who may need services, all necessary evaluations must be completed.

Sterling Montessori Academy participates in the Child Find Process. Child Find posters and leaflets are displayed on the bulletin boards outside each building.

Please reference the [Child Find Brochure](#) for more information.

IN-STATE STUDENTS WITH A CURRENT IEP

In accordance with Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), Sterling Montessori will implement an IEP from a student's previous school upon their admission to Sterling. The EC team will develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP, if necessary, that better meets the needs of the individual student.

OUT-OF-STATE STUDENTS WITH A CURRENT IEP

In accordance with Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), Sterling Montessori will implement an IEP from a student's previous out-of-state school upon their admission to Sterling. The EC team will conduct an evaluation process to develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP, if necessary, that better meets the needs of the individual student.

CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Sterling Montessori uses the "Pyramid of Intervention [Live link Student Handbook](#)" as its discipline model. Sterling takes a team approach in decision making for disciplinary action. When an in-school or out-of-school suspension takes place for an EC student who is removed for more than ten days, the IEP team meets and ensures a continuum of services. An individualized approach addresses student's needs. When necessary the IEP team will develop a behavior intervention plan and/or a manifestation determination meeting will be put in place.

TEACHER EVALUATION FORMS FOR OUTSIDE SERVICES

Any teacher evaluation needed for outside services will require the following steps to be followed:

1. Parents/guardians must fill out the Exchange of Information Form.
2. Give prior notice to teachers and allow at least five days to complete.
3. All Teacher evaluation forms will be sent directly to the provider by Sterling Staff [after the Director review](#)

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The Regular School Day

ATTENDANCE

Attendance in school is central to a student's educational success. In addition to being a statutory requirement, regular attendance fosters a more cohesive classroom community and increases student performance and success. Families are requested to plan vacation trips and absences for personal reasons to correspond with school holidays so that the education process is not disrupted.

On days your child is absent, or to let the school know ahead of time that your child will be absent, email the school at attendance@sterlingmontessori.org as well as your child's teacher.

THE FIRST TWENTY DAYS OF SCHOOL

All students, both returning and newly enrolled, are expected to be in attendance each day for the first 20 days of school.

Once a parent/guardian accepts a seat, the student must attend school immediately. Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying our staff in advance if their student will not be in attendance at once. If a student does not attend school within the first three (3) days of school, the Admissions staff will email and call the parent/guardian of the admitted student. If the student does not attend school by the close of business on the third (3rd) day of school, that student will be automatically un-enrolled and the seat will be offered to the next person on the wait- list.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

School principals are required to authorize a minimum of two excused absences each academic year for religious observances required by faith of a student or a student's parents/guardians. The student shall be given the opportunity to make up any tests or other work missed due to this excused absence. (S.L.2010-112)

Our complete Attendance Policy ([Page 40](#)) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.

TARDINESS

Getting to class on time has a significant impact on your child’s instructional and social experience at school. During the 15-20 minute arrival window, your child is set up for a successful day by greeting and being greeted by teachers and peers, receiving important start-of-the-day information and directions, and settling into the daily routine.

Tardiness creates stress on your child and the classroom community as a whole. Based on these well documented facts, the faculty and Administration will make every effort to support your family’s success. Should your child be chronically tardy, you should expect to be contacted by a member of the administration for remediation.

TARDY PROCEDURE

When tardy, parents/guardians of kindergarten through 8th grade must walk their child to the Main Office to sign-in. After 8:45 AM, adults are required to check-in and must bring a photo ID. Tardies are excusable under the following circumstances:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Student illness | Family emergency (approved by Section Director) |
| Student medical appointment (parent/guardian phone call or note from a provider is needed to verify) | Religious holidays |
| Student or note from a | Court appointment |

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

EARLY DISMISSAL

Sterling Montessori is aware of the occasional need for students to be picked up early for various appointments (i.e. doctor, dentist, etc.). Please schedule these after school when possible. At the end of the school day, students are receiving last minute instructions, packing up and helping with the cleaning of the classroom. Dismissing students during this time causes a disturbance to teachers and classmates. Please go to the Main Office to request early dismissal from class and when possible email office@sterlingmontessori.org as well as the classroom teacher ahead of time. Repeated early dismissals are not allowed. Parents/guardians arriving after 2:30 pm will not be granted this request.

A-BUILDING ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

No student may be on the playground before or after school hours unless they are enrolled in a Beforecare or Aftercare Program.

Upon arrival, 3 year-olds, 4 year-olds and kindergarten aged children must be accompanied by an adult, or minor 13 years and older, to and from their individual classroom. Make sure the teacher personally greets your child for safety and in order to record attendance.

Minors 13 years and older are allowed to escort students to and from the building if the students arrive at school on time. Otherwise, if students are late, parents/guardians must park, bring their child to the Main Office for a tardy slip and then accompany their child to their classroom.

Dismissal of all A-building students (3 to 6 year-olds) begins at 3:15 pm and ends at 3:30 pm. Parents/guardians are required to park their cars, collect their children from their classroom’s outer doors, and escort their children back to their cars.

Authorization is required in writing when anyone other than the parent or guardian is picking up a student. For non-routine departures, we ask that parents/guardians email both the teacher and the Main Office. In order for your child to be released, the person must be listed on your child’s approved pick up list and be prepared to present a photo ID.

**3 year-olds and 4 year-olds in Children’s House must be signed in no later than 10:00am if arriving late to ensure they can attend school.

B, C & D BUILDING ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

No student may be on the playground before or after school hours unless they are enrolled in an Aftercare Program.

Authorization is required in writing when anyone other than the parent or guardian is picking up a student. For non-routine departures, we ask that parents/guardians email both the teacher and the Main Office. In order for your child to be released, the person must be listed on your child’s approved pick up list and be prepared to present a photo ID.

MORNING DROP-OFF FOR B, C & D BUILDING STUDENTS

There are three drop-off zones during morning carpool: Main Parking Lot (sidewalk only), Behind “C” Building at the sidewalk, and the

Back Parking Lot.(Children dropped off behind C building should exit on the driver's side, since that side faces the sidewalk).

We will have sidewalk monitors to ensure children safely walk to their classroom patio doors. As a reminder, please use the crosswalks and do not leave children unattended in your vehicle.

AFTERNOON PICK-UP FOR B, C & D BUILDING STUDENTS

The "C" Building zone will be blocked off. All families will have a carpool tag. Please make your tag visible to staff during carpool, or if you are a walker, that you have your tag ready to present to staff. Students will wait in their classroom to be called before they make their way to the drop off zone. All B,C, & D building siblings of preschoolers and kindergartners who are not going to routinely go through the carpool process, will need to be picked up at the designated cone. You must present your tag and verify that it matches the dismissal tag on your child's backpack before your child will be released to you.

All parents/guardians of Lower Elementary students must pick up from the main parking lot zone (Treybrooke).

Lower elementary students who have Upper Elementary and Middle School siblings will also be picked up at the main parking lot zone (Treybrooke).

All Middle School Students and Upper Elementary students who do not have a younger sibling at Sterling will be picked up at the back parking lot zone (Town Hall Blvd).

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CARPOOL PROCEDURES

Every effort is made by staff to keep carpool lines flowing and crosswalks safe. Parents/guardians shall wait in the carpool line of their youngest attending child. Parents/guardians who wait for their child(ren) from B, C and/or D Buildings must wait in the assigned area. Any children with them must be supervised and remain with their parents/guardians

Safety and security of your child is our first priority. The following guidelines and procedures shall be followed:

- Follow all signs and arrows in the parking lot.
- The right lane is for carpool and the left lane is for parking.
- Cell phone use is prohibited in the carpool line.
- Slow down in the parking lot.
- Only allow children to enter or exit the side of the car facing the sidewalk.
- Parents/guardians can only park in the main parking lot.
- The back parking lot is staff parking only.
- If you are waiting for your child in the carpool lane, pull to the front of the circle and put on your blinkers.





You must have a carpool tag to pick up a student in the carpool line. Please show your tag to the carpool staff every day. Adults without a tag will be asked to go to the Main Office before picking up any students.

Because parking is limited at Sterling, we ask that you do not use our lot to park your vehicle unless you are on campus.

Carpool Procedures

2023-24





IMPORTANT:
The **youngest** child attending Sterling Montessori determines your carpool procedures for **both** arrival and dismissal.
e.g. if a family has children in **both** CH & UE, follow the CH procedures.

Need Help? Contact Brittany Long, blong@sterlingmontessori.org

Acronyms for Reference	
Children's House	CH
Lower Elementary	LE
Upper Elementary	UE
Middle School	MS

Arrival Procedures

Reminder: The youngest child attending Sterling Montessori To respect the carpool procedure please make soon as you stop.

Arrival (8:30 - 8:45 AM)

1. **EXIT** car when **GREEN** flag is in cone
2. If CH, **PARK** car in Lot 1
 - a. **ESCORT** CH child to class patio door
 - b. Older siblings can **WALK** themselves to their class patio door
3. If **LE**, **USE BLUE** carpool lane
 - a. **EXIT** car sidewalk side *only*
 - b. **WALK** to class patio door

Arriv

4. **UE/MS** with siblings, **USE**
 - a. **EXIT** car
 - b. **WALK** to

Alternative

- NOT** for families
5. If **UE/MS** & **USE ORANGE** option:
 - a. **EXIT** car
 - b. **WALK** to
 - c. This lane morning

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Dismissal Procedures (Only 1st-8th grade families receive tags)

Reminder: Must **DISPLAY** carpool tag when on campus. ⚠️ If no tag, **PARK & GO** to Main Office with Driver License. The youngest child attending Sterling Montessori determines your carpool procedures for **both** arrival & dismissal. All CH students **MUST** stay with their parent for safety reasons. **NO** playing in courtyard or patio areas.

Children's House Dismissal 3:00 - 3:30 PM

1. Must **DISPLAY** carpool tag when on campus
2. If CH, **PARK** car in Lot 1
 - o **PICK-UP** CH child at class patio door
 - o If there are older siblings, **WALK** to front of Bldg A, **STOP** at painted **RED** line
 - o **SHOW** carpool tag to staff member
 - o **WAIT** for older siblings on sidewalk behind the **RED** line

LE/UE/MS Dismissal 3:30 - 3:45 PM

1. Must **DISPLAY** carpool tag when on campus
2. Children will **ENTER** car from sidewalk side. ⚠️ Do **NOT** open trunk.
3. **USE** same carpool line that you used for arrival.
 - a. UE/MS without younger siblings: **PURPLE** lane
 - b. LE & UE/MS with younger siblings: **BLUE** lane
 - c. **NO ORANGE** lane during dismissal

Late Dismissal CH: after 3:30 PM LE/UE/MS: after 3:45

1. **PARK** in Lot 1
 - ⚠️ Do **NOT** use Fire Lane
2. CH students will be taken to After-Care at 3:30.
 - ! Late fees will apply.
3. LE/UE/MS students will be in the Main Office until parent arrives
 - TAKE** carpool tag/Driver License to Main Office
 - ! Late fees will apply.

Campus Map (Loop colors are for the map only)

Please follow all NC standard traffic laws, including no double parking, illegal turns, or speeding. **Safety** is our #1 priority!

Please stay in your carpool lane, do not pass other vehicles. Model grace and courtesy at all times.

The **STARS** indicate safe drop-off zones for each carpool lane.

If parking, **USE** the ⬇️ pedestrian crosswalks.

Carpool tags must be **DISPLAYED** when on campus.

⚠️ Children must **ENTER/EXIT** cars on sidewalk side for all carpool lanes.

If using the **ORANGE** loop (AM only), **ENTER** campus using the **BLUE** loop, merge to **ORANGE** lane, & **EXIT** with **PURPLE** loop.



More Information on Arrival/Dismissal

For the safety and well-being of everyone, all participants must display **GRACE** and **COURTESY** to staff, other families and students during carpool.

Green Flag at Arrival

8:30 - 8:45 AM

ALL families & students must **WAIT** in car until **GREEN** flag is in cone

After 8:45 AM, if there is no **GREEN** flag **FOLLOW** *Late Arrival* on pg 2



Safety Alerts

1. If parking, **USE** painted pedestrian crosswalks for Arrival & Dismissal
2. Must **DISPLAY** carpool tag when on campus
 - ▲ If no tag, **PARK & GO** to Main Office with Driver License
3. CH children **MUST** be picked-up prior to the release of older siblings.
 - a. **SHOW** carpool tag to have older sibling called
 - b. If no tag, **GO** get carpool tag or **GO** to Main Office to with Driver License

Early Dismissal

1. **BRING** Driver License into Main Office
 2. **USE** lobby computers to check-out children
 3. ▲ **NO** children will be released for early dismissal after 2:30 PM
- If you arrive at 2:00 PM, you must wait in your car until carpool begins at 2:30PM

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CARPOOL TAGS

Families with students in Lower Elementary through 8th grade will receive 2 carpool tags (divorced families will receive 2 tags for each household). If your tag becomes lost or damaged or you need to rent additional tags, you may do so through [MySchoolBucks](#) which is located on Sterling's website. Additional carpool tags are \$10.00. Families who walk to pick up their child(ren) will also be given 2 carpool keychain tags. Additional keychain tags are not available for rent. If a person does not have a carpool tag they must park and check-in at the Main Office.

WALKERS

Students in Children's House through Upper Elementary may walk home only if accompanied by an adult. Parents of unaccompanied walkers must be subject to all of the following terms:

Students must be in the 7th or 8th grade.

Parents/guardians must submit a signed permission slip documenting they approve their child walking home two weeks prior to the first day of unaccompanied walking.

Students will be expected to walk to their home located no more than 2 miles from Sterling or to the Morrisville Library. Students may also walk to the community public transportation shuttle stop adjacent to the community library, for further transportation as approved by the parent.

All walkers will be dismissed as a group **at 3:45** following the afternoon carpool rush and in order to reduce crossing during highest traffic times.

Sterling staff may accompany the walkers to the edge of Sterling property but will not leave property or act as crossing guards. Students are expected to use crosswalks where available and only cross when safe. If it is learned or seen that a student is crossing a roadway unsafely, the student's permission slip to walk may be suspended or revoked by school leadership due to unsafe choices.

If applicable, students are strongly encouraged to use the crossing guard at Cedar Fork Elementary on Town Hall Drive. Finally, the Board and Sterling's administration recognizes the responsibility of parents/guardians in deciding whether to allow a student to walk to or from school.

CHANGES IN PICK-UP ROUTINES

Always make sure those who routinely pick-up are on your child's Student Information Sheet as an approved person. Teachers and administrators make note of each student's typical dismissal routines and typical pick-up person or people at the start of the school year. Changes to these normal pick-up routines and authorized pick-up person must be made in writing in advance by emailing the Office Manager at office@sterlingmontessori.org **AND the classroom teacher**. Include your child's name, student they are going home with and the person authorized to pick-up. This will help us shift your child's carpool procedure if necessary.

SITUATIONS WHICH REQUIRE A MAIN OFFICE CHECK-IN DURING DISMISSAL

Any last-minute changes to routine which have a non-authorized person picking-up your child will require that person to park and check-in at the Main Office. This will enable us to confirm and verify the information you provided in email. Any situation or change in pick-up routines that is not covered in this information will also require the person picking up to park and check in at the Main Office.

UNEXPECTED CLOSINGS, DELAYS AND EARLY DISMISSALS

Severe weather, including hurricanes and winter storms, is a normal part of the school year. A determination will be made on a case by case basis by the Executive Director or designee in the event of an unscheduled closing, delay or early dismissal. Sterling Montessori will not provide Beforecare when operating on a delay and will not provide Aftercare when operating with an early dismissal. All weather closings, delays and early dismissals will be posted on WRAL and the school's website. Sterling Montessori families will also receive alerts via text messaging, email and/or voicemail. Contact information is taken from the Student Information Sheets and is the responsibility of the family to keep this information updated. Families and staff are expected to make their own judgements and use their discretion about the safety of the roads during inclement weather. Families and staff should inform the school if they are not able to make it to school. Our complete policy on Unexpected Closings, Delays and Early Dismissals (Page 184) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.

BEFORECARE, AFTERCARE AND CLUBS

BEFORE & AFTERCARE

Sterling Montessori provides quality Beforecare and Aftercare programs for all enrolled students, enabling parents/guardians and family members to go to work knowing their children are in safe, caring environments.

Beforecare arrival begins each morning at 7:30 AM and Aftercare pick-up ends at 6:00 PM. The BeforeCare and AfterCare programs are offered 5 days a week.

Sterling does not offer individual days or single hours for these programs.

Registration information for both programs can be [found on our website](#). After 4:00 PM the Main Office is closed. In an emergency you can reach our aftercare staff by calling the following numbers:

**Students attending Children's House must arrive at school no later than by 10:00 am to attend aftercare service on that day.¹
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After Care Contact Information	
Children's House	(984) 220-1495
Elementary and Middle School	(984)220-1499

UNSUPERVISED CHILDREN BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

Sterling Montessori prohibits unsupervised children on campus at any time before or after school hours. Children who arrive earlier than their scheduled arrival time will be escorted to the Beforecare Program. Likewise, children who remain on campus after the scheduled pickup time will be escorted to a designated area to await their parents/guardians. Parents/guardians will be subject to a charge of \$5.00 per minute to a maximum of \$100.00 per day. When a parent/guardian is running late, a courtesy call should be made to the Main Office and/or classroom. Parents/guardians will receive a 1st time warning. The 2nd time the parents/guardians are late, there will be a late fee pick up charge.

AFTERCARE AND CLUBS

Students attending the Aftercare Program, or who are engaged in other after school activities, will be escorted to designated areas to wait for the start of the program or activity.

Student Health & Safety

CHARTER HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Sterling Montessori is compliant with all student health and safety requirements as defined in general statute, SBE policy, or the signed charter agreement. Sterling Montessori is required to annually report all immunizations. All immunization records and health assessments must be in the student's file.

SICK PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES

Sick children are brought to a designated area in order to keep others healthy. Parents/guardians are then contacted to come to school to pick up their children as soon as possible. Children are to be kept out of school if any of the following symptoms develop at home:

Fever

Fever is determined by a thermometer reading 100.4 or higher or by subjective signs such as flushed cheeks, fatigue, extreme fussiness, chills, shivering, sweating, aches, headache, not eating or drinking.

Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has started.

If the child has vomited within a 24-hour period.

A red eye with white or yellow discharge, until 24 hours after treatment.

Scabies or lice (a child with any nits in their hair will be sent home until they are nit-free).

Chicken pox, or a rash suggestive of chicken pox.

Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.

Tuberculosis, until 2 weeks after treatment.

Pertussis, until five days after the appropriate antibiotic has been taken.

Hepatitis A, viral infection, until one week after onset of illness or jaundice.

Sudden onset of diarrhea characterized by an increased number of bowel movements compared to the child's normal pattern.

When a physician or other health professional issues a written order that the child should be separated from other children due to a contagious illness.

Open sores or fungal infections that cannot be covered, until a health professional states that the child is not infectious or is safe to return to school.

COVID symptoms according to CDC and NCDHHS.

When necessary, classroom communities will be notified of a spreading illness. CDC and DHHS requirements for reporting to the health department will be followed at all times. Children may not return to school until they are fever, vomiting or diarrhea free for 24 hours without needing any medication.

In addition, we may ask that you come to pick up your child if they are unwell and unable to participate in community routines. This includes, but is not limited to extreme irritability and fatigue.

Our complete Sick Policy (Page 37), including guidelines for when children may return to school, can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.

SANITATION PROCEDURES

In order to maintain a clean and healthy environment, we adhere to the following procedures:

Tables are washed by staff prior to class beginning, before and after any food consumption and at the end of the day. Students and staff members wash their hands at the beginning of the day, before and after any food consumption, after bathroom use and after outdoor activities and through the day as needed.

Sterling uses a sanitation approved, hospital grade cleaning agent that is safe to be used in school settings. PreK3, PreK4 and Kindergarten lunches must be stored in a refrigerator at the start of the day.

All uneaten food must be discarded after lunch and cannot be sent home.

Touch points (doorknobs, light switches, chairs, electronic devices, etc.) are cleaned regularly by staff with the hospital grade cleaning agent.

MEDICINE

All medicines are stored in and administered from the Main Office, with the exception of inhalers, diphenhydramine (Benadryl), and epinephrine injectors (EpiPen), which are kept in a secure area of the child's classroom. **In order to be admitted into class on the first day of school, students requiring EpiPens or inhalers must have the necessary paperwork and two current EpiPens/inhalers.** The school endeavors to make sure children receive medicine when required and may only administer labeled prescription medicines or over-the-counter medication in its original/most recent container. All prescription medication must be accompanied by a signed permission form. Prescription authorization must be renewed every year. **The same forms must be filled out and turned in at least 1 day prior to departure for overnight field trip medications.** A parent/guardian must pick up medication at the end of the school year or they will be properly disposed of within a week after the end of school. Our policy on over-the-counter topical medication prohibits the use of bug spray. However, we do permit sunscreen in stick form only. Sunscreen will be applied to students enrolled in our Aftercare program before they engage in outdoor activities in the late afternoon, ensuring their protection. To uphold the safety and welfare of all students, we kindly ask parents to contact the Director at least 24 hours in advance for any requests regarding over-the-counter medication or topical ointments. Completion of the required paperwork and adherence to instructions are mandatory to comply with our protocols and maintain accurate records. Our complete Student Medical Support Policy (Page 53) can be found in the policies section of this handbook.

CHRONIC HEALTH ISSUES

Please note on the Student Information Sheet, and notify the Main Office and all the child's teachers, if your child has a chronic health condition. Chronic health conditions include asthma, allergies, or anything that requires continuous medication or special considerations. Many of these chronic health conditions (allergies, asthma, diabetes, seizure) also require an action form to be completed and turned in to the Main Office. These forms can be found on both our website and in the Main Office. Sterling Montessori complies with FERPA regarding matters of confidentiality. Parents/guardians should report any new medications or health issues to their child's teachers and Section Director in a timely manner. Our complete Student Medical Support Policy (Page 53) can be found in the policies section of this handbook.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Services provided are to offer guidance and resources during school hours. Services are not provided after hours. Please know if you send an email or leave a phone message at the end of the school day or on the weekend you will not receive an answer until school is back in session. To learn more about the counseling services at Sterling, go to our website, click on Charter, Support Services and then the School Counseling link to get more information.

SUICIDE INTERVENTION

We take ALL threats seriously. Student safety is our primary concern. Our complete Suicide Intervention Policy (Page 35) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.

SAY SOMETHING ANONYMOUS REPORTING SYSTEM (SSARS)

This program, which fulfills the mandate requirement under 115C-105.51 of NC Law, teaches students, teachers, and administrators how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, of individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others and Say Something to a trusted adult OR use its anonymous reporting system. Specifically, the program educates participants to: Recognize the signs and signals of at-risk behaviors – especially within social media.

Take every sign and signal seriously; act quickly to get help by talking to a trusted adult OR report it anonymously through SS-ARS 24/7 Crisis Center, mobile app, or website.

Respond to and manage the submitted tip via multi-disciplinary educator and administrator teams.

Sustain the curriculum and awareness via student clubs, in-school activities and call-to-action weeks.

CHILD SUPERVISION

It is important children are supervised indoors and outdoors while at school. Elementary and middle school children may run errands in pairs. Children's House students must have an adult with them at all times. Upper elementary and middle school children may go to the restroom in their own building alone. When exiting the classroom in a line, one teacher should be at the beginning of the line and one at the end. If one teacher is escorting a smaller group, he or she should be at the back of the line. Have children stop at the corner and wait for the teacher to join them so the teacher can monitor the front and back of the line at all times.

CHILD SUPERVISION IN THE CHILDREN'S HOUSE

In the Children's House, state law requires two adults with a group of 25 children. If there is only one adult present with Children's House children, the ratio must not exceed 1 to 15. It is each individual teacher's responsibility to make sure the appropriate ratio is maintained at all times. During nap time, the ratio requirement changes. As long as children are on their nap mats, there only has to be one adult in the room at a time. When any child gets up and assumes their normal activities, a second adult must be present. Children must be where they can be seen and heard at all times. They may not be left alone with volunteers in hallways or spare rooms unless that volunteer meets licensing requirements. Children may work on the patios or hallways if the windows and doors are open, so they can be properly supervised.

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PLAYGROUND RULES & SUPERVISION

The Sterling Montessori playground has been thoughtfully constructed and maintained for the purpose of enriching the school experience for our students. Playgrounds are for student use only and are not available for before and after school use. It is important that during outside time, teachers and students model appropriate behaviors in problem-solving skills and conflict resolution strategies through the use of the Grace and Courtesy curriculum, Positive Discipline techniques and Restorative Practices. According to state law, children may not lose their playtime as a consequence. Texting, talking, and browsing on a cell phone while supervising children is prohibited unless there is a student emergency.

At Sterling, we believe in the importance of safe, unstructured free play. It is the job of teachers on the playground to keep the big picture at all times. Teachers should be aware of the location of all children and should be up and moving at all times. The playgrounds and fields are large and it is important that teachers spread themselves out to ensure child safety. If a teacher has to leave the playground to take a child to the bathroom, they must let other adults know and remain within ratio.

CHILDREN'S HOUSE PLAYGROUND SAFETY RULES

Rocks, sand and wood chips are to stay on the ground. The wood chips belong in the wood chip area. The sand and the digging tools stay in the sandbox.

Students are to stay on the inside of climbing structures.

The clubhouse is for walking through. Its windows are for looking through.

Use the stairs to access the slide. When sliding, students must be seated in a forward position. Slide down the slide feet first while sitting up. When they reach the bottom, students need to get off and move away from the slide. Only one person may use the slide at a time.

Students using the swing should sit on their backside, keep their bodies in the seat until the swing comes to a complete stop, swing back and forth only. No twisting and/or standing on swings. Students are not to jump off swings. Only one student on a swing at a time. Adults must check that all gates are closed after anyone goes out or comes in as it is not spring-mounted. The tricycles are to be ridden on the sidewalk by seated students. There should only be as many students on the tricycle as there are seats. Non-riders should keep their hands to themselves. Tricycle traffic goes clockwise at all times. Riders are expected to be respectful of other tricycles, people or structures when passing. Pedestrians have the right of way. All tricycles are to be parked on the porch outside of A-10 when any group leaves the playground.

ELEMENTARY PLAYGROUND/OUTDOOR SAFETY RULES

Balls are to be used on the designated fields only.

Treat the plants and trees with care.

Students need to have an adult's permission to be outside the classroom or on the playground.

Shoes are to be worn at all times.

Students should play away from entrances, exits and recycling areas.

Ask an adult for help if there is a problem or if someone is hurt.

All wood chips and rocks are to be kept on the ground.

Use the stairs to access the slide. When sliding, the student must be seated in a forward position. Slide down feet first while sitting up. When they reach the bottom, students need to get off and move away from the slide.

Up to three (3) people allowed on the tire swing at a time. Students must be seated on the tire swing with hands and feet inside.

Only one student pushes the tire swing.

No twisting and/or standing on swings. Students are not to jump off swings. Only one student on a swing at a time. Tag games should be played in an open space away from all playground equipment.

Students must obtain permission from the teacher before retrieving balls from the parking lot.

Patios and gardens are extensions of the classroom and students on the playground must refrain from playing on them while at recess.

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

All accidents and incidents requiring first aid are reported to parents/guardians in writing. Any incident involving the head requires a call to the child's parents/guardians. If a child requires treatment beyond what the school is able to administer, the teacher or school will attempt to contact the parents/guardians. If they cannot be contacted, emergency contacts listed on the child's Student Information Sheet will be called. In an extreme emergency, the school will arrange for ambulance transport to an appropriate treatment center. If parents/guardians elect to seek medical care for their student after an accident occurs at school, we require that they notify the Section Director as soon as

FIRST AID

All members of our faculty are trained in CPR and first aid and have knowledge of blood-borne pathogens. The faculty is only permitted to perform the following procedures for first aid: wash or direct a child to wash an abrasion or cut with soap and water, apply a bandage, take an ancillary temperature, and offer ice for bumps and bruises. Faculty members are not permitted to remove splinters or ticks, or administer non-prescription medication, including painkillers and cough drops, without the consent of a parent/guardian. Sunscreen and ointments will only be administered if written permission is given by the parent or guardian. Parents/guardians will be called if/when a child encounters an injury (i.e. tick, splinter, etc.) that Sterling Staff are unable to address. *Our complete Student Medical Support Policy (Page 52) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.*

CONCUSSIONS

This policy is mandated by North Carolina Statute GS 115C-12(12) titled "Return-to-Learn After Concussion". After a head injury, 911 will be immediately called for any incident resulting in loss of consciousness, significant neck pain, significant changes in mental state, severe headache, or uncontrolled bleeding or vomiting.

Parents/guardians are always called when an incident involves the head. In addition, parents/guardians must inform the school when their child has had a concussion. Any paperwork provided by the doctor, in regard to their child's transition back to school, should also be shared with the child's teacher and the appropriate section director. *The complete mandated Concussion Policy (Page 34) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.*

CRIMINAL HISTORY AND BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR VOLUNTEERS, CHAPERONES AND SUBSTITUTES

Sterling Montessori strives to provide the safest possible learning environment for all students, employees, and parents/guardians. Sterling Montessori requires all volunteers, chaperones and substitutes to secure a valid background check. *The complete Criminal History and Background Check Policy (Policy 41) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.*

VISITOR SIGN-IN

All parents/guardians and visitors to campus must go through a check-in screening upon entering the Main Office and have a current driver's license ready to scan before proceeding to the student's exterior classroom door. This includes appointments, observations, volunteering, classroom presentations, and birthday celebrations. Sign-in is not required on whole-school Parent/Teacher Conference days and evening events (Science Night, Rise-Up Nights, etc.). On the days you are required to sign in, please return to the office to sign out and return your badge before leaving campus. **VERIFICATION OF CHILD**

CUSTODY

Any person, other than an authorized parent, guardian, or legal custodian, will not be permitted to take a student from school unless the Administration appropriate authorization forms have been filed in advance with the school. Authorized parent or guardian. In cases of custodial dispute or other extenuating circumstances, a Custodial Release form and necessary court documents are required to prohibit the release of a child to a parent/guardian. This form is available upon request at the Main Office. *The complete Verification of Child Custody Policy (Page 35) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.*

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Sterling Montessori complies with all local and state laws regarding any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect. All employees are required to report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the appropriate local and/or state authorities.

PETS

For the safety of everyone, personal pets are not permitted on campus at any time. This policy does not apply to service animals. *The complete Service Animals Policy (Page 36) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook. The complete Classroom Pets Policy (Page 50) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.*

ASBESTOS INFORMATION

In compliance with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response (AHERA), the Asbestos Management Plans are on file at the school. Sterling Montessori has a plan for ensuring no hazardous asbestos materials are present.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Your child's safety is of utmost importance to us. We will have regular emergency practice drills so that each child knows what to expect in the event of a real emergency. Evacuation plans are posted at each classroom. In the event of a real emergency, we will contact all parents/guardians through our alert messaging system as soon as possible.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTACTING LAW ENFORCEMENT

When a reasonable belief that any acts of crime and violence have occurred on school property or at school sponsored events, you are required to call law enforcement (911).

Social Interaction

PEACE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL INTERACTION

Behavior at Sterling Montessori is based on a positive attitude toward children, an awareness of the developmental psychology of children, and the unique ability to view and address each child's needs as an individual. Montessori educators seek to create respectful, inclusive classrooms, which celebrate diversity, cross-cultural boundaries, and provide opportunities for learning about how communities and individuals establish and maintain consensual peace. Beginning in Children's House, children are learning what it means to be a member of a larger community outside of their home. They are learning that their actions or inactions have an impact on their community. Individuals and groups interact with one another and have the opportunity to build positive relationships with each other. When internal or external conflicts arise, students learn the tools necessary to self-reflect, take another's perspective and communicate respectfully and effectively. They are learning how to engage in peer mediation to resolve their differences constructively.

Teachers model appropriate behaviors, and teach students problem-solving skills and conflict resolution strategies through the use of Positive Discipline techniques and restorative practices. The goal is to help children learn to evaluate, make choices and arrive at inner discipline through concentrated work. Natural and/or logical consequences are used as a means of helping the child to develop inner limits. Teachers explain the reasons for limits or rules to be sure children understand the need for them, and strive to create an environment to promote learning, where children feel safe and secure.

At each level, the school's focus, based on Montessori pedagogy, is on nurturing and encouraging positive behavior. Beginning in Children's House through our Middle School, children are explicitly taught the following lessons on how to:

- Be caring and courteous
- Cooperate with others
- Process a wide variety of feelings and emotions
- Self-Advocate in respectful ways
- Respect and celebrate the unique qualities of every person
- Make appropriate behavioral and academic choices

By employing the Peace Education strategies rooted in Maria Montessori's philosophy and methods, our faculty and staff develop and nurture the following skills and characteristics:

- To learn to recognize oneself as being a unique individual. To learn to be self-evaluating, to have realistic knowledge of one's own strengths and weaknesses, while not ignoring or dwelling on them.
- To develop a personal code of ethics, to have a sense of right and wrong, and to remain true to these values under emotional or group pressures.
- To be able to work with others to accomplish a goal, to learn to contribute ideas, to listen to others, and to compromise. To learn to be responsible, not only in the sense of being reliable, but also being able to understand the effect of an action before performing it, and being answerable for it afterwards.
- To experience balanced development across emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and physical areas, not neglecting any for the others.
- To understand the interdependence of humans, animals, plants and the natural resources of the earth. To have knowledge of and respect for the different ways humans have met their physical and spiritual needs over the ages.
- To be able to communicate clearly and comfortably with individuals of all ages and backgrounds. To be able to use a variety of effective nonviolent techniques for resolving conflict.
- To accept the responsibility of making a contribution for the benefit of future generations.
- To be self-directed, to be able to initiate activities, set goals, organize time, and complete projects. To be determined to try, and to be capable of working to the limit of, one's ability in everything one does. To develop persistence, to be allowed to struggle with difficult work, and to learn to take disappointment in stride. To think logically and rationally, and to evaluate information and seek out different opinions and facts before making a decision.
- To be creative, using his or her imagination to generate fresh and new ideas in all areas.
- To love learning, to find knowledge interesting in itself, to pursue interests with enthusiasm, and for fun.

Code of Conduct and Discipline

PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE AT STERLING MONTESSORI

When children receive positive, non-violent, and empathetic guidance from adults, they develop good self-concepts, problem-solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief about how children learn and develop values, Montessori will use the Pyramid of Intervention as its discipline model. This tiered model was emulated after the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) in an effort to respond to a student's needs. Directors, teachers, specialists and other school staff at Sterling Montessori are members of the MTSS team. They work as a team to assess students and plan MTSS interventions. Each member has responsibilities to ensure the success of all the children at Sterling Montessori. The MTSS Core team oversees the MTSS process and procedures and ensures proper documentation. This model strives to provide a way for Sterling Montessori to support students with learning and behavior problems by systematically delivering a range of interventions based on demonstrated levels of need.

THE RULES OF RESPECT

The primary rules at Sterling Montessori are:

Respect yourself.

Respect others.

Respect the environment.

DISCIPLINE MODEL

Based on the Pyramid of Intervention model, this discipline plan reflects the graduated and documented response to a student's inappropriate choices. The items listed in this plan are examples and do not represent all possible situations. The Administration has the discretion to evaluate issues on a case by case basis in order to determine the appropriate Administrative Level and related consequences.

This plan is consistent with the Montessori philosophy that holds respect and responsibility as key elements and builds confidence, self-esteem, and leadership.

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CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT LEVEL (TIER I)

Includes: Lead Teacher, Parents/Guardians, and Student.

Eighty to ninety percent of student behaviors are addressed at the Classroom Management Level, and the Lead Teacher documents accommodations and interventions. Chronic behaviors that prove non-responsive to these strategies are moved to the Administration Level I. Incident reports are completed by the person witnessing/reporting the event and signed by the Lead Teacher and Section Director. The report is then emailed to the parent/guardian. These reports along with any documentation (e.g.

phone logs, behavior plans, emails, etc.) will be submitted and filed with the Section Director. Lead teachers may request the support of the MTSS team.

Examples (but not limited to): Disruptive Behaviors: interrupting teachers, distracting during work time, being unprepared for class, misusing materials, rough play, leaving the classroom for an excessive amount of time, vandalizing, bringing inappropriate items to school or hurting others. Inappropriate Communication: passing notes, starting rumors, calling names, being disrespectful, lying, using rude language and mimicking.

Dress: poor choices of clothing (decency)

ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL I (TIER II)

Includes: Section Director(s), Classroom Teacher, Parents/Guardians, and Student.

Administration Level I behaviors generally result in interventions but may result in a suspension. This level generally accounts for 5-10% of behaviors. This level may include (but not limited to): documented chronic behaviors from Classroom Management Level and those listed on the pyramid (chronic issues from Category I, destruction of property, bullying/harassment, harmful behavior, plagiarism, stealing, profanity, obscenity, misuse of personal or school-owned electronics, etc.). Willful harmful behavior that results in injury of a child will be considered a physical assault.

Incident reports are completed by the person witnessing/reporting the event and signed by the Lead Teacher and Section Director. These reports along with any documentation (eg. phone logs, behavior plans, emails, etc.) will be submitted and filed with the Section Director. Lead Teachers may request the support of the MTSS team.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL II (TIER III)

Includes: Section Director(s), Classroom Teacher, Parent/Guardian and Student.

Behaviors addressed at this level may include (but not limited to): chronic behaviors from earlier levels and those on the pyramid, leaving campus or class without permission, hiding from the teacher, or skipping classes, bad language, physical assault, cheating and lying, and drugs of any sort. Physical assault or harmful behavior that results in biting another person where the skin is broken and or harming another person leaving bruises or cuts and scratches will result in immediate removal from the classroom and parents/guardians will be asked to come and pick up for the remainder of the school day. If a pattern develops, a plan will be put in place. If no progress is made, academy students may be asked to leave the program.

Administrative Level II behaviors may warrant a Short-Term Suspension, not to exceed five (5) school days. The Section Director may recommend a Long-Term Suspension based upon aggravating factors regarding the severity of the violation or safety concerns which may warrant the recommendation of Long-Term Suspension.

The incident report is completed by the person witnessing/reporting the event, signed by the Lead Teacher and submitted to the section director with the appropriate documentation (e.g. phone logs, behavior plans, emails, etc.). If a suspension is warranted, the Section Director will write a formal notification letter to the student's parents/guardians, a copy of which will be filed in the student's Cumulative Folder and reported in Power School. In the event of escalating chronic behaviors, the support of the MTSS team is recommended.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL III (CONTINUATION OF TIER III)

Includes: Section Director(s), Classroom Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Student, and School Counselor or Behavior Specialist Behaviors addressed at the Administrative Level III, including (but not limited to): Assault, weapons, destructive devices, bomb threats, act of terror, hate crimes, breaking and entering, or anything unlawful are more severe in nature and typically result in a recommendation for Suspension, Long-Term Suspension or Exclusion. Additionally, chronic behaviors in all previous levels not responsive to interventions may be elevated to this level. Referral to MTSS, alternative placement, or involvement of school counselor or other outside resources may be responses at this level.

SUSPENSIONS

After a student receives a suspension, both the parents/guardians and student are asked to meet with the Section Director(s) prior to the student returning to the classroom. The purpose of this meeting is to help the student transition successfully back into their classroom.

Please refer to the Student Handbook.

LONG TERM SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION FROM THE CHARTER SCHOOL

Student retention is valued. Therefore, long term suspensions and exclusions of charter students should be a very rare event. This action should be taken only when there is either a clear and present danger to the school community because of a student's actions, or as a last resort after multiple, lower level disciplinary actions have been implemented.

Please refer to our Student Handbook.

INCIDENT REPORTS

Incident reports are used at Sterling Montessori to document certain situations and behaviors. It is important to have clear lines of communication between staff and families about things that occur during the school day. In general, the following situations require a written report:

- A non-accidental act that damages or destroys materials
- A non-accidental act that results in harm of another, or in the need for first aid of any kind
- An act of excessive disrespect

When an incident occurs, families of all children involved in the incident must be notified with either an accident or incident form. Each age level has their own guidelines based on the developmental capacity of the children enrolled for when Incident Reports and the involved procedures are used. This section describes those guidelines in more detail.

DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

Bullying is conduct meant to harm, intimidate or coerce another person. Bullying can take many forms. It is our policy to prohibit bullying of any kind.

Sterling Montessori recognizes the impact that bullying has on health, welfare, safety and the learning environment. Bullying is prohibited on Sterling Montessori property, activities, field trips or events.

All administrators, teachers, staff and students share the responsibility to ensure that bullying does not occur at Sterling Montessori or at any Sterling Montessori-sponsored activities or events.

Our complete policy on the Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (Page 25) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.

TOBACCO USE

Sterling Montessori prohibits the use or display of any tobacco product by any person on school property. For the purpose of this Policy, "tobacco product" is defined to include cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. "Tobacco use" includes smoking, chewing, dipping, or any other use of tobacco products. "Display" is defined as having any tobacco product in a location or position that is visible to children to school personnel.

General School Policies and Procedures

COMMUNICATION

Clear communication between parents/guardians and teachers is vital to student success. Teachers will respond within 48 hours. Drop-Off and Pick- Up are not the appropriate times for conferences as this interferes with safety and smooth transition into and from the classroom. Teachers will make every effort to respond during non-instructional time.

If a member of the community does not know who the best person is to answer their question or concern, they should ask a member of the administrative staff, beginning with the Office Manager. Addressing concerns on social media should be avoided to maintain a positive and respectful atmosphere."

If a parent has a question related to instruction or that relates to the classroom in any way the classroom teacher should be the first person whom the parent would go for information and/or resolution. If after a period of problem solving the parent does not feel their concern has been resolved by the teacher, they should ask the teacher for a meeting with the appropriate director."

When setting a meeting directly with the director, parents should have already tried to address the issue with the teacher and should feel comfortable asking the teacher for an administrative conference. If the parent feels the teacher and director have not

sufficiently resolved their concern, they may bring their concern to the Director of Student Affairs. **24**

WEEKLY MESSAGE, TEXTS AND UPDATES

Sterling Montessori uses digital communication to send updates through our weekly messages, text messaging, and emergency alerts. Email and phone information is obtained from the Student Information Sheets which are filled out electronically by parent/guardians. Although most communications are done electronically, we do mail some information home. Please make sure we have your most recent address on file. If your child is a member of a two household family, please make sure both addresses are listed on their Student Information Sheets.

If you need to update your information, please email office@sterlingmontessori.org.

FIELD TRIPS

ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRE-SCHOOLERS

Off Campus Field Trips are for first through eighth grade students only. Pre- Schooler and Kindergarten students shall not

participate in Off-Campus Field Trips. Enrichment opportunities will be provided in class for all Children's House students.

OFF CAMPUS FIELD TRIPS

Curriculum related field trips occur throughout the year. All field trips require parent/guardian permission. Chaperones of Field Trips will receive guidelines of their responsibilities on the trip and are required to complete a background check as stated on page 46.

Our full policy on Off Campus Field Trips ([Page 38](#)) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.

GOING OUT

A Going Out is a meaningful, productive component of 'Cosmic Education' as implemented in a Montessori Elementary or Middle School classroom.

As children develop through the second plane, they realize that not all their answers can be found in the classroom environment. Going Outs are not field trips. They are small group visits to local destinations, or visits to local experts which support and are an extension of their classroom work. They are independently planned and implemented by the group of students attending.

The classroom requirements and procedure for Going Out trips are communicated by the Lead Teacher to the students and parents/guardians. In order for students to be eligible to participate in a Going Out enrichment experience, the student must meet certain classroom prerequisites. All students must have written parental consent to participate.

Chaperones of Going Out trips will receive guidelines of their responsibilities on the trip and are required to complete a background check as stated on page 46.

VOLUNTEERING

Sterling Montessori is aware of the importance of parent/guardian involvement in the overall success of the school. There are many opportunities for volunteering in all aspects of Sterling Montessori's operations. Contact a teacher, administrator, and / or the Parent, Faculty, Student Association (PFSA) to find out more.

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OBSERVING CLASSROOMS

Observation is part of the scientific method upon which Montessori philosophy is based. Sterling Montessori welcomes parent/guardian observers.

Classroom observations start after the first six weeks of school and end six weeks prior to the last day of school. Please contact your child's Section Director to make an observation appointment. Upon arrival, check into the Main Office to sign in and get a visitor's badge. When observing in the classroom, it is important to sit quietly and unobtrusively in a chair designated by the teacher. Parents/guardians may take notes. Please do not speak to the children in the class unless they speak to you first. Feel free to follow up with questions and comments to your child's teacher via email or phone. Teachers are not available to discuss an observation during class hours.

STUDENT RECORDS

All student records shall be up-to-date and shall be maintained with appropriate measures of security and confidentiality. Sterling Montessori abides by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) with regard to the procedures for inspection, review and disclosure of student records as set forth in 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, 34 C.F.R. Part 99. Records protected by this policy include any recorded information directly related to a student and maintained by Sterling Montessori. Student records do not include the records of school personnel that are in the sole possession of the maker and which are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the person who made the record. *Our complete policy on Student Records ([Page 42](#)) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.*

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

The right to inspect and review your educational records within 45 days of the request for access. Parents/guardians or eligible

students should submit to their Section Director a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Section Director will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

The right to request the amendment of your child's educational records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate.

Parents/guardians or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. Parents/guardians should write their Section Director, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the School will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

the right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member; a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent/guardian or student serving on an official committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. **The office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington DC 20202-5901**

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE

Make sure children are dressed appropriately in school clothes that allow for safe movement, independence and the possibility of getting dirty. We discourage distracting clothing such as those with lights or which make noise, etc. Academy/Kindergarten students are required to provide a spare change of clothing that is seasonally appropriate. In case of an accident, children who do not have a change of clothing will be sent home to change. Sterling Montessori does not have spare clothing or laundry at our facilities. Sterling Montessori prohibits disruptive, provocative, revealing, profane, vulgar, offensive, obscene or unsafe clothing. *Our complete Dress Code Policy (Page 43) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.* **APPROPRIATE CLOTHING FOR OUTDOOR PLAY**

Outdoor play is a part of our daily schedule. Sterling Montessori takes ALL children outdoors in most weather conditions. Increased caution is taken during days of extreme heat or cold. It is very important for students to come to school every day with the appropriate clothing for outside activities. The school cannot make provisions for students to remain indoors unless stated in a 504 Plan due to medical conditions.

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APPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR

For safety reasons, we require that all students in the Children's House through Upper Elementary wear closed toed, rubber soled shoes while playing on the playground. All students and adults must wear shoes at all times while on campus due to fire and health regulations. Charter School students must wear appropriate shoes in order to participate in physical education. Those without proper shoes will not be able to actively participate in physical education. **TOYS, JEWELRY, WATCHES, MONEY, AND ELECTRONICS**

Personal items can be a distraction to the child and others in the class. When lost or broken, it can ruin the rest of the day, making it difficult for the child's focus to remain on their work. Unless permitted by the classroom teacher for a special event or for rest time, please refrain from personal items being brought to school. Sterling Montessori is not responsible for items that are lost, stolen or damaged.

TECHNOLOGY

CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of cell phones and other electronic devices is prohibited while students are on campus. This ensures that lessons and student work will not be interrupted, safeguards students against cyber bullying, and prevents theft of such devices. *Our complete policy on Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices (Page 41) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.*

RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Sterling Montessori provides an extensive technology infrastructure toward the purpose of improving the School's educational, administrative, and clerical functions. The significant ongoing investment in technology prepares students for life and work and increases the productivity of current and future faculty and staff. Sterling Montessori intends that children and employees will remain within the bounds of safe, legal and responsible use of technology. The parent/guardian and child must consent to the child's independent access to the Internet and to the monitoring of the child's Internet activity and e mail communication by school personnel. In addition, in accordance with Sterling Montessori's goals and visions for technology, children may require accounts in third party systems for school related projects designed to assist children in mastering effective and proper online communications or to meet other educational goals. Parental permission will be obtained when necessary to create and manage such third-party accounts. Though

school personnel generally do not monitor children's internet activity conducted on non-Sterling Montessori devices during non-school hours, when the child's online behavior has a direct and immediate effect on school safety or maintaining order and discipline in the school, the child may be disciplined in accordance with school policy and applicable federal, state and local laws. *Our complete Use of Technology Policy (Page 27) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.*

USE OF PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY ON STERLING MONTESSORI PROPERTY Sterling

Montessori assumes no responsibility for personal technology devices brought to school. To prevent the introduction of malicious code and protect the integrity of Sterling Montessori's information resources, Sterling Montessori's technology team may restrict the use of any hardware or software it deems inappropriate.

GRIEVANCE

Sterling Montessori encourages resolutions of any grievance through informal means, however it recognizes that, at times, a formal process may be necessary for certain types of grievances or if the informal process did not produce satisfactory results. Grievances will be dealt with in accordance with all applicable laws, policies, and regulations. Grievance proceedings and all information pertaining to them shall be kept confidential at all levels to the extent feasible and permitted by law. *Our complete policy on Parent/Guardian Grievances (Page 43) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.*

Nutrition

SNACK

All students, PK3-8th grade, may bring a healthy snack to school. An afternoon snack is provided to the students enrolled in our Aftercare program. Parents/guardians are asked to look at the posted snack menu to determine whether or not the food being served is appropriate for their child. The school is not a peanut-free environment. If your child has a food allergy or dietary restriction, it is the family's responsibility to provide substitutes that are nutritionally balanced. Reach out to your student's classroom teacher for suggestions if needed.

SCHOOL LUNCH

Parents/guardians should send a lunch from home. We do not allow daily drop off of lunches by parents/guardians as this interrupts the classroom schedule. Please visit [Kids Health](#) for nutritional guidelines. Due to sanitation regulations, any food students do not consume during the lunch period must be discarded. Academy/Kindergarten students are required to store their lunches in the classroom refrigerator. If and when Sterling can provide a lunch option, Sterling will follow the USDA Food Guidelines.

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BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Montessori classrooms, Children's House through Upper Elementary, celebrate the life story of a child. This is a Montessori educational experience showing the passage of time and growth of the child from birth to present day. For all levels snacks and party favors are prohibited.

Enrollment

STERLING MONTESSORI CHARTER ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

Sterling Montessori is a tuition-free public school. Any student who is qualified under North Carolina law for admission to a public school is qualified for admission at Sterling Montessori. All students are required by the NC Charter School law to complete an application for admission. All applicants to the lottery must be North Carolina residents at the time of the application process with a physical North Carolina address. However, North Carolina county boundaries or school attendance areas do not affect charter school enrollment. In addition, Sterling does not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, gender, ethnicity, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

Our complete Charter Admissions and Enrollment Policy (Page 29) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.

EXPECTATIONS FOR INCOMING ACADEMY STUDENTS

Our expectation is that all academy children are independent in toileting. This means they are able to complete all aspects of the toileting process without the help of an adult. Accidents happen. We understand. If accidents become common, we will need to make a plan with parents/guardians to help the child be independent again. In the case of a bowel movement accident, the parent/guardian could be asked to come and change the student. Consistent, repeated occurrences will result in a meeting to discuss continued enrollment in the program.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Class Placement is a collaborative, involved process aimed at maintaining well-balanced, successful classrooms. The needs of each child over a three-year cycle are considered and weighed in an effort to meet individual and group needs. Reassignment during the three-year cycle is a rare occurrence, happening only when it is deemed to be in the child's best interest, after sustained collaboration and problem-solving among parents/guardians, teachers, and administration. Specific classroom requests are not permitted. Requests

for re-assignment for the following year must be submitted during the academic school year. It is not recommended that multiple-birth siblings be considered for placement together in the same classroom, however, if requested, a team approach will be used to determine if being in the same classroom is in the best interest of each child. The placement decision will be reevaluated with the team after a 90-day period.

STUDENT RETENTION AND ACCELERATION

The question of retention or acceleration is a collaborative effort. The ultimate decision for both of these special cases will rest with the Section Director. The aforementioned team will be comprised of parents/guardians, faculty, administration, and any other involved EC/MTSS professionals. *Our complete Student Retention Policy (Page 40) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook. Our complete Student Policy for Acceleration (Page 49) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.*

STUDENT INFORMATION SHEETS

Every child enrolled in the Academy and Charter program must have a Student Information Sheet on file by the first day of school. This Student Information sheet will need to be completed through the Info Snap invite that parents/guardians will receive prior to the start of school (only one parent/guardian will receive the Info Snap invitation). This necessary form collects data that is important for the school to have on file; medical issues, allergies, emergency contacts and approved pick-up list. The Information Sheet is needed for the school to send important communication via text and email to parents/guardians.

For families having more than one child at Sterling, you will have to complete a form for each child. Once you submit the information for the first child and submit it, auto-fill will allow you to fill out the same information more quickly for additional siblings.

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HEALTH/MEDICAL RECORDS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

By law, the school must maintain current health and immunization records on all students. Health forms are provided by the school if needed. Medical forms require a signature and date of examination from a health provider. Physical exams must be completed and dated no more than six months prior to enrollment and must be submitted no later than 30 days from the start date. Sterling Montessori complies with FERPA regarding matters of confidentiality.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS: PRESCHOOLERS THROUGH EIGHTH GRADE

Preschoolers-8th-grade students are required to have the following documents in their student file. NOTE: Because it can sometimes be difficult to schedule a school physical with the children's regular pediatrician prior to the start of school, the Medical Form (for preschoolers) and the Health Assessment Form (for K-8) can be submitted no later than 30 days following the start of school. We cannot admit children without a completed exam and immunization record.

- Academy Application for Enrollment (preschoolers)
- Lottery Application for Enrollment -must be signed and dated by parent or guardian (K-8th grade)
- Copy of Original Birth Certificate (K-8th grade)
- Proof of Residence (one of the following: NC Driver's License, Deed of Trust, Rental Lease Agreement or Utility Bill no more than 30 days old) (K-8th grade)
- Student Information Sheet
- Current Immunization Record (7th grade students must have TDAP booster)
- Medical Form (preschoolers only)
- Health Assessment Form (K-8th grade)
- Parent Permission Form (image and grounds permissions, receipt of Parent Handbook acknowledgement)
- Primary Language Survey
- Shaken Baby Head Trauma Policy Form (preschoolers)
- Student Records Request Form (K-8th Grade if applicable)
- Medical Action Plan (if applicable)
- Custodial Form (if applicable)

RETURNED CHECK

By law, the school must maintain current health and immunization records on all students. Health forms are provided by the school if needed. Medical forms require a signature and date of examination from a health provider. Physical exams must be completed and dated no more than six months prior to enrollment and must be submitted no later than 30 days from the start date. Sterling Montessori complies with FERPA regarding matters of confidentiality. *Our complete Returned Check Policy (Page 48) can be found in the Policies section of this handbook.*

Withdrawal

WITHDRAWING OR EXITING FROM STERLING MONTESSORI

When your child withdraws or graduates from Sterling Montessori, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Contact Data Manager to inform of the withdrawal from the school, complete withdrawal form, and notify of new address if applicable.
2. Notify Classroom Teacher and EC or 504 Coordinator if applicable. 3. Notify Before and After Care staff if applicable.
4. Return all Carpool tags to the Main Office.
5. Reconcile all fees and outstanding balances.

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Related Documents and Forms

All necessary documents and forms can be accessed via Sterling's website at <https://www.sterlingmontessori.org/parents/forms-and-documents/>

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

UPDATED 05/22/2024

The mission of Sterling Montessori is to create a diverse educational community, grounded in the Montessori philosophy and teaching practices, that fosters curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking in its students. We strive to empower each student to become life-long learners who respect themselves, others and their environment.

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Welcome

Welcome to Sterling Montessori. You are now an important member of a team of educators who have dedicated their professional lives to children.

This employee handbook is a summary that provides information regarding employee rights and responsibilities related to your time of employment at Sterling Montessori. To access the full copy of this employee handbook, please [click here](#). After you've completed the reading, please initial, date, sign and return the receipt for this handbook to the school office. This receipt will become a part of your employee record.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Sterling Montessori follows the philosophy and teaching practices based on the Montessori Method developed by Dr. Maria Montessori (1870- 1952). Montessori education emphasizes learning through all five senses.

Children learn at their own pace with a goal of nurturing a natural desire for knowledge, understanding, and respect. A child's work at Sterling Montessori is an exciting process of discovery leading to concentration, motivation, self- discipline, and a love of learning.

Montessori classrooms have three-year multi-age groups (ages 3-6, 6-9, 9-12, and 12-15) together, forming communities in which the older children spontaneously share their knowledge with the younger children. The Montessori method of education is a child-centered educational approach based on scientific observations of children. Children develop physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively in order to thrive in the real world.

STERLING MONTESSORI ACADEMY IS...

an American Montessori Society (AMS) Member school. Sterling Montessori follows the AMS educational guidelines. licensed by the State of North Carolina, Division of Child Development and Early Education, as a childcare and preschool facility. a full day, Montessori preschool program which offers an optional summer camp. overseen by the LHU Board of Directors, a non-profit organization.

STERLING MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL IS...

an AMS (American Montessori Society) Member school. Sterling Montessori follows the AMS educational guidelines. a full day, ten-month, Montessori kindergarten, elementary and middle school educational program. chartered by the State of North Carolina as a public charter school. Sterling Montessori meets or exceeds all North Carolina State Standards. overseen by the LHU Board of Directors, a non-profit organization. committed to offering parent education in the Montessori method and philosophies.

Handbook
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Employee

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Sterling Montessori...

nurtures in its children a lifelong love of learning and respect for themselves and others, in a peaceful environment follows the philosophy and curriculum of Maria Montessori as the cornerstone of the educational programs. The Montessori curriculum is scientifically based and meets the requirements of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and the Office of Charter Schools

has an aesthetically pleasing campus and is an interactive extension of the classroom by offering a prepared and sustainable environment for children

has prepared environments that are developmentally appropriate and provide hands-on learning, freedom of choice, a mixed-age classroom, the absence of rewards and punishments, uninterrupted work periods, and individualized instruction that supports each child's growth

views diversity as a strength where every individual is welcomed, treated with respect, and supported in their own educational journey. Our diverse population is celebrated and enriches our students' cultural education so that they learn to value differences and listen respectfully to a variety of ideas as a step towards supporting a more peaceful world understands that to follow a child with learning differences might require additional expertise and implementing a specialized learning plan in addition to the Montessori curriculum is a community where the voices of children, parents, and staff are valued and all members are active participants in creating an ideal learning environment for all

in pursuit of our mission and goals, is a financially sustainable institution, whose leadership models transparency, accountability, and professionalism for its staff

VISION

Sterling Montessori is a model charter school that demonstrates how the Montessori Method and a commitment to academic excellence helps students reach their full potential. We envision a sustainable, accessible, and diverse institution that graduates thriving students who are engaged in lifelong learning and are empowered to become positive, contributing members of their immediate and global communities.

HISTORY & ACCREDITATION

On June 20, 1989, special education teachers Andrea Faurot and Charles Uzzell opened Cary Montessori in their home with one preschool student and their daughter Molly. From this humble beginning, Sterling Montessori Academy and Charter School was born. By December 1990, Cary Montessori had grown to 90 students and 14 teachers. This rapid growth necessitated a move to larger facilities – first moving into 201 High House Road, then in 1993 – 1994 moving into two additional spaces in Cary.

As demand for a quality Montessori education grew, Andrea and Charles were challenged to find land or facilities in Cary large enough for the growing school. The first six acres in Morrisville were purchased and construction began on A & B buildings, using “natural lighting” concepts. Shortly after completion of the private school in 1996, North Carolina passed laws enabling the creation of Charter Schools. Sterling Montessori Academy and Charter School became a private preschool and public K-8 charter school in 1997.

EMPLOYMENT AT STERLING MONTESSORI

Sterling's founders, Andrea Faurot and Charles Uzzell, are teachers and visionaries committed to the quality of the Montessori education the school provided. The non-profit Laura Holland Uzzell (LHU) foundation was started in 1993 to raise money for teachers to acquire Montessori certification, and for students to have access to a Montessori education. Named after one of Sterling's early supporters, the LHU Foundation Board operates, and is the governing body of, Sterling Montessori Academy and Charter School (SMACS).

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

It is the policy of Sterling Montessori to provide all applicants for employment with equal employment opportunities and to provide current employees with training, compensation, promotion, and other attributes of employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, citizenship status, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation, except where sex, age, or physical requirements are essential occupational qualifications. All candidates will be evaluated on their merits and qualifications for positions.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) POLICY

In keeping with Sterling Montessori's commitment to equal opportunity employment, Sterling Montessori will ensure compliance with the ADA. All otherwise qualified employees and applicants with a "disability" (as defined by law), will be afforded "reasonable accommodation" in accordance with ADA, as long as accommodation can be provided without undue hardship at Sterling Montessori. Any individual who requests accommodation must contact the Human Resources (HR) Manager who will comply with the requirements of the ADA.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS PHILOSOPHY

We are committed to providing the best possible climate for maximum development and achievement of goals for employees. Our practice is to treat each employee as an individual. We seek to develop a spirit of teamwork; individuals working together to obtain a common goal. In order to maintain an atmosphere where these goals can be accomplished, we provide a workplace which is comfortable and progressive. Most importantly, we have a workplace where communications are open, and problems can be discussed and resolved in a mutually respectful atmosphere, considering individual circumstances and the individual employee. We firmly believe that by communicating with each other directly, we can continue to resolve any difficulties that may arise, as well as develop a mutually beneficial relationship.

EMPLOYEE PRACTICES

SCHOOL STRUCTURE

Our school is composed of two separate educational entities. The Academy services children ages 3-5 and is a tuition-based program. The Charter School services children ages 5-14, which includes Kindergarten through 8th grade.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

All employees, immediately upon acceptance of employment but prior to starting work, shall undergo a criminal records check. Sterling reserves the right to withdraw its offer of employment to any new employee based on the results of the criminal records check. Note that all employees must truthfully and accurately complete all required employment application forms. Any untruthful statement and/or misrepresentation by an employee on their employment application shall be grounds for immediate termination.

As a condition of employment, several requirements must be met prior to beginning employment. These requirements include, but may not be limited to:

- Employment Application/References/Resume
- Criminal Background Check resulting in a Qualification Letter obtained from DHHS. This background check must be renewed as specified in Policy 41: Criminal History and Background Checks
- Tuberculosis (TB Skin Test)
- Medical Staff Report
- Emergency Information Sheet
- Confidentiality Statement
- Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9)
- Documentation of Orientation
- Employee Information / Health Questionnaire

Requirements

for All Employees Be at least 18 years of age

03

Assistant Teacher

Employment Requirements

01

Required Trainings

The following trainings are required for initial hire and will be retaken as specified by the Executive Director or designee.

CPR Training/Certification
Wright Specialty Insurance Online Trainings
Active Shooter Response for K-12 Employees
Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention for K-12 Employees (Yearly)
Sexual Harassment Prevention for K-12 Employees
Workplace Bullying and Violence Prevention

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Embrace Montessori theory and practice, or be willing to attend Professional Development on how it relates to the Assistant Teacher's job responsibilities.

Additional Requirements for

MACTE Montessori Certification for the level at which the teacher is employed
A Bachelor's Degree
State licensure (at least 50% of teachers must meet this requirement)
All teachers will be required to obtain their teaching license within 3 years of the date of employment.

- Blood-borne Pathogens
- Infectious Disease Control: Kick Those Germs to the Curb!
- Administration of Medication
- Medication Administration in the Child Care Setting: Using Proper Practices and Procedures
- Prevention of and Response to Emergencies Due to Food and Allergic Reactions
- Food Allergies: Recognizing Allergic Reactions and Meal Planning in the Child Care Setting
- Building and Physical Premises Safety
- Ensuring Building and Physical Premises Safety
- Essentials of Outdoor Safety
- Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma

Professional Development

Continuing education funds can be made available to employees. Professional development should be geared towards educational opportunities that are relevant to your classroom's philosophy and curriculum.

Employees interested in pursuing such funds should submit a Professional Development Request Form to their Section Director for approval.

Licensure

Sterling Montessori Lead Teachers are required to obtain State Licensure within three years of being hired. Professional Educator's Initial Licenses are intended for teachers with 0-2 years of teaching experience, and are valid for three years. To be issued a Professional Educator's Initial License, an individual must have:

- Completed a state approved teacher education program from a regionally accredited college or university *or*
- Completed another state's approved alternative route to licensure and earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college.

To be issued a Professional Educator's Initial License, teachers must also have:

Academy Children Employees

Child Abuse and Neglect Statement
Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma Staff Acknowledgement
In-Service Training Requirements

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Lead Teacher Employment Requirement

Health and Safety Pro Solutions Training: Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases (Including Immunization)

Hand-washing: Clean Hands = Better Health

Brain Development: Amazing Brains, Amazing Babies
Physical Well- Being, Stress and Trauma
Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Response Planning
Emergency Preparedness: Better Safe Than Sorry! Responding to Medical Emergencies
Handling and Storage of Hazardous Materials and the Appropriate Disposal of Bio-Contaminants
Essentials of Indoor Safety
Recognizing and Responding to Suspicions of Child Maltreatment

Praxis II Testing - for middle grades (6-9), secondary (9-12), and K-12 (including Exceptional Children: General Curriculum) license areas

and

Pearson Testing for North Carolina: Foundations of Reading and General Curriculum - for Elementary Education and Exceptional Children: General Curriculum licenses only.

Professional Educator's Continuing Licenses are intended for teachers with 3 or more years of teaching experience, and are valid for five years. Teachers who are fully licensed in another state who have three or more years of teaching experience AND who meet NC State Board of Education approved licensure exam requirements, OR have National Board Certification, are issued the Professional Educator's Continuing License.

Teachers who hold a current license to teach in the state of North Carolina are required to complete continuing education credits (CEUs) in order to maintain and renew their professional teaching license. More information on state licensure can be obtained from DPI. Teachers are responsible for fulfilling their CEU requirements as well as payment.

Licensure

All Lead teachers will receive an email reminder of their licensure obligations 12 months before the license renewal date.

Probationary Period

The probationary period for new employees lasts 90 days from the contracted date of hire. You are eligible for health benefits after 30 days if your average hours per week are at least 30 hours.

During the probationary period, you have your first opportunity to evaluate Sterling Montessori as a place to work and we have our first opportunity to evaluate you as an employee. A New Staff Orientation is required for all new employees. As part of this orientation the administrators will provide an on-the-job-review of Sterling Montessori's procedures and policies. When necessary, employees will be given a job performance review after the 6 weeks' employment anniversary, and again after 10 weeks. These reviews will be conducted by your Direct Supervisor. Upon successful completion of this probationary period, you will become a permanent employee.

Personnel File

Pursuant to North Carolina law, personnel files shall be available for the employee's inspection at all reasonable times. Any pre-employment information may be kept in a file separate from the personnel file and need not be made available to the employee for inspection.

Contract Renewal

All employees who receive written employment contracts will receive an offer of re-appointment, or notification of the status of their re-appointment in the spring before the next school year. When you receive an offer of re appointment, you have 10 business days to sign and return your contract to the Executive Director or designee. If your contract is not returned within that time, the offer of re-appointment expires automatically, unless the Executive Director or designee elects to extend that time limit.

Outside Employment

Any outside employment must not conflict in any way with your responsibilities at Sterling Montessori. **Employee**

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PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

All staff are required to work their specified contract hours. When late or absent for work, notify your Section Director, teaching partner and office administrator as soon as possible and prior to the start of your work day. Ten days advance notice and approval from your Section Director is required for personal leave. If the required advanced notice is not given, you may be denied your request for time off. This helps to ensure safe and adequate coverage for the children.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

When school is in session, employees are required to respond to parent emails within 48 hours.

If a parent has a question related to instruction or that relates to the classroom in any way the classroom teacher should be the first person whom the parent would go for information and/or resolution. If after a period of problem solving the parent does not feel their concern has been resolved by the teacher, they should ask the teacher for a meeting with the appropriate director.

When setting a meeting directly with the director, parents/guardians should have already tried to address the issue with the teacher and should feel comfortable asking the teacher for an administrative conference. If the parent feels the teacher and director have not

sufficiently resolved their concern, they may bring their concern to the Director of Student Affairs. **TEACHER HOURS &**

BREAK

The standard work day for full time employees is from 8:00 am -4:00 pm or as stated in the annual employment contract. Teachers and assistants are expected to work the same hours on professional development days, conference days, and teacher work days.

It is expected that staff attend meetings as stated in the annual employment contract. Lead Teachers shall attend any staff meetings, professional development, trainings, parent workshops, and annual open house outside of standard working hours as requested by the Section Director and as stated in the annual employment contract. Throughout the year, Sterling Montessori will conduct school functions, such as festivals and performances. Sterling Montessori encourages participation by all its employees during these functions as part of their employment with the school.

BLACK-OUT PERIODS & CAPPED DAYS

Due to the importance of full coverage there are certain "black-out" periods when leave is typically denied. These include conference and teacher work days, one week before the opening of school, the first and last week of school, during EOG testing and the day before or after a vacation period or holiday.

Leave may be denied if days are capped due to high number of leave requests or lack of substitutes on any particular day.

PARKING

Employees are required to park within the designated areas. The school is not responsible for loss, damage, or theft to your vehicle.

FACULTY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT & EVALUATION PROCESS

Sterling Montessori is dedicated to supporting the professional growth and development of each faculty and staff member. In order to accomplish this support, Sterling follows an annual comprehensive professional growth and evaluation process for its faculty and staff.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH FOR INDIVIDUALS AND THE REFLECTIVE PRACTICE Sterling Montessori is a school that nurtures and develops its staff to be a reflective, child centered community. Each Director plays a vital role in creating a space where teachers feel safe to reflect upon their daily practice in the classroom with the children. The school and directors support the teachers in alignment with AMS standards in the following ways:

Prepared Environment: Directors help remove obstacles for the adults to maximize their potential. Teachers will prepare their environments to be beautiful, organized and well maintained.

Role of the Adult: Directors support teachers in ways that will cultivate each teacher to demonstrate Grace and Courtesy, the ability to listen, be honest, respectful, show patience and kindness to the children, parents/guardians, colleagues and administration.

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Professional Development: Directors will help identify professional development goals for teachers to help them meet their highest potential and meet the needs of the children they serve in their classrooms. Directors will support their team members in the work of the shared mission by observing on a regular basis and meeting 1:1 to discuss the observations and see what is working and what are areas of growth. This is an opportunity for teachers and directors to practice the reflective process:

Looking over the Observation (data collection) form

Discussing what trends the teacher sees (children not working in Practical Life and only in Math and Language)

Develop a plan on how to address any issues that they may see in their classroom

Evaluate: How will you know if the plan is working? What will you see as a result?

Continue the process and refine goals and action items when necessary

CODE OF ETHICS AND STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

Employees of Sterling Montessori hold positions of public trust and are responsible for the education of our children, which includes being a good role model. Each employee at Sterling Montessori is a professional who is dedicated to the education of our children according to the **AMS Code of Ethics and NC Educators Code of Ethics**.

All staff are expected to conduct themselves according to the highest standards of honesty, integrity, fairness, and respect for themselves and others at all times. All staff are responsible for both the integrity and the consequences of their own actions. Conduct that interferes with or adversely affects the operation of the school, brings discredit on the school, or is offensive to others will not be condoned or tolerated and is grounds for disciplinary action by your Section Director or Executive Director. This may include, but is not limited to, a verbal or written warning, a suspension without pay, immediate termination, or non-renewal of an employment contract. The infraction and what actions were taken to resolve the issue will be documented and filed in the employee's file.

Each employee has an obligation to observe and follow the School's mission, policies, the Guiding Principles and maintain proper standards of conduct at all times.

Guidelines and Strategies for a Montessori Approach to Education: Sterling Montessori cultivates a rich diversity of backgrounds and opinions and shares a commitment to the values underlying the **AMS Code of Ethics and NC Educators Code of Ethics**. In a climate of mutual respect and support, we each play a significant part in developing and supporting these values in ourselves, our children and the community at large.

Perspectives Related to Attitude Toward Self and Others

Attitude: *recognize oneself as being a unique individual.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to exhibit unconditional positive regard for each child as a person of worth and dignity, regardless of his or her behavior. Children in a classroom of mixed ages are encouraged to show mutual respect and empathy for others by working together toward common outcomes. These ongoing experiences develop social skills as a response to conditions, rather than through direct teaching intervention.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The strategy for the Sterling employee is to exhibit positive regard for each individual as a person of worth and dignity, is sensitive to cultural differences and is respectful in communications with families, staff, community members, and other stakeholders.

Attitude: *to be self-evaluative, to have a realistic knowledge of one's own strengths and weaknesses.* **Strategy with Students:** The strategy for the teacher is to provide constant encouragement and support for each child by responding to their individual needs and interests. When discouraging situations arise, the teacher approaches all situations with a solution-oriented framework. The teacher is expected to be positive and respectful to the child.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The strategy for the Sterling employee is to display a realistic appreciation of his/her strengths and weaknesses, and delegate responsibilities based, in part, on that awareness. Employees manage their time effectively, remain calm in the face of stress and understand their emotional triggers and take steps to mitigate their impact on the organization.

Attitude: *to work in alignment with Sterling's Code of Ethics and to remain true to those values under emotional or group pressures.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to develop a community consensus as well as specify guidelines for acceptable behavior, Grace and Courtesy, and restorative practices. The emphasis of these guidelines is mutual respect and acceptance of individual differences. They provide concrete and consistent rules for the class. The group enforces these standards of behavior.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The strategy of the Sterling employee is to put the needs of the organization as a whole above individual preference or self-preservation. They take a consistent stand for the integrity of the school's mission and sustainability. Sterling employees are meticulous about promoting open, honest and direct communication across the school community, taking care to avoid triangles, splitting or other dysfunctional patterns of conflict or avoidance.

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Attitude: *to be able to work with others to set and meet reasonable goals by learning how to contribute ideas, listen to others and to compromise.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy of the teacher is to widen the learning process for the child by offering a variety of collaborative opportunities. The spirit of cooperation is encouraged through mixed-aged mentoring. **Strategy with Stakeholders:** The strategy of the Sterling employee is to understand the feelings and perspectives of others and assumes the best intentions of all. The employee is an excellent listener, giving full attention to those who are speaking and makes working collaboratively a priority.

Attitude: *to develop a sense of responsibility and be accountable for their choices.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to apply the principles and strategies of Positive Discipline. **Strategy with Stakeholders:** The Sterling employee seeks feedback from all members of the community, asks questions, and listens authentically to multiple points-of-view. The employee finds value in and actively reflects on one's self and willingly takes responsibility for errors and will take risks in order to improve practice. They are resilient and able to recover from setbacks. When at school, employees direct their full attention to the growth and development of children.

This is evident in behavioral norms such as: arriving on time to school and to meetings, refraining from checking email while in meetings, refraining from cell phone use, etc.

Attitude: *to be well rounded in their physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to apply the Montessori approach to education, which does not isolate subject matter, but rather incorporates and demonstrates the interrelationship of all knowledge.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The Sterling employee deliberately demonstrates curiosity about what goes on in the life of the student and seeks to build a deeper knowledge base of Montessori theory and practice. They embody the core values of the school with all community members—children, trained and untrained staff, families, and other stakeholders. They are intentional about caring for their physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

Perspectives Related to Attitudes Towards Society

Attitude: *to understand the interdependence of humans, animals, plants and the natural resources of the Earth.* **Strategy with**

Students: The strategy for the teacher is to provide knowledge, which demonstrates the interdependencies of man with nature, and shows the child his place in preserving and protecting the ecological balance.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling Montessori is dedicated to incorporating our stakeholders in school-wide functions and educational opportunities.

Attitude: *to have knowledge of and respect for the different ways humans have met their physical and spiritual needs over the ages.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to provide a wide scope of history that shows that humankind has been meeting the same basic needs throughout time. The child has a rightful place in this contribution to the greater good. Faculty will use the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them; they teach to and through student's strengths.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling Montessori's faculty and staff value diversity. Faculty and staff are accepting of all backgrounds and respect the different cultural backgrounds and customs, different ways of communicating and different traditions and values. We strive to be

culturally self-aware. We have an understanding and an awareness that culture is the sum total of an individual's experiences, knowledge, skills, beliefs, values, and interests—it shapes a person's sense of who they are and where they fit in their family, school, community, and society.

Attitude: to recognize personal choices.

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to respect and listen to each child's individual choices and guide them to build confidence and self-worth by providing a variety of choices throughout their day.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling's staff provide parent education for the practice of independent choice and the student led work cycle.

Attitude: to be able to communicate clearly and comfortably with individuals of all ages and backgrounds. Strategy with

Students: The strategy for the teacher is to model and interact respectfully with all community members in all situations.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling staff are direct, specific, and consistent in communicating expectations about social interactions, care of the environment, and purposeful work. The tone of voice and body language are calm, soft and pleasant.

Attitude: to learn courteous, caring, and respectful behavior.

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to set a positive tone: be confident, fair, consistent, and respectful. The classroom community will establish clear expectations and enforce reasonable and well-defined rules. **Strategy with Stakeholders:** Sterling's faculty and staff intentionally practice Grace and Courtesy when interacting with all stakeholders.

Attitude: to be able to use a variety of effective positive techniques for resolving conflict.

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to reinforce desirable behavior through the Positive Discipline principles and strategies and to apply Restorative Conflict practices.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling employees resolve conflicts and questions through in-person conversations. They regard those with whom they have difficulty as their greatest teachers.

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Perspectives Related to Attitudes Towards Work and Learning

Attitude: to be self-directed, to be able to initiate activities, organize time, and complete projects reflective of their potential.

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to monitor and guide the child from one activity to another when necessary. The teacher will assist the child towards independent learning by setting positive expectations and reinforcing success. The teacher or child will keep records of their work and progress, and these will be reviewed on a regular basis. Expectations and strategies for growth will be shared with the child.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling Montessori is dedicated to providing Professional Development opportunities for faculty and staff. The school provides ongoing opportunities for family education, including information sessions, discussion groups, observation of classrooms, and parent-teacher- student conferences

Attitude: to develop critical thinking skills.

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to provide a wide scope of information and learning tools for the child to evaluate information and perspectives.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The Sterling employee develops strong partnerships between home and school which is evident in all formal and informal communications.

Attitude: to be creative, using imagination to generate fresh and new ideas in all areas.

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to provide a climate of acceptance that sponsors creative thought and allows for freedom of imagination. The child is encouraged to do so in their own way, without predetermined standards. **Strategy with**

Stakeholders: The Sterling employee continually strives to realize their own human potential, and look toward the students and each other for inspiration.

Attitude: to develop and maintain a love of learning.

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to embrace and model a love of learning and demonstrate a growth mindset.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The strategy for the Sterling employee is to stay up-to-date on the latest research on human development, and best practices, including new insights on neuroscience and cognition and their relationship to Montessori theory and practice.

ANTI-HARASSMENT AND ANTI-BULLYING

Sterling Montessori acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and employees and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. Sterling Montessori prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age. Sterling Montessori will not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying in any of its educational or employment activities or programs. Any violation of this policy will be considered serious and the school administration shall promptly take appropriate action to address the violation. *Our complete Prohibition against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (P.9) can be found in the Policies document.*

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is conduct of a sexual nature that creates an unwelcome environment; it does not require physical contact. It is our policy to prohibit sexual harassment of any kind. *Our complete Sexual Harassment Policy (P.30) can be found in the Policies document.*

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

An employee's primary duty is to represent the school at all times to the best of his or her ability. To this end, an employee should not become involved in any situation which may create a personal interest or place the employee under any obligation that may interfere with this primary duty.

Each employee has a duty to be free from any influence which might conflict or appear to conflict with the interest of Sterling Montessori or which might deprive the employee of his or her undivided loyalty and business.

A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual has competing interests or loyalties. No employee should directly or indirectly engage in conduct which is disloyal, disruptive, competitive, or damaging to the school. *Our complete Conflicts of Interest Policy (P.31) can be found in the Policies document.*

NEPOTISM

Nepotism is favoritism based on kinship. The purpose of our nepotism policy is to protect the interests of Sterling Montessori when it is contemplating entering into an arrangement with an immediate family member or a member of the LHU Board of Directors or an employee of Sterling Montessori. *Our complete Nepotism Policy (P.32) can be found in the Policies document.*

TOBACCO USE

Sterling Montessori prohibits the use or display of any tobacco product by any person on school property. For the purposes of this Policy, "tobacco product" is defined to include cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. "Tobacco use" includes smoking, chewing, dipping, or any other use of tobacco products. "Display" is defined as having any tobacco product in a location or position that is visible to children or school personnel.

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DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

Sterling Montessori complies with state and federal laws maintaining a drug-free workplace. This policy will govern each employee while on school property and at any time during which an individual employee is acting within the course and scope of his/her employment or at any other time that the employee's violation of this policy has a direct and adverse effect upon the performance of his/her job. *Our complete Drug-Free Workplace Policy (P.32) can be found in the Policies document.*

WEAPONS

No weapons of any sort, whether or not concealed, are permitted on Sterling Montessori campus or school-sponsored events or activities.

DRESS CODE

All employees are expected to maintain the highest standard of professional cleanliness and present a neat, professional appearance at all times. As employees they are integrated parts of the classroom environment, serve as role models for the students with whom they work and as leaders in the community. Consistent with these roles, all faculty and employees shall dress in a manner and have an appearance that is appropriate and professional in light of the environment in which they work, the duties of their jobs and the impressionable students they serve. We understand that working with children can be messy work, so there is a balance to be struck. Employees are to wear clothing that is neat and clean. Employees are not to wear clothing that is revealing, torn, tattered, dirty and excessively faded, or with visual, written, or implied messages that are likely to disrupt the school environment. Employees are not to wear attire prohibited in the student dress code. Sweatpants and ripped jeans are prohibited. *Our complete Dress Code Policy (P. 56) can be found in the Policies document.*

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Sterling Montessori prohibits the use of corporal punishment. No school employee or volunteer may use corporal punishment to discipline any child. Corporal punishment is defined as all forms of physical punishment including, but not limited to spanking, paddling or slapping. *Our complete Discipline Policy (P. 61) can be found in the Policies document.*

CARE OF ENVIRONMENT

All Sterling Montessori employees are expected to use proper care when using Sterling Montessori's property and equipment. No school property may be removed from the premises without proper authorization. If any school property is lost, broken or damaged for any reason whatsoever, it must be reported to a supervisor immediately. Sterling Montessori has the right to charge an employee for any damage they cause to property or equipment.

The Prepared Environment: Preparation of the "prepared environment" is an ongoing task in the Montessori class. It remains the responsibility of all those who use the class. Children are encouraged to return the materials in such a way that the materials will be ready for others to use. At the end of the day, all chairs must be stacked or placed on the tabletops in order for floors to be cleaned. Students should also help to clean up the floor. Sink areas are to be kept clean and clear to give the custodians access to the surfaces for cleaning.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATING TO EMPLOYMENT

Policies and Procedures: All Sterling Montessori employees are responsible for knowing and understanding the policies and procedures outlined in the Employee & Parent Handbook.

Protecting School and/or Child Information: It is the responsibility of every employee to protect the school's and child's confidential information

and all employees share a common interest in making sure that such information is not improperly or accidentally disclosed. The business affairs of the school or child's confidential business should not be discussed outside the organization except when required in the normal course of business. Access to any sensitive school or child information and operating procedures will be limited to those employees on a "need to know" basis. Any employee in the possession of confidential information is responsible for its security and extreme care must be taken to ensure that this information is safeguarded to protect the school, its children, and its employees. In the event that the media reaches out to any school employee, refer them to the Executive Director. Do not respond to any media inquiries. Confidential child information is protected by state and federal law, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

GRIEVANCE

Sterling Montessori strives to encourage harmony among its employees, faculty, children, and parents/guardians. When disagreements arise, Sterling Montessori always tries to find equitable solutions through open and honest communication. All grievances should be resolved as close to their source as possible. Any grievance should only move to a higher level of authority after direct communication between those initially involved has failed to produce a resolution.

Faculty Grievance: For those cases in which more informal attempts at a resolution of a problem have not been successful, Sterling Montessori is committed to providing employees a fair procedure for prompt consideration of the complaints. *Our complete Grievance Policy (P.33) can be found in the Policies document.*

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VOLUNTARY SEPARATION / INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION

In the event an employee's employment with Sterling Montessori is voluntarily or involuntarily terminated, the code of ethics and standards of behavior and all procedures are expected to be followed until the last day of employment at Sterling Montessori. Involuntarily or voluntarily terminating employment may forfeit any bonus or pay raise to that employee for that contracted year.

Voluntary Separation: Individuals who leave employment with Sterling Montessori are expected to provide adequate notice, return school property, and satisfy outstanding financial or other obligations before their last work day. Until all financial matters or other obligations are settled the last paycheck will be held. Sterling Montessori may pay employees for unused accumulated paid leave per this policy.

Involuntary Termination: Occasionally, it becomes necessary to terminate an employee involuntarily. The Involuntary Termination Procedures are to be employed to ensure due process for all employees and that all employees are treated in a just and equitable manner. *Our complete Involuntary Termination Policy (P.35) can be found in the Policies document.*

TELEPHONE USE

Classroom Telephone Use: Faculty and staff are expected to use the school's telephone system to conduct school business and to only make personal local calls when it is absolutely necessary.

Employee Use of Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices: Employees are permitted to possess cell phones on campus. Cell phone use must take place outside of the presence of students. This includes checking emails from personal devices.

All parent communications shall be made through school phones and devices. Taking photos or videos of students using personal devices is prohibited. *Our complete Employee Policy on Cell Phones (P.36) can be found in the Policies document.*

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Responsible Use of Technology: Sterling Montessori attempts to provide an extensive technology infrastructure toward the purpose of improving the School's educational, administrative, and clerical functions. The significant ongoing investment in technology prepares students for life and work and increases the productivity of current faculty and staff. Sterling Montessori intends that children and employees will remain within the bounds of safe, legal and responsible use of technology. *Our complete Use of Technology Policy (P.#37) can be found in the Policies document.*

Parental Consent: Sterling Montessori recognizes that parents/guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards their children should follow when using media and information sources. Accordingly, before a child may independently access the Internet, the child's parent must be made aware of the possibility that the child could obtain access to inappropriate material while engaged in independent use of the Internet. The parent and child must consent to the child's independent access to the Internet and to monitoring of the child's Internet activity and e-mail communication by school personnel. In addition, in accordance with Sterling Montessori's goals and visions for technology, children may require accounts in third party systems for school related projects designed to assist children in mastering effective and proper online communications or to meet other educational goals. Parental permission will be obtained when necessary to create and manage such third-party accounts.

USE OF PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY

Personal Websites and Social Media: The Executive Director or designee may use any means available to request the removal of personal websites and social media accounts that substantially disrupt the school environment or that utilize Sterling Montessori school names, logos, or trademarks without permission.

Children: Though school personnel generally do not monitor children's internet activity conducted on non-Sterling Montessori devices during non-school hours, when the child's online behavior has a direct and immediate effect on school safety or maintaining order and discipline in the school, the child may be disciplined in accordance with school policy and applicable federal, state and local laws.

Employees: Pictures that show children should not be uploaded to an employee's social media account or personal website without

the parent or guardian's consent. All parent communications shall be made through school phones and devices. Taking photos or videos of students using personal devices is prohibited.

Use of Personal Technology on Sterling Montessori Property

Sterling Montessori assumes no responsibility for personal technology devices brought to school. To prevent the introduction of malicious code and protect the integrity of Sterling Montessori's information resources, Sterling Montessori's technology team may restrict the use of any hardware or software it deems inappropriate.

EMPLOYEE PAY

PAYROLL

Sterling Montessori has one (1) pay period per month: the pay period ends on the last day of the month and is payable on that day. Employees can view pay stubs on the Employee Linq Portal. If you have questions about the direct deposit program, please contact the HR Manager.

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Two types of deductions are made from each employee's gross pay. Mandatory deductions required by federal or state agencies and voluntary deductions.

Mandatory deductions will be made automatically in accordance with legal requirements. Your records provide accurate information within legal limitations as a basis for these deductions. Attachment made to an employee's paychecks by legal authority of wage garnishment, regardless of cause, will be treated as a mandatory deduction in the amount and for the time specified by such authority.

Voluntary deductions will not be made without your written authorization. **SALARY POLICY**

It is the goal of Sterling Montessori to offer fair and competitive compensation for all employees.

Lead Teachers: All lead teachers will be compensated according to the salary scale for licensed and non-licensed teachers published by the State of North Carolina, with any additional salary supplements offered by Wake County. This salary scale includes additional compensation for teachers with advanced degrees and National Board Certification.

It is the goal of Sterling Montessori that all lead teachers possess a valid North Carolina Professional Educator's License, appropriate for the grade level they are teaching. Lead teachers hired after January 2018 will be required to obtain their teaching license within 3 years of the date of employment. All teachers who are hired without a teaching license are to be initially paid on the NC Salary Scale. If and when they obtain their license, they will be moved to the Wake County Scale. If a teacher is unable to obtain a license during that time period, their salary scale will revert to the scale published by the State of North Carolina, without the additional salary supplement offered by Wake County.

Lead Teachers - Masters Degree Completion

All Lead teachers will be compensated the following pay period of Sterling Montessori receiving the official college transcript confirming completion of the MA degree.

Retro-Pay

All Lead teachers will receive retro-pay the current year when the license has been updated and Sterling Montessori receives confirmation of the employee's updated licensure (Employee must provide an updated license).

Teaching Assistants: Sterling Montessori has developed its own, internal salary scale for Teaching Assistants. Most notably, for teaching assistants hired after January 2018, Sterling Montessori will not pay an additional bonus for teaching assistants with Master's degrees.

Administrative Personnel: Sterling Montessori has a set salary scale for administrative personnel based on the educational level and experience of each employee.

CHECK REQUEST

Please allow 30 days to process the check request. Check request forms not accompanied by proper documentation will not be processed.

Minimum Amount to submit a check request must be 10.00

Reimbursement checks that are not cashed/deposited by the employee within 6 months will be voided.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS MUST ACCOMPANY THE REQUEST FORM:

Invoice/statement/receipt

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Items that cannot be purchased online or ahead of time can be reimbursed, however, purchases over \$100 must have prior approval from your Section Director.

Once you have your receipt, please submit the receipt that shows that the field trip / other expenditure was paid for along with the check request form.

Please staple all receipts to the back of the check request form.

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FIELD TRIP CHECK REQUEST

Funds must be available in your field trip account.

Accounting will NOT provide checks for your field trip or other class expenditure if your account has insufficient funds.

Checks cannot be processed without supporting documentation for either a payment to a vendor or for reimbursement.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Health benefits are available for all employees who work 30 or more hours per week. There is a 30-day waiting period for new employees.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Sterling Montessori pays 100% of the NC State Employee Coverage plus \$15 of the State subscribers co-pay. **Health Insurance:** The NC State Health Plan, administered by Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC, offers two PPO plans to eligible employees:

Enhanced 80/20 PPO

Traditional 70/30 PPO

Eligible employees are permanent full-time employees working 30 or more hours per week;

Insurance premiums: Your cost will depend on the plan and coverage you choose. Coverages include Employee Only, Employee + Child(ren), Employee + Spouse and Employee + Family. Eligibility does not guarantee employer contribution towards your premiums. To view 12-month rates, visit the NC State Health Plan at www.shpnc.org or call (888) 234-2416.

Enrollment: Eligible employees and dependents may enroll within 30 days of hire or qualifying life event Open enrollment is available as determined by Sterling's Insurance Plans.

DENTAL INSURANCE

Sterling Montessori pays for the employee's coverage.

VISION INSURANCE

Sterling Montessori pays for the employee's coverage.

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT

Sterling Montessori offers a Flexible Spending Account for employees to withhold amounts for medical and child care expenditures.

RETIREMENT PLAN

Employees who work 20 hours or more/week can have amounts withheld to invest in a 403b retirement plan. Sterling Montessori will contribute 50 cents on the dollar up to the first 6 % of the employee's contribution.

VESTING

A year of vesting service is earned when 1,000 hours have been worked in a contract year (July 1 - June 30). Generally, an Hour of Service is earned for each paid hour of work but there are exceptions that may apply.

LIFE INSURANCE

Employees are covered for life insurance in the amount of their annual salary. (Reduced benefits for advanced age of employee).

SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE

Supplemental Insurance is also available to Sterling Montessori employees.

SCHOOL RELATED EMPLOYEE DISCOUNTS

Full time Employees receive 60% off Annual Children's House tuition for their children. Application fee and new student fees are waived.

Employees receive free Before/After/Staff Care while the employee is working including on professional development days.

If the employee is working at Sterling Montessori camps, their children will receive free tuition for camps. There is no discount for employees not working at Sterling Montessori camps.

For these discounts, "children" are defined as biological children, adopted children, foster children, step children, children for whom you stand in the place of a parent, or children for whom you are a legal guardian. Proof of guardianship by way of a Court Order is required.

ADMISSIONS FOR CHILDREN OF EMPLOYEES

Sterling Montessori will offer priority enrollment for children of full-time Sterling Montessori employees, not to exceed 15% of the school's total enrollment. The tuition for the Academy will be reduced by 60% and the New Student Fee is waived.

Before and After Care for children of employees is offered at no additional cost. Employees must fill out all required applications and child information sheets.

Our complete policy on Charter Admissions (P.39) can be found in the Policies document.

ASPIRE Smart Retirement Solutions

Eligibility

You are eligible to participate in the plan immediately upon hire, unless you are an employee who normally works fewer than 20 hours per week or are a student performing services for the company described under IRS Code Section 410(b)(3)(c).

Manage Your Retirement Account and Ongoing

To enroll in the plan or go over investment options regarding any of the 403(b) plan's provisions or the investments offered within the plan, please contact:

Christopher Norlund to enroll in the plan or go over their investment options@ christopher.nordlund@nfp.com 800-826-7859 ext. 6398 or 301.214.7088.

Kadedra Warran to discuss the Plan, the transition, how to logon, how to make investment election changes, make deferral changes @ kadedra.warren@nfp.com or 800-826-7859 ext. 6192.

Investments

You may change the future investment direction for new contributions and/or transfer existing amounts in your account among a variety of investment options that have been approved by the plan's trustees. To access your account for the first time:

- Please log onto <https://investlink.aspireonline.com>
- Create Login Link
- Enter your Plan ID: #**34682**
- Complete all five of the mandatory fields and click Submit
- Create your personal Username and Password
- Login using the Username and Password that you have created

***For assistance with resetting your password, please contact ASPIRE Financial at 866-634- 5873 option 1.**

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE STERLING MONTESSORI RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN

Effective Date of the Plan

July 1, 2006

Plan Year

July 1st – June

Eligibility

30th

You are eligible to participate in the plan immediately upon hire, unless you are an employee who normally works fewer than 20 hours per week or are a student performing services for the company described under IRS Code Section 410(b)(3)(c).

Participant Contributions

For 2018, you can contribute up to \$18,500 to the plan on a pre-tax basis or on a ROTH (after-tax) basis. If you will be at least 50 years old by December 31, 2018, you can contribute an additional “catch-up” contribution of \$6,000.

Employer Discretionary Matching Contributions

Any eligible employee who is over 21 years of age, has completed 1 year of service, for which that work at least 1000 hours will be eligible to receive the discretionary matching contribution. This amount is determined by the Plan Sponsor and is given on a uniformed percentage basis of an employee’s elective deferral into the plan.

Rollover Contributions

The 403(b) Plan accepts most rollover contributions.

Vesting (ownership)

You are always 100% vested in the contributions you defer into the plan. Employer discretionary matching contributions shall be 100% vested upon the vesting schedule below:

Years of Vesting Service Percent Vested

Less than 1 yr.	0%
1 but less than 2	20.000%
2 but less than 3	40.000%
3 but less than 4	60.000%
4 but less than 5	80.000%
5 or more	100.000%

Retirement

Normal retirement age is age 65. Early retirement age is age 55.

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LEAVE POLICIES FOR TEN (10) MONTH AND/OR TWELVE (12) MONTH EMPLOYEES

CALENDAR

Every Winter, upon approval of the LHU Board, the Executive Director or designee publishes a school calendar for the upcoming school year. This calendar is composed of ~~473~~ 177 school days.

Our complete policy on Holidays and Vacations for 10 Month Employees can be found in the Policies document.

PERSONAL LEAVE

Unless otherwise specified in the employment contract, Personal Leave may not be used during the first or last week of the school year and is subject to blackout periods as identified by the Executive Director or designee. Requests for Personal Leave must be made at least 10 days in advance, and approvals are subject to the needs of the school and are in the sole discretion of the Executive Director or designee. Personal Leave may be taken in increments as small as one half (½) day, and, unless due to illness or family emergency, must be approved by the Executive Director or designee.

Full-time employees shall accrue a maximum of twelve (12) days per year of Personal Leave. *Our complete Leave for 10 Month Employees Policy (P.13) can be found in the Policies document.*

ADDITIONAL LEAVE POLICIES FOR TWELVE (12) MONTH EMPLOYEES

Unless otherwise specified in the employment contract, Vacation and Personal Leave may not be used during the first or last week of the school year and is subject to blackout periods as identified by the Executive Director or designee. Requests for Vacation and Personal Leave must be made at least 10 days in advance, and approvals are subject to the needs of the school and are in the sole discretion of the Executive Director or designee. Vacation and Personal Leave may be taken in increments as small as one half (½) day, and, unless due to illness or family emergency, must be approved by the Executive Director or designee.

VACATION LEAVE

Full-time 12-month administrator employees may accrue Vacation Leave as specified in the employment contract. In no event shall any employee accrue more than fourteen (14) Vacation Leave days in a calendar year.

Our complete Leave for 12 Month Employees Policy (P.42) can be found in the Policies document.

PERSONAL LEAVE

Full-time employees shall accrue a maximum of twelve (12) days per year of Personal Leave. Personal Leave is accrued at the rate of one (1) day per month worked.

Our complete Leave for 12 Month Employees Policy (P.42) can be found in the Policies document.

VOLUNTARY SHARED LEAVE POLICY

The purpose of voluntary shared leave is to provide economic relief for Sterling Montessori employees who are likely to suffer financial hardship because of a prolonged absence or frequent short-term absences caused by a serious medical condition of the employee or of a member of the employee's immediate family.

Our complete Voluntary Shared Leave Policy (P.43), including eligibility requirements, can be found in the Policies document

UNPAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leaves of Absence without pay may be granted to employees for personal leave at the discretion of the Executive Director or designee. The maximum term is for a three-month period which may be renewed in some cases, if deemed warranted, at the sole discretion of the Executive Director or designee for an additional period of up to three months. The request for such leave must be submitted to the Executive Director or designee, in writing, clearly stating the reasons for such a request. This leave is not to be used for an employee seeking alternative employment opportunities.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles eligible employees unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons. FMLA also includes certain military family leave provisions.

For more information on FMLA eligibility and to see our complete Family and Medical Leave Policy (P.45), please see the Policies document.

JURY DUTY

The school recognizes jury duty as a community obligation and the responsibility of a citizen. All employees who are summoned for jury duty will receive benefits/ pay required by law. You should make appropriate arrangements for leave as soon as you have received your jury duty notice, of which a copy must be submitted to the school.

MILITARY LEAVE

All employees who are required to serve in any branch of the armed forces of the United States will be given the necessary time off, without pay. This includes those employees serving in any of the reserves, National Guard or entering into active military service.

The employee must provide the school advance written notice of the date of his or her departure and expected return. Upon providing the school with notification of the satisfactory completion of his or her duties, employees still qualified to perform the duties of their position will be reinstated to their former position or to a comparable position with the same status, pay and seniority.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Sterling Montessori will employ substitute teachers as deemed appropriate by the administration. Human Resources will coordinate the recruitment and selection of substitute teachers, recommending qualified applicants to the Executive Director or designee.

Substitute teachers must complete all onboarding documentation in order to be placed on the substitute list.

BREAKS AND PLACEMENT

Substitutes are notified either by phone or by text through the substitute phone system (984-220-1497). Substitute jobs may be for either full or half days.

Sterling will provide substitute teachers working a full day, an unpaid 30-minute break.

Employees who need a substitute teacher when absent are required to follow the Leave Request procedures in place.

It is in the discretion of the school to place the substitute in a classroom or where there is a greater need within the school due to the lack of substitute teacher coverage.

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DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To enable substitute teachers to provide better services to students during planned and/or emergency absences, all lead teachers (including lead exceptional teachers must prepare an emergency substitute teacher folder. This folder must be kept in the classroom at all times and updated periodically as necessary.

As applicable, the folder should include the following information for each class/ group:

Attendance procedures and an up-to-date class roster	plans) Medical plans and/or procedures for students
Lesson plans	Lunch procedures
Instructions for using electronic equipment	Accident procedures, reports
Daily schedule for students and teacher (pull-out programs, etc.)	Any extra duties that the absent teacher may have (carpool, lunch duty)
Classroom management procedures (group and/or individual	

LONG TERM SUBSTITUTES REQUIREMENT AND EXPECTATIONS Long term substitute teachers need at least a bachelor's degree in education or in a related field. A long-term substitute teacher is a qualified individual who steps into a classroom and takes over a position for a prolonged period of time. The long term assignment must be for 4 weeks (20 days) or more. For long-term substitute teachers, if the teacher has not left adequate information for the substitute, the responsibility falls upon the individual teams, department chairs and other staff members to provide the necessary lesson plans, interim reports, grades, IEP meetings, teacher/parent conferences, etc.

COMPENSATION

Substitutes are paid \$16 per hour, \$18 per hour, or \$20 per hour for their service and time. Substitutes in their first two years of service are paid \$16 per hour. Substitutes who are in their third or higher year of service are paid \$18 per hour. If any substitute agrees to fulfill a long term substitute role by Sterling Executive Director that substitute will be paid \$20 per hour. The definition of a long term substitute is any substitute who agrees to fill a vacancy of any kind or who fills the same vacancy for longer than 2 weeks on a full time basis (full school day, five days per week). Examples include maternity or paternity leave of a staff member, a long term illness, FMLA absence, a sudden staff departure, unexpected illness, or a not yet filled vacancy. In the event that a substitute is in a position that becomes a longer term vacancy,

that substitute will be paid retroactively at the long term substitute rate.

“DO NOT USE” REQUESTS

In the event that a substitute does not work out, the school administrator may submit a “Do Not Use” request to Human Resources requesting that the substitute’s name be removed from the list of available substitutes. The school administrator or designee must inform the substitute teacher of the reasons for the “Do Not Use” request in person or by phone. If a substitute teacher receives a “Do Not Use” request and is terminated from employment, s/he may submit a written appeal to the Executive Director or designee within 30 calendar days. A substitute teacher will not be able to work during the appeal process. Once the appeal process has been completed the substitute will be notified by phone of the decision.

WORKER’S COMPENSATION

An employee who has been injured while on the job performing work functions is responsible for reporting his/her injury to their director immediately and must submit the statement of injury form as soon as possible or within 24 hours of the accident. Please submit a statement of injury form to Denise Kimball, Director of Operations at Sterling Montessori. The form must be filled out entirely, including a complete description of the injury, and signed by the appropriate director. If the employee’s director is not available, the employee must reach out to the Director of Operations, the Executive Director, or the HR Manager. This form should be turned in, in person, to the Sterling HR office prior to leaving campus after an injury.

If the employee is unable to return to work due to the injury, they must complete a leave form request. There is a seven (7) day waiting period during which the employee can elect to use appropriate accumulated leave, 103 voluntary shared leave, or elect to go on leave without pay. The employee must specify on their leave request what election they are choosing.

Finally, all medical documentation must be turned into the Sterling HR office, including, but not limited to, return-to-work release notices and any restrictions pertaining to the ability to perform one’s job. All necessary paperwork should be emailed to

hr@sterlingmontessori.org

Once an insurance adjuster is assigned and the employee’s claim has been approved, the insurance carrier will be in contact with the employee regarding the payment of medical bills and lost time wages. Employees may choose to supplement their Workers’ Compensation benefit with leave accumulated prior to going out on Workers’ Compensation approved leave. Use of sick and annual leave for this purpose must be requested in writing and shall not result in compensation greater than the usual full salary.

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CLAIM REPORTING PROCEDURES

Sterling Montessori feels that as a responsible employee you should notify administration of any unsafe conditions which you feel could lead to or contribute to an employee being harmed.

Information regarding the school’s Worker’s Compensation policy is posted in the Main Office. Please contact the Human Resource Manager if you would like further information regarding Worker’s Compensation Insurance.

1. Each employee injured on the job, no matter how minor, should report the incident to their immediate Supervisor and HR Manager.
2. If seeking medical assistance, the employee will go to a local urgent care on the day of the incident. A post-accident drug screen is required. Leave time will not be deducted when an employee leaves work on the day of an injury to seek medical assistance for an on the job injury; however, the employee must provide Sterling with a work note from their local urgent care provider.
 - a. The employee will be provided with the “Initial Employee Form” to give to the medical provider’s office. b. The employee will be provided with the “First Fill Card,” a prescription card which is approved for a single RX-fill. 3. The Supervisor and/or HR Manager will complete a Supervisor’s Accident Investigation Report and determine from the employee, what happened, what body part was injured, and who witnessed the incident. 4. The employee will complete the Employee’s Report of Injury Form with the HR Manager. The employee should sign off on the form acknowledging the information is true and accurate.
5. If the employee identified a witness to the incident, the witness should complete the Witness Report of Injury Form by the end of the day and return to the HR Manager.
6. In cases of emergencies, the employee can see a health care provider at their local hospital emergency room. However, any follow-up treatment must be by a pre-approved health care provider.
7. If follow-up visits are needed the employee will contact the Supervisor and HR Manager after each visit to their health care provider. The employee will provide the following information:
 - a. The length of his/her disability period or related time off.
 - i. Provide a medical leave of absence slip from the health care provider. if the employee is to remain out of work during

- any length of time. It is the employee's responsibility to get the disability/medical leave slip to the HR Manager. A copy of the slip should be maintained in the employee's Workers Compensation file.
 - ii. The date and time of employee's next health care provider's visit (if applicable).
 - iii. A telephone number where the employee can be reached.
8. Once the claim has been submitted and entered, a Workers Comp Adjuster will be assigned to you. The assigned Adjuster will contact the employer, employee and medical provider to begin the claims process.

GENERAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

REQUIRED SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Safety can only be achieved through teamwork at the school. Each employee, supervisor, and administrator must practice safety awareness by thinking defensively, anticipating unsafe situations and reporting unsafe conditions immediately.

Please observe the following precautions:

- Understand your job duties fully and follow instructions. If you are not sure of the safest procedure, don't guess, ask an administrator.
- Know the locations, contents and use of all first aid and firefighting equipment.
- Call Maintenance and Facilities Manager to repair machines and equipment.
- Get help when lifting or pushing heavy objects.
- The violation of any safety precaution is in itself an unsafe act.

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EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Sterling Montessori must be prepared to respond to an emergency or traumatic event in an organized and timely manner. This section includes procedures that are designed to handle a number of emergencies and crises that could occur. These procedures do not cover every condition that might develop, and it may not always be possible to follow every procedure.

General Emergency Plan for Teachers: In the event of a life-threatening emergency, call (911) and immediately notify the main office. The Executive Director or designee will report to your room immediately. Teachers should remain calm and in control at all times, especially in front of children. Take appropriate actions to care for the children at the scene. Send child(ren) to get help if you are the only adult present. Verbal communications should not be overheard or misinterpreted by children or other non-responders. Always account for children that you are responsible for during that time.

Requirements for Contacting Law Enforcement: When a reasonable belief that any of the following acts of crime and violence have occurred on school property or at school sponsored events, you are required to call law enforcement (911). If you should have a question whether or not an incident should be reported, consult with the Executive Director or designee. These crimes are: assault on school personnel not resulting in serious injury, assault resulting in serious injury, assault involving the use of a weapon, homicide, kidnapping, possession of a controlled substance, possession of a firearm, possession of a weapon, rape, robbery from the person, robbery with a dangerous weapon, sexual assault, sexual offense, taking indecent liberties with a minor, alcohol consumption, possession, sales or purchase, willfully burning a public school and bomb threats/bomb hoaxes.

SEVERE WEATHER

The Executive Director or designee will monitor weather reports to determine if action must be taken. If a warning is issued, an announcement will be made over the public address system (PA) with all relevant information.

Weather Watch: Weather conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop during the next 24-36 hours. No severe weather currently exists within the county; therefore, no action other than preparation is required at this time.

Weather Warning: Weather conditions have produced severe weather within Wake County. Actions should be taken to protect lives and property.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning: If outside, return to the building for protection and shelter. If inside, stay away from windows. **Tornado**

Warning: Follow the protocols as outlined in the Emergency Procedure Guidelines.

If outside, return to the building in predetermined safe areas of the building. Take shelter in predetermined safe areas of the building. Use "head tuck" position when appropriate to protect from flying objects.

Winter Storm Warning: Issuance of a Winter Storm Warning indicates some form of frozen precipitation (snow, sleet, freezing rain, etc.) is occurring within Wake County, which will provide significant accumulation of frozen precipitation on the ground. Remain indoors and calm children. The school administration will provide direction on the handling of children and/or transport of children to their homes.

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UNSCHEDULED SCHOOL CLOSINGS/DELAYS/EARLY DISMISSAL Severe weather, including hurricanes and winter storms, is a normal part of the school year. A determination will be made on a case by case basis by the Executive Director or designee in the event of an unscheduled closing, delay or early dismissal.

Sterling Montessori will not provide Before Care when operating on a delay and will not provide After Care when operating with an early dismissal. Staff may not use weather related closings as an optional teacher workday.

All weather closings, delays and early dismissals will be posted on WRAL and the school's website. Sterling Montessori families will also receive alerts via text messaging, email and/or voicemail. Contact information is taken from the Child Information Sheets and is the responsibility of the family to keep this information updated. Families and staff are expected to make their own judgements and use their discretion about the safety of the roads during inclement weather. Families and staff should inform the school if they are not able to make it to school. *Our complete policy on Severe Weather (P. 63) can be found in the Policies document.*

Toxic Substances

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SPILLS

Spill(s) of hazardous materials can occur at any location and at any time.

If the spill is outside, the Executive Director or designee should contact off-site emergency services (911). Move upwind away from the spill area. If you are outside, return to the building. Close all exterior windows, doors and vents.

If the spill is inside, contact the Executive Director or designee. The Executive Director or designee should contact off site emergency services (911). Avoid direct or indirect contact with materials spill. Go to a safer location inside the building. Evacuate the building if the situation requires.

NATURAL GAS LEAKS

Gas leaks are identified by an odor similar to rotten eggs. If a gas leak is detected, the following steps should be taken:

If the gas leak is inside, open exterior windows to vent building. Contact the Executive Director or designee. The Executive Director or designee should contact off-site emergency services (911). Utilize evacuation procedures to evacuate the area/building upon direction of the fire department.

Do not turn on or off any electric device including light switches.

If the gas leak is outside, move upwind of gas odor. Turn off ALL automobile engines in the area. If you are outside, return to the

building. Notify the Executive Director or designee. The Executive Director or designee should contact off-site emergency services (911). Keep exterior windows and doors closed.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

For the protection of all occupants of the building, it is important that everyone is informed and understands what to do in the event of a fire, gas leak, or other type of emergency requiring the evacuation of the building.

The following evacuation procedures should be discussed with each class:

Occupants should remain silent. Directions and important instructions cannot be heard if teachers and children are talking. Occupants should clear the building immediately through a predetermined exit and report to a predetermined area. Teachers should take the Red Emergency Bag with them. Ensure that all children are evacuated safely from the building. Relocate as far from the building and the emergency vehicle access areas as possible to the previously designated area. Attendance should be taken to account for all children.

The Executive Director or designee will give a verbal or manual "all clear" to return to the building after all areas have been determined safe.

If an evacuation exit route is blocked, the next nearest exit should be used. If relocation to another site is necessary, the relocation will be facilitated by the Executive Director or designee.

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FIRE

Follow the protocols as outlined in the Emergency Procedure Guidelines. These will be followed for handling actual fire or smoke situations, automatic system activations, or a false alarm. *Our complete Fire Policy (P. 47) can be found in the Policies document.*

BOMB THREAT

In the event a bomb threat is received by telephone, the individual receiving the telephone call should attempt to obtain and record as much information as possible. Immediately record the call ID number located on the caller identification screen (if applicable). Record all information on the Bomb Threat Information Sheet.

The person receiving the call should immediately notify the Executive Director or designee. The Executive Director or designee should immediately call law enforcement officials (911). *Our complete Bomb Threat Policy (P.47) can be found in the Policies document.*

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

LOCKDOWN / LOCKDOWN CODES

A Lockdown is a protective action employed to safeguard children, faculty, and staff when there is an imminent threat (i.e. armed perpetrator) approaching the school, on school grounds, or in the school. Lockdown is employed to keep people away from a violent perpetrator while law enforcement engages the suspect. The procedures will minimize the risk of harm by limiting the opportunity for any perpetrator to gain access to children, faculty or staff. They are also designed to reduce the anxiety levels. Familiarize yourself with the system that will be used to warn you to lockdown.

Follow the protocols as outlined in the Emergency Procedure Guidelines.

HOSTAGE SITUATION

A Lockdown is a protective action employed to safeguard children, faculty, and staff when there is an imminent threat (i.e. armed perpetrator) approaching the school, on school grounds, or in the school. Lockdown is employed to keep people away from a violent perpetrator while law enforcement engages the suspect.

The procedures will minimize the risk of harm by limiting the opportunity for any perpetrator to gain access to children, faculty or staff. They are also designed to reduce the anxiety levels. Familiarize yourself with the system that will be used to warn you to lockdown.

Follow the protocols as outlined in the Emergency Procedure Guidelines.

FIRST AID AND SICK PROCEDURES CPR & FIRST

AID

Members of our faculty are trained in CPR and first aid, and have knowledge of blood-borne pathogens. The faculty is permitted to perform the following procedures for first-aid: wash or direct a child to wash an abrasion or cut with soap and water, apply a bandage, take an ancillary temperature, offer ice for bumps and bruises and call the parents/guardians or other adults on the child's emergency contact list.

Faculty Members are NOT permitted to remove splinters or ticks. They can only administer non-prescription medication, ointments and sunscreen with a signed Medication Administration Permission Form signed by parent/guardian. Parents/guardians will be called if their children get splinters or ticks or need other first aid which the faculty is unable to offer. *Our complete Student Medical Support Policy (P. 63) can be found in the Policies document.*

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

All accidents and incidents requiring first aid require an Incident Report to be filled out and given to parent(s) or guardian(s) the day they occur. Serious injury policies are regulated by the state. If a child requires treatment beyond what Sterling Montessori can administer, the office will attempt to contact the parents/ guardians.

If parents/guardians cannot be contacted, emergency contacts listed in the child's child records will be called. In an extreme emergency, the school will call 911.

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SICK PROCEDURES

Sick children are brought to a designated area in order to keep others healthy. Parents/guardians are then contacted to come to school to pick up their children as soon as possible. Children are to be kept out of school if any of the following symptoms develop at home:

Fever is determined by a thermometer reading 100.4 or higher or by subjective signs such as flushed cheeks, fatigue, extreme fussiness, chills shivering, sweating, aches, headache, not eating or drinking. Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has started.

If the child has vomited within a 24-hour period.

Pink eye with white or yellow discharge, until 24 hours after treatment.

Scabies or lice (a child with any nits in their hair will be sent home until they are nit-free).

Chicken pox, or a rash suggestive of chicken pox.

Tuberculosis or Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.

Pertussis, until five days after the appropriate antibiotic has been taken.

Hepatitis A, viral infection, until one week after onset of illness or jaundice.

Sudden onset of diarrhea characterized by an increased number of bowel movements compared to the child's normal pattern.

When a physician or other health professional issues a written order that the child should be separated from other children due to a contagious illness.

Open sores that cannot be covered, until a health professional states that the child is not infectious.

Any COVID symptoms according to CDC and DHHS.

When necessary, classroom communities will be notified of a spreading illness. CDC and DHHS requirements for reporting to the health department will be followed at all times.

Children may not return to school until they are fever, vomiting or diarrhea free for 24 hours without needing any medication.

In addition, we may ask that you come to pick up your child if they are unwell and unable to participate in community routines. This includes, but is not limited to: extreme irritability, fatigue, and incessant coughing.

Our complete Sick Policy (P.50), including guidelines for when children may return to school, can be found in the Policies document.

CHILD HEALTH

CHILDREN WITH CHRONIC HEALTH ISSUES

Parents/guardians are to notify faculty/staff directly if children have a chronic health condition. Chronic health conditions include asthma, allergies or anything that requires continuous medication or special considerations. Sterling Montessori complies with FERPA regarding matters of confidentiality.

MEDICATION

All medicines are stored in and administered from the Main office, with the exception of inhalers and EpiPens and antihistamine which are kept in a secure area of the child's classroom. *Our complete Student Medical Support Policy (P. 63) can be found in the Policies document.*

CONCUSSIONS

This policy is mandated by North Carolina Statute GS 115C-12(12) titled Return- to-Learn After Concussion.

After a head injury, 911 should immediately be called for any incident resulting in loss of consciousness, significant neck pain, significant changes in mental state, severe headache, or uncontrolled bleeding or vomiting. A seriously injured child should not be moved. All parents/guardians

must inform their child's teacher and Section Director when their child has/had a concussion. *The complete mandated*

Concussion Policy (P.48) can be found in the Policies document.

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THREATS OF VIOLENCE

Take ALL threats seriously. Notify the Executive Director or designee of any threat. Protect children at the scene. School administration and/or personnel conduct a preliminary interview with the children. If an imminent danger is perceived, contact law enforcement (911). Notify the parent(s) and have them report to the school. Document all actions taken, noting the names of those involved and the date actions were taken.

REPORT OF SUICIDE THREAT

Take ALL threats seriously. Notify the Executive Director, Section Director or school counselor. Take necessary steps to keep the child safe in school. Confiscate pills/weapons. Search locker. Do not leave child alone at any time. Do not permit child to leave campus without adult supervision. *The complete Suicide Intervention Policy (P.48) can be found in the Policies document.*

THREAT OF RUNAWAY OR CONFIRMED RUNAWAY

Take ALL threats seriously. Notify Administration immediately. Interview the child/witnesses. Take appropriate action based on the results of the interview. Notify the parent(s). If a runaway occurs, notify law enforcement and the Administrative Team. Do not allow the child to leave campus unsupervised. Have appropriate school personnel monitor the child after the incident. Document all actions taken, noting time and names of those involved in actions taken. When necessary, use your walkie talkie to ask for assistance.

MISSING CHILDREN

MISSING CHILD PROTOCOL

If a child is missing from campus remain calm. Notify the Administration Team or designee immediately of the situation. Provide as many details as possible, including: name, nickname, aliases; race, gender, and nationality; identity of missing child's friends; detailed description of clothing; time when the child was last seen; location where the child was last seen and who they were last seen by. Advise Executive Director or designee of any problems that are known to you regarding the child.

If a thorough search of the school and its perimeter fails to locate the child, the Administration Team or designee should contact the parent/guardian of the missing child. A determination will be made whether it is necessary to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency.

If media contacts Sterling Montessori for a statement, all media inquiries will be referred to an administrator or designee.

MEDIA PROCEDURES

The Executive Director or designee shall be the only spokespersons to respond to the media. Television, radio, and newspapers provide an excellent conduit for getting information to large numbers of people. As a result, information shared with the news media should be both timely and accurate. Employees and children should avoid speaking with the press. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) precludes school staff from disclosing a child's name, grade or other personal identifying information. Reporters and photographers should be kept off campus until specific photo and briefing opportunities have been scheduled.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Children may begin entering classrooms at their designated arrival time. Attendance will be taken no later than 10:00 am. Those children who arrive after the arrival window are considered tardy and must be signed in at the Main Office before going to their classroom.

Early Dismissal: Parents/guardians must sign out their child at the Main Office in order to pick up their children early but no later than 3:00 pm. Parents/guardians of A building must then walk over to their child's classroom to pick up their child from

the classroom. Parents/guardians of Elementary and Middle School must wait in the office for their child to come to them.

Late Dismissal: Charter School children who are still on campus at the end of dismissal must go to the Main Office or their designated after school activity. Late charges may apply. All children must be supervised at all times by an adult.

STUDENT RELEASE

Parents or guardians must provide the school with a list of people authorized to pick up the child on the Student Information Sheets. No child will be dismissed to any unauthorized person at any time.

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CARPOOL SUPERVISION

During dismissal, children will wait in their respective classrooms. Each arriving family will have a carpool tag on their dashboard with a unique number. Using an iPad, staff at curbside will select the arriving families' numbers in a shared google spreadsheet. The classroom teachers will have a view of their own class' roster in the same google spreadsheet. When a child's family is selected, the teacher will see the child's name indicated in the roster and will send them out. For this carpool process to work efficiently, it is essential that classroom teachers respond immediately to prepare their children to leave when the Main Office makes the announcement to prepare for carpool over the PA system. Please see the most updated carpool document for more information.

CUSTODY AND CHILD WELFARE

VERIFICATION OF CHILD CUSTODY

It is the responsibility of Sterling Montessori to determine that any person appearing at the school requesting permission to take a child from the school be properly identified and approved before allowing that person to do so.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Sterling Montessori complies with all local and state laws regarding any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect. All employees are required to report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the appropriate local and/or state authorities. Best practice of mandatory reporting is to also notify the Executive Director or designee.

CHILD OR STAFF DEATH

DEATH IN CHILD'S IMMEDIATE FAMILY

When a death occurs in a child's immediate family, inform the school counselor, administration and all of the child's teachers. Develop a plan on how to inform the child's peers and to talk to them regarding the death; including how to welcome the child back to school. Appropriate school personnel should contact the family. Prepare to have support for the child when they return to school (outside specialist) and monitor the child as needed.

CHILD/STAFF DEATH

Notify the Executive Director or designee and the School Crisis Intervention Team. Verify the child's/staff member's death. A school counselor should be brought in to assist children and staff. Communicate known facts to school Crisis Intervention Team members according to the school's crisis plans. Notify staff and families as soon as possible. Schedule a staff meeting and develop a crisis plan for the day (Refer to Crisis Intervention Team Manual). The administration and the Crisis Intervention Team will update information concerning death(s). They will follow a crisis plan by making announcements and counseling children. Additionally, they will make arrangements for appropriate staff to attend funeral, identify and monitor children/staff most affected by the tragedy and plan for an appropriate memorial.

CHILD SUPERVISION

It is important children are supervised indoors and outdoors while at school. Elementary and middle school children may run errands in pairs. Children's House students must have an adult with them at all times. Upper elementary and middle school children may go to the restroom in their own building alone. When exiting the classroom in a line, one teacher should be at the beginning of the line and one at the end. If one teacher is escorting a smaller group, they should be at the back of the line. Have children stop at the corner and wait for the teacher to join them so the teacher can monitor the front and back of the line at all times.

CHILD SUPERVISION IN THE CHILDREN'S HOUSE

In the Children's House, state law requires two adults with a group of 25 children. If there is only one adult present with Children's House children, the ratio must not exceed 1 to 15. It is each individual teacher's responsibility to make sure the appropriate ratio is maintained at all times. During nap time, the ratio requirement changes. As long as children are on their nap mats, there only has to be one adult in the room at a time. When any child gets up and assumes their normal activities, a second adult must be present. Children must be where they can be seen and heard at all times. They may not be left alone with volunteers in hallways or spare rooms unless that volunteer meets licensing requirements. Children may work on the patios or hallways if the windows and doors are open, so they can be properly supervised.

PLAYGROUND RULES & SUPERVISION

The Sterling Montessori playground has been thoughtfully constructed and maintained for the purpose of enriching the school experience for our students. It is important that during outside time, teachers and students model appropriate behaviors in problem-solving skills and conflict resolution strategies through the use of the Grace and Courtesy curriculum, Positive Discipline

techniques and Restorative Practices. According to state law, children may not lose their playtime as a consequence. Texting, talking, and browsing on a cell phone while supervising children is prohibited unless there is an emergency. At Sterling, we believe in the importance of safe, unstructured free play. It is the job of teachers on the playground to keep the big picture at all times. Teachers should be aware of the location of all children and should be up and moving at all times. The play areas are large, and it is important that teachers spread themselves out to ensure child safety. If a teacher has to leave the playground to take a child to the bathroom, they must let other adults know and remain within ratio.

CHILDREN'S HOUSE PLAYGROUND SAFETY RULES

Rocks, sand and wood chips are to stay on the ground. The wood chips belong in the wood chip area. The sand and the digging tools stay in the sandbox.

Students are to stay on the inside of climbing structures.

The clubhouse is for walking through. Its windows are for looking through.

For safety, students are to go down the slide feet first. Only one person may use the slide at a time. Students using the swing should sit on their backside, keep their bodies in the seat until the swing comes to a complete stop, swing back and forth only.

Adults must check that the gate has been closed after anyone goes out or comes in as it is not spring-mounted. The tricycles are to be ridden on the sidewalk by seated students. There should only be as many students on the tricycle as there are seats. Non-riders should keep their hands to themselves. Tricycle traffic goes clockwise at all times. Riders are expected to be respectful of other tricycles, people or

structures when passing. Pedestrians have the right of way. All tricycles are to be parked on the porch outside of A-10 when any group leaves the playground. Students unable to follow these rules lose the privilege of using the bikes for that play period.

ELEMENTARY PLAYGROUND & OUTDOOR SAFETY RULES

Balls are to be used on the designated fields only.

Treat the plants and trees with care.

Students need to have an adult's permission to be outside the classroom or on the playground.

Shoes are to be worn at all times.

Students should play away from entrances/exits and recycling areas.

Ask an adult for help if there is a problem or if someone is hurt.

All wood chips and rocks are to be kept on the ground.

Use the stairs to access the slide. When sliding, the student must be seated in a forward position. Slide down feet first while sitting up. When they reach the bottom, students need to get off and move away from the slide. Up to three (3) people allowed on the tire swing at a time. Students must be seated on the tire swing with hands and feet inside. Only one student pushes the tire swing.

No twisting and/or standing on swings. Students are not to jump off swings. Only one student on a swing at a time. Gaga courts must follow the same set of rules.

Tag games should be played in an open space away from all playground equipment.

Students must obtain permission from the teacher before retrieving balls from the parking lot.

Patios and gardens are extensions of the classroom and students on the playground must refrain from playing on them while at recess.

PROCEDURES FOR AFTERCARE PROGRAM

Safety is one of the highest priorities at Sterling Montessori. In order to ensure that all children are making their way to the designated aftercare classroom in a timely efficient manner, please abide by the following procedures: At 3:30 PM (Academy/K) or 3:45 (Grades 1-8) all children that are enrolled in the After Care Program are taken to their designated aftercare classroom.

At 3:30 PM (Academy/K) or 3:45 (Grades 1-8), any child NOT enrolled in the After Care Program but whose parents/guardians have NOT picked them up are brought to the aftercare classroom (Academy/K) or to the office (Grades 1-8). The teacher is to sign the child into the aftercare classroom and bring the completed Late Child Form with them.

Children who are picked up after 3:30 PM (Academy/K) or 3:45 (Grades 1-8) will be charged applicable late fees. (Note, teachers who offer tutoring or any other services after school to a child must stay with the child until the parent picks them up to avoid late fees).

When someone other than the parent is picking up a child, please alert the aftercare staff. Remember to make sure all persons picking up children are on the authorized pick up list on their emergency cards and Child Information Forms.

OFF-CAMPUS FIELD TRIPS

Off-campus field trips apply to kindergarten through middle school-aged children. The purpose of this policy is not only to ensure the safety of all children, staff, and volunteers, but also to enhance the classroom educational experience. All off campus field trips require pre-approval from the Executive Director or designee. Only curriculum-related study and trips in adherence to the safety precautions outlined in the policy will be approved. *Our full policy on Off-Campus Field Trips (P.50) can be found in the Policies document.*

ANIMALS

PETS

For the safety of everyone, personal pets are not permitted on campus at any time. Class pets with the exception of approved reptiles and amphibians are not allowed. Teachers are responsible for the care of the class pets over weekends, and when school is not in session. *Our complete Policy on Classroom Pets (P.61) can be found in the Policies document.*

SERVICE ANIMALS POLICY

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Rehab Act"), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), and state law, Sterling Montessori may be required to accommodate an otherwise qualified individual with a disability by making a reasonable modification in its services, programs, or activities. Sterling Montessori acknowledges the health and safety interests of the general community. *Our complete Service Animals Policy (P.49) can be found in the Policies document.*

FACILITIES

HOUSEKEEPING

Good housekeeping, good work habits, and a neat place to work are essential for job safety and efficiency. All employees are expected to keep their place of work organized and in good order at all times. All employees are expected to report anything that needs repair or replacement to Maintenance.

PESTS

Email the Maintenance and Facilities Manager with any pest-related requests. Red ants require an immediate request. Please keep children clear of the nest. Mouse droppings are to be reported ASAP as well. Please do not clean up their droppings or have the children clean them up.

FOOD WASTE

Please instruct the child to put all food waste in the lidded trash unit assigned to the classroom. Using the trash can instead of an open one helps with pest reduction. Please do not leave food out overnight or for any extended period of time. All food kept in the classrooms must be in air-tight storage containers.

DUMPSTER USE

The Maintenance and Facilities Manager and the Custodian are the only people who may enter the dumpster areas. All cardboard must be broken down before the cleaning crew will remove it. Place it alongside the trash can. At no time should children be taking trash to the dumpster without supervision.

MAINTENANCE REQUESTS

For non-emergency facility needs, email the Maintenance and Facilities Manager.

AFTER HOURS USE

In an effort to increase community involvement, Sterling will allow the use of its property after school hours when certain criteria are met. *Our complete Policy on After Hours Use (P.53) can be found in the Policies document.*

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Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) Plan

Overview

Sterling Montessori has established a Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) in accordance with the State Board of Education Policy TCED-016 (formerly TCP-A-004/LICN-004). The BTSP at Sterling Montessori was designed to support the professional learning and development of beginning teachers as well as their mentors. Sterling Montessori is committed to helping both Mentors and Beginning Teachers (BTs) succeed through a shared vision, integral BTSP plan, and consistent, constructive feedback from a supportive network of colleagues and administrators.

The BTSP plan was developed to align to the Beginning Teacher Support Program Standards.

Standard 1: Systematic Support for High Quality Induction Programs- This standard is designed to promote the commitment of all stakeholders in seeing mentoring and induction programs succeed. Key program elements include the creation of an institutional plan, demonstrating institutional commitment, and support and principal engagement.

Standard 2: Mentor Selection, Development and Support- This standard articulated the process and criteria for mentor selection, discusses mentor roles and responsibilities, and delineates foundational mentor training. Key program elements include mentor selection, defining the role of mentors, and mentor professional development.

Standard 3: Mentoring for Instructional Excellence- Mentors are given protected time to provide beginning teachers with support to achieve success in the areas set forth by the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards. Key program elements include providing time for mentors and beginning teachers, ensuring mentoring is focused on instruction, and addressing issues of diversity.

Standard 4: Beginning Teacher Professional Development: Professional development is provided to beginning teachers that orients them to their new career and supports their efforts to meet the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards. Key program elements include structured orientation to the school site, as well as professional development designed to meet the unique needs of beginning teachers that is aligned with the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards, and the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System.

Standard 5: Formative Assessment of Candidates and Programs- New teachers and mentoring programs are monitored and supported using a formative assessment system to guide their work. Key program elements include formative assessment systems and program evaluation.

Identification of Beginning Teachers

The state of North Carolina defines “beginning teacher” as a teacher with fewer than three years of professional experience. Beginning teachers hold initial or lateral entry/residency licenses. All teachers who hold initial licenses are required to participate in a three-year beginning teacher induction period that includes a formal orientation, support from a trained mentor, and classroom observations, prior to the recommendation for the continuing licensure. Lateral Entry/Residency teachers are required to participate in the BTSP program for three years and have three years to complete licensure requirements to obtain the continuing license.

Teachers with three or more years of appropriate professional experience are not required to participate in the BTSP, nor are student service personnel (e.g., counselors, psychologist, and speech language pathologist), administrators, or curriculum instructional specialists.

Completion of the BTSP requirements in one teaching area satisfies the BTSP requirements for all other teaching areas. Once a continuing license has been earned in one teaching area, additional teaching areas do not require participation in BTSP.

The BTSP Coordinators work collaboratively with the Director of Licensure Renewal, the Executive Director, and Section Director to verify beginning teachers’ eligibility for continuing licenses, in accordance with state-mandated requirements and will follow NCSBE requirements for all required licensure tests.

After successful completion of the three-year BTSP, beginning teachers with three years of successful experience (who meet all licensure criteria, including “proficient” or higher ratings on all standards on the most recent Teacher Summary Form), notification will be sent to the Licensure Division of the NC Department of Public Instruction by the Director of Licensure Renewal.

New Staff Orientation

New Staff Orientation is the responsibility of the Executive Director and the Section Director(s). Orientation will be provided, attended, and documented prior to the first day of the teacher work days in August. Topics will include, but are not restricted to:

Sterling Montessori’s mission, policies, procedures (including those directly affecting students)

Meet members of the Administrative Team

Review of the Employee and Parent Handbook

Campus tour

How to ask for technical assistance or resources.

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Orientation of Beginning Teacher Within Two Weeks of the BT’s First Day of Work

Orientation of Beginning Teachers in the Beginning Teacher Support Program will be the responsibility of the BTSP Coordinators. Orientation will happen within two weeks of the BT’s first day of work, preferably during the teacher work week in August. The Beginning Teacher Orientation topics include, but are not restricted to:

The teacher will receive a rubric for evaluating NC teachers, the evaluation policy, and the schedule for completing all components of the evaluation process

Review of Sterling Montessori’s mission, policies, procedures (including those directly affecting students) Include an overview of the BTSP plan, process and BTSP calendar/schedule for the year

Review and update all BTSP binders

Reiterate that meetings and observations will be spaced out throughout the year

Answer questions Beginning Teachers may have about the workplace, duties, school programs, etc., and address any concerns

Provide assurance that Beginning Teachers are paired with Mentors who are trained, knowledgeable, trustworthy, and eager to help them succeed

Provide assurance that the BTSP Coordinator will help maintain optimum work conditions, and make Beginning Teachers aware of NCDPI policies that support them
Explain ways in which the BTSP Coordinator supports both Beginning Teachers and Mentors
Review teaching criteria/policies of the State of North Carolina
Review NC curriculum standards
Discuss mission and goals for the State Board of Education
Discuss the process for achieving a continuing license
Overview of the resources and supports available to assist beginning teachers in acclimating to the classroom setting (including the role of a mentor)
Documentation that each beginning teacher attended orientation

Required Working Conditions for Beginning Teachers:

The Executive Director, BTSP Coordinators, Section Directors, Mentors and peers are instrumental in supporting beginning teachers. It is the expectation of Sterling Montessori that administrators be intentionally involved in the professional development and growth of beginning teachers by adhering to optimal working conditions for beginning teachers:

Assignment of area of licensure: A critical factor in determining an applicant's eligibility for hire is the determination that he/she holds (or is eligible to hold), a North Carolina teaching license in the content area for which he/she has been recommended. The Executive Director or designee, in close collaboration with the Director of Licensure Renewal, reviews all certified hiring recommendations and application materials to ensure that the applicant's teaching license accurately corresponds to the teaching position for which he/she is being considered.

Mentor assigned early, in the licensure area, and in close proximity: The Beginning Teacher Support Coordinator works with the Executive Director and Section Directors to match beginning teachers with effective, nurturing, and committed teachers who have been trained as mentors. While every effort is made to ensure that mentor teaches in the same licensure area and is in close proximity to the beginning teacher's assigned location, in some instances, when a trained mentor does not exist in the same licensure area, or the teacher is a specialist in the school, a mentor will be assigned from a different location.

Limited preparations: Section Directors will work to create the best possible schedules for the new teachers in their buildings. Specialists who serve all students in a school should have ample planning time each day to prepare lessons for the various grade levels that they teach.

Limited non-instructional duties: Section Directors will monitor the number and type of duties and committees assigned to beginning teachers. These assignments are restricted by State Board policy QP-A-004 to those that all teachers on the staff are required to complete and to committees on which all staff members are assigned. **Limited number of exceptional or difficult students:** Decisions related to class assignments and teacher schedules are to be made with an intentional focus on setting beginning teachers up for success. To that end, the Executive Director, Section Directors, EC Coordinator, and EL Coordinator will work together to balance the number of EC, EL, and/or difficult students assigned to beginning teachers.

No extracurricular assignments unless requested in writing by the beginning teacher:

In accordance with North Carolina GS 115C-47, which calls for local boards of education to adopt policies to eliminate extracurricular duties for teachers in their first three years of teaching, beginning teachers who elect to serve in extracurricular roles are required to sign Time to Teach Waivers. This waiver documents the beginning teacher's voluntary assumption of the extracurricular assignment. Possible examples of extracurricular duties include: club sponsor, sports coach, academic team coach, class sponsor, and assistance at sporting/cultural events.

Developing building-level consistency and continuity: To allow beginning teachers the chance to grow and develop, mentors must have worked with Sterling Montessori for a minimum of three years. This practice seeks to encourage continuity for the beginning teacher and to facilitate the development of strong professional relationships between beginning teachers, their mentors, colleagues, and administrative support teams.

Completion of surveys: In accordance with Policy TCED-016, completion of the recent graduate survey by the Beginning Teacher (BT) and the employer survey by the principal of the school during the BT's first year of teaching as part of the requirements to measure the performance of Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) stated in GS 115C 269.35 . The surveys must be completed at the end of the first year of teaching.

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Mentor Assignment

In collaboration with the Executive Director, and BTSP Coordinators, Section Directors recommend mentors for their schools' beginning teachers. The Executive Director or designee will sign off on the mentor recommendation and the BTSP Coordinator will assign the mentor to the beginning teacher.

Eligibility will be based on SBE policy and GS 115C-296€ requirements concerning Mentor's NCEES evaluation.

The selection of mentors is a critical component in developing beginning teachers, growing teacher leaders, and increasing student achievement. Mentor Assignment Guidelines shall follow Beginning Teacher Support Program Standard 2:

Selection criteria, including mentors' range of roles and responsibilities, include input from a variety of stakeholder groups, are well-defined and clearly communicated to all stakeholders by program leadership.

The selection process is transparent and uniformly implemented.

Mentors support Beginning Teacher orientation and provide logistical and emotional support. They focus their primary support on improving instruction and learning. Mentors provide ongoing support and encouragement for the Beginning Teacher. They must want to help others by sharing ideas, materials, knowledge, and experience. Being a Mentor is an opportunity to continue the cycle of learning, and to give back to the teaching profession by working collaboratively with Beginning Teachers. Mentors will be volunteers who are intelligent, prepared, creative, and determined to help the Beginning Teachers who depend on them for support. Mentors will have the experience to know how demanding teaching is; e.g. establishing positive connections between home and school, balancing responsibilities, keeping up with paperwork, communicating with faculty and teachers, managing stress, making time to take care of themselves, and always "following the child" in accordance with the needs of each individual student. They should be lifelong learners who love children and the work they do within the teaching profession and Sterling Montessori.

Mentor selection criteria include:

Rated at least "proficient" level on NCEES (Ratings of proficient or higher on all five standards on the most recent summative evaluation, or on Standards 1 and 4 on an abbreviated evaluation) refer to Sterling's Evaluation form Submission of the mentor application, including Executive Director's and Section Director's endorsement Teaching in the same or similar teaching area or performing similar duties;

Mentors need to be in relatively close proximity to their Beginning Teachers so they are accessible for observations, check ins, and

routine support; Completion of a minimum of three years of successful teaching experience;

Successful completion of the required mentor training;

Committed to working with beginning teachers as needed to promote professional growth based on identifiers defined in the NC Teacher Evaluation System;

Demonstrated ability and willingness to observe the beginning teacher and offer objective, constructive feedback; Skilled at modeling effective teaching, professional, and administrative behaviors;
Participation in ongoing training and professional learning related to mentoring.
Retired teachers are eligible to serve as mentors

The BTSP Coordinators with the Executive Director or designee's approval shall determine which mentor teacher best meets the needs of each new teacher and shall assign the most appropriate mentor teacher to the new teacher, with priority consideration for mentors rated as "distinguished" or "accomplished". If the BTSP Coordinators and/or the Executive Director or designee determines that a teacher rated "proficient" or a retired teacher is the most appropriate mentor for a new teacher, the Executive Director or designee shall maintain records of the reasons for that determination.

LEAs may use the most recently available evaluation for teachers who lack an evaluation from the prior year. Teachers without evaluation data for two or more consecutive years shall not be eligible to serve as mentor teachers, unless the mentor is a retired teacher. Any teacher who is assigned to be a mentor to a Beginning Teacher must meet eligibility requirements in the year of assignment. No mentor whose evaluation falls below the "proficient" level may continue to serve as a mentor to a Beginning Teacher, regardless of existing mentor-mentee relationships. A teacher may be a mentor at a different school building from which the mentor is assigned if the Executive Director (Principals) of each school and the mentor teacher approve the assignment, the mentor is rated at least "accomplished" (received ratings of accomplished or higher on three of five standards including Standard 4 on the most recent summative, or on Standard 4 on an abbreviated evaluation), and the Beginning Teacher's Executive Director or designee maintains a record of the reasons for selecting the mentor from a different school building.

When mentor selection necessitates deviation from the criteria above, the BTSP Coordinator can advise and approve alternative solutions that best meet the mentoring needs of the beginning teacher. Occasionally, when a mentor must be relieved of his or her mentor responsibilities based on feedback from the mentee and/or Section Director, the BTSP Coordinators will work collaboratively with the Executive Director or designee to identify and assign a new mentor.

The BTSP Coordinators will assign Mentors to Beginning Teachers as early as possible during the first three weeks of school (including the teacher work week prior to students returning to school), and take an active role in the development of their successful relationship within the program.

Mentor Assignments will be made based on the needs of the Beginning Teachers, the area of expertise of the Mentors, and the compatibility of the Beginning Teachers and Mentors.

Training Based on NC Mentor Standards and Support is Provided for Mentors: Teachers who meet the previously detailed criteria and who are endorsed by their Section Director and Executive Director are eligible to complete mentor training. Selected mentors have the option to complete mentor training through an annual face-to-face training, or via online modules that are aligned with the state's mentor standards and the corresponding NC Teacher Evaluation Standards. Offering multiple training opportunities provides options for teachers and enables Sterling Montessori to select and train new mentors throughout the school year.

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Training will include the following:

Knowledge of how to satisfy the mandated requirements for Beginning Teachers.

Examples on how to serve as role models, coaches/helpers, and collaborators.

Use of reflective processes (e.g. journaling and self-evaluation). Mentors will need to examine and reexamine their beliefs about the teaching profession and mentoring, including Montessori philosophy and methodology, and any problems that may arise in the course of mentoring. They need to devote time to developing their mentorship skills, which requires the support of the BTSP Coordinator and Sterling Montessori.

Opportunities for professional development as they become available. Through online resources, Sterling Montessori will inform Mentors about instructional tools and ongoing professional development regarding mentor training, current issues affecting Beginning Teachers in the workplace, webinars about how the BTSP program can make a critical difference in how successful a Beginning Teacher is or perceives himself/herself to be.

Information about regional meetings for Mentors, as it becomes available.

Opportunities to participate in annual peer reviews.

Links to information and support resources that Mentors can share with their Beginning Teachers. Monthly meetings with the BTSP Coordinator where Mentors feel nurtured, supported, encouraged, and appreciated.

Annual Development of a Professional Development Plan (PDP) in Collaboration with the Section Director, and the Assigned Mentor:

There are two aspects to consider when developing a Professional Development Plan with a beginning teacher at Sterling Montessori i.e. goal setting with Section Directors and Licensure Renewal with Director of Licensure Renewal. During the BTSP process, a Beginning Teacher's Professional Development Plan will be created and take these two things into account.

An annual PDP must be developed collaboratively between the Beginning Teacher, the assigned Mentor, and the Section Director by the end of October each year. The PDP is based on the NCPTS and must include goals, strategies, and assessments of the PT's progress in improving professional skills. They could include standards adopted by the NC Board of Education, as well as Montessori pedagogical principles. The creation of the PDP will be documented, placed in the binder and will be signed by the beginning teacher, the mentor, and the Section Director. The teacher's progress (formative assessment conferences) on his/her PDP goals will be reviewed a minimum of two times during the school year (mid-year and at the end of the year) by the assigned mentor and the Section Director. Signatures of Beginning Teacher, Mentor and Section Director are required for each formative assessment conference. The Beginning Teacher will provide tangible evidence of growth during both the mid-year and final review. It is the responsibility of the BTSP Mentors to help/support Beginning Teachers to meet these goals.

Section Directors/Executive Director will conclude PDP discussions during the Beginning Teacher's summative evaluation conference.

The Director of Licensure Renewal will provide Licensure Renewal support by tracking licenses, linking faculty to professional development opportunities, securing Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and Licensure Renewal Credits, and informing faculty members about state requirements regarding Professional Licenses. Ways to meet the requirements for Licensure Renewal will be part of the Professional Development Plan of Beginning Teachers in the BTSP process. The BTSP Mentor is responsible for helping Beginning Teachers plan and follow through with their Licensure requirements.

CEUs are granted for study that matches Sterling Montessori's priorities and/or each teacher's Professional Development Plan. Approval should be sought and granted prior to enrollment in Professional Development opportunities. Licensure Renewal Credits for Licensed Teachers may be granted for:

Professional Development provided by Sterling Montessori

Professional Development offered by NCDPI

Relevant workshops and conferences offered by national, state, or local professional organizations including (but not limited to) the teacher's area of licensure, instruction methods, Montessori pedagogy, cultural diversity, global education, use of technology in the classroom, effective communication (with colleagues, parents, students), learning disabilities, classroom management, and behavior management.

University or college courses in an accredited program. The teacher must present the course description to their Section Director

or Director of Licensure Renewal for approval prior to enrolling in the course; and upon completion of the course, the teacher must present to Director of Licensure an original transcript with the course listed and grade received.
Teaching experience, with one unit granted for each year of full-time teaching. Teachers who teach less than full-time will receive prorated credit.
Participation as a mentor for beginning teachers, mentor training, and monthly mentor support meetings. Mentors will receive .5 CEU for every year of mentoring.

Formal Process for Conducting Observations and a Summative Evaluation on all Beginning Teachers:

Sterling Montessori follows the comprehensive evaluation schedule to complete the four beginning teacher observations and summative evaluation required by the state each school year. All teachers, principals, and peer evaluators must complete training on the process. A Beginning Teacher will be informally observed at least five times throughout the year (for BT1s and BT2s at least 2 observations must be conducted within the first semester, and if practicable, at least one of those observations will be within the first grading period), with scheduling based on the specific needs of him/her:

Two formal observations by Section Director:

The first observation to be conducted in October

The second observation to be conducted in March that evaluates the Beginning Teacher's cumulative performance of the school year

The observations must last 45 minutes or entire class period, the first observation must have a pre-conference and all must have a post-conference within 10 days

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Two formal observations by the assigned Mentor (to be scheduled by BTSP Coordinator):

The first observation to be conducted by mid-October

The second observation to be conducted in April that evaluates the Beginning Teacher's cumulative performance of the school year

The observations must last 45 minutes or entire class period, the first observation must have a pre-conference and all must have a post-conference within 10 days

One formal observation by Section Director completed at the beginning of May that evaluates the Beginning Teacher's cumulative performance of the school year

The observation must last 45 minutes or entire class period, and must have a post-conference within 10 days For BT1s and BT2s, at least one of the three annual administrative observations must be conducted by the Section Director. One peer observation

One summative evaluation annually

Monitored Growth Plans and Directed Growth Plans must be implemented when necessitated by ratings.

PDP's, observations, and evaluations will be completed and documented in the binder provided during the BTSP orientation meeting.

In an effort to help support Beginning Teachers acclimate to their classrooms and to the community, BTSP Coordinators will schedule informal observations for each Beginning Teacher. There will be two observations per year either at Sterling Montessori or at a location approved by the BTSP Coordinator, scheduled in November and February.

Any teacher who teaches 120 or more days in a school year and who will get a full year experience credit should have six completed observations. Section Director's will aim to schedule six observations when possible for late hires that works less than 120 days, depending on when they were hired, and in accordance with the observation schedule. At a minimum, the peer observation and the observations required from the date hired will be completed. The Section Director, not his/ her designee, will complete the initial observation on all first year beginning teachers and any Beginning Teachers with performance concerns.

In accordance with State Board Policy, Beginning Teachers in the third year of employment must be rated as "proficient" or higher on all evaluation standards on the Summary Evaluation to be recommended for a continuing license.

In addition to the scheduled Observation Mentors will meet with their Beginning Teacher bi-weekly or weekly (monthly for BT-3 teachers), and will document the meeting using the meeting log.

Participation in BTSP Monitoring for Compliance with State Board Policy

As mandated by SBE policy TCED-016, the Sterling Montessori Beginning Teacher Support Program is monitored every fifth year for compliance. This monitoring process seeks to document evidence of Beginning Teachers' participation in a three-year induction period. In an effort to

meet or exceed the "proficient" rating on each element and standard of the compliance review, Sterling Montessori has established a system of ongoing BTSP support and documentation.

The BTSP Coordinators will hold the following meetings in an effort to be supportive of the Beginning Teachers and Mentors:

Beginning Teacher Group (if there is more than one Beginning Teacher on staff): Informal 45-minute support meetings will be held once a month with just Beginning Teachers during a professional lunch time on campus (in Office A7 or Teacher Lounge). This will be a "support group" of enthusiasm, encouragement, collaborative problem-solving, and constructive feedback for Beginning Teachers. BTSP Coordinators will attend and lead this meeting.

Mentor Group (if there is more than one Mentor on staff): Informal 45-minute support meetings will be held once a month with Mentors and lead by BTSP Coordinators during a professional lunch time on campus (in Office A7 or Teacher Lounge). This will be a "support group" of enthusiasm, encouragement, collaborative problem-solving, and constructive feedback for Mentors as role models, advocates for their Beginning Teachers, and teachers in their own right who require ongoing professional development and support.

BTSP Coordinators/Mentor/Beginning Teacher: Informal 45-minute support meeting held twice a year (Beginning and end of year) with the Mentors and Beginning teachers lead by the BTSP Coordinators. The purpose of these meetings is to work through the BTSP process with sharing. Promote a collaborative environment between all participants.

At the start of each school year, Beginning Teachers and Mentors receive a binder. These binders are accessible by the mentor, the beginning teacher, and the BTSP Coordinators. They are used to organize and maintain all required Beginning Teacher documentation including but not restricted to:

Calendar/Schedule for the year

Check sheets for documentation to be added to the binder throughout the year

Contact Log sheets

Meeting log documentation forms

Reflection/Assessment sheets for sessions/meetings

Mentor observation forms

Rubrics for observations

Guide sheet for informal observations

- Teacher responses to observation forms
- Post-Visit Reflection Questions sheet for Mentors
- Self-Assessment surveys
- Teacher Summary Rating forms
- Beginning Teacher Individualized Growth Plan forms
- Professional Development Plan forms
- List of MTSB links
- List of additional resources
- “Motivational” writings about mentorship, and qualities of a great teacher
- “Anticipation Guides” for training and discussion
- Definitions of “administrator,” “colleague,” “helper,” “model,” “mentor,” “mentee”
- Active Listening helps

It is the responsibility of the Mentors and Beginning Teachers to keep their binders up-to-date and organized with monitoring by BTSP Coordinators, and assistance given as needed. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Beginning Teacher to ensure that his/her documents are completed and presented to the coordinators in full, and on time.

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The BTSP Coordinators maintain the following BTSP documentation, either electronically or in a hard copy:

- Mentor contracts
- Mentor Training documentation
- Beginning Teacher induction and orientation sign-in sheets
- Monthly agendas from Novice Teacher Support Group Meetings
- Master list of beginning teachers and mentors
- Comprehensive list of trained mentors
- Monthly Mentor Meeting agendas

Additionally, the BTSP Coordinators and the BTSP Team works to continually improve efficacy of the BTSP by obtaining objective stakeholder feedback. This information is solicited in the form of:

- Annual Peer Review of a paired school (Casa Esperanza, for example)
- Self-Assessment of Sterling Montessori’s BTSP Plan
- Timely transfer (within two weeks of transfer request) of all Beginning Teacher files to subsequent employing LEAs, Charter Schools, or non-public institutions within North Carolina.

Beginning Teacher Personnel Files are Filed and Kept Secure

All employee files, including beginning teacher personnel files are securely maintained and housed with the Human Resource Manager’s office and the confidentiality of these files is strictly maintained.

Timely Transfer of Beginning Teacher Files to Subsequent Employing LEAs, Charter Schools, or Non-Public Institutions Within the State:

When an employee’s cumulative file is requested by another LEA, documentation of participation in the Beginning Teacher Support Program will be provided to the Beginning Teacher Coordinator contact within that LEA. The BTSP Coordinator and the Director of Licensure Renewal will work together to provide the requested information within two weeks.

Conclusion

Sterling Montessori recognizes that one of the most critical factors in predicting a student’s academic achievement is the effectiveness of the classroom teacher. To that end, Sterling Montessori is committed to providing the resources, logistical structures, and human capital required to nurture, develop, and retain beginning teachers. The BTSP Plan provides the foundation upon which the comprehensive continuum of beginning teacher services and supports is constructed.

**EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT TO STERLING MONTESSORI
ACADEMY & CHARTER SCHOOL
RECEIPT OF THE SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

This mission of Sterling Montessori is to create a diverse educational community, grounded in the Montessori philosophy and teaching practices, that fosters curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking in its students. We strive to empower each student to become life-long learners who respect themselves, others and their environment.

Sterling Montessori expects all employees to be committed to the workplace and his/her job responsibilities and duties. We are to be engaged in the work and committed to the organization’s mission, values, goals and organizational development of the school’s practices to meet the educational achievement of the school’s success.

I, the undersigned, have this day received a copy of Sterling Montessori School’s Employee Handbook.

I understand that this Employee Handbook has been provided to me for guidance purposes only, and that this Handbook is not a contract of employment, nor does it provide me with any contractual rights. I understand that I should consult with the Executive Director regarding any questions not answered in the Handbook.

I understand that this Handbook replaces any and all prior handbooks, policies and practices of the School, and I also understand that the policies and benefits contained herein may be added to, deleted or changed by the School at any time at its discretion, and that the School will provide me with notice of such changes.

I acknowledge that I have access to a copy of the Sterling Employee Handbook, the Employee Handbook was reviewed during the first section meeting of the school year and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this Handbook and any revisions made to it.

Employee’s Signature Date

Employee’s Name (Print)

This 2023-2024 Employee Handbook was approved by the
LHU Board