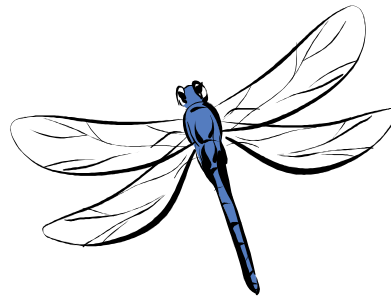


2011 – 2012

# Student Handbook



Dixon Montessori Charter School

355 No. Almond Street, Dixon CA 95620

707-678-8953 ~ 707-676-5215/fax

"Our aim is not only to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his innermost core. We do not want complacent pupils, but eager ones."

*Dr. Maria Montessori*



## Table of Contents

<b>Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives</b>	Page 3 - 6
Pick-Up & Drop-Off Site Procedure map	Page 7
Staff Directory	Page 8
Staff Communication	Page 8
Bell Schedule	Page 9
2011-2012 DMCS Calendar	Page 10
2011-2012 DMCS Important Dates	Page 11
<b>School Policies &amp; Procedures</b>	
Arrival & Dismissal	Page 12
Absences & Truancy	Page 13
Tardiness Independent Study Communication With our School Student Identification Emergency Cards	Page 14
After School Care Student Health	Page 15
<b>General Information</b>	Page 16
Birthday Celebrations Roster Calendar Classroom Volunteers Classroom Observation Policy Conferences DMCS Governing Board	
Garden Lost & Found Minimum Days Recycling Program School Lunches Snack	Page 17
School Photos Speech Transportation Visitors & Volunteers Toys and other non-school items Student Cell Phones Incident Reports Volunteer hours	Page 18
Dress Code Student Cubby space	Page 19 - 20
Discipline Policy & Process	Page 21 - 23
Bullying	Page 24
Pink Slip Example	Page 25
Green Slip Example	Page 26
Discipline Policy Agreement – <b>REMOVE, SIGN AND RETURN TO SCHOOL</b>	Page 27

# Mission Statement

The Dixon Montessori Charter School is a K-8 community dedicated exclusively to students and learning. Academic excellence is best achieved when students work at their own pace in a student-centered environment where individual learning styles and interests are honored. Effective instruction ensures academic progress of each student in order to meet school and state expectations and provides the skills necessary for life-long success.

## Goals and Objectives

**Maria Montessori said, "There is a part of a child's soul that has always been unknown but which must be known. With a spirit of sacrifice and enthusiasm we must go in search, like those who travel to foreign lands and tear up mountains in their search for hidden gold."**

**It is in that spirit of sacrifice and enthusiasm that families in the Dixon community created the Dixon Montessori Charter School. Our guiding principles are basic yet profound. The DMCS learning community agrees to:**

**Keep school choice affordable.** Dixon is a community of contrast. As a growing semi-rural area located on the I-80 corridor, Dixon is home to a significant population of migrant farm workers as well as an increasing number of relatively affluent individuals who commute to work in the Bay Area and Sacramento. The demand for housing in Dixon is high and homes are expensive; yet some of the schools in the Dixon Unified School District have a free and reduced lunch population of more than 70%.

DMCS is rooted in the principle that all children are entitled to excellent education options without regard to family income. DMCS was created as an alternative to both private schools and traditional public schools. DMCS is a vehicle to turn parent involvement, hard work and community support into a first-class educational option for Dixon families.

**Encourage parent participation.** DMCS promotes family interaction and parent participation in school. As parents, we are our children's first teachers and this connection shouldn't end when our children enter kindergarten. Each DMCS family is requested to volunteer at least 40 hours every year working in the classroom, on the facility, in the garden, on fundraisers, special events or other activities. Parents agree to limit the amount of television children watch at home, to help with homework, to promote a healthy lifestyle and to encourage the whole family to become life-long learners.

**Meet or exceed California state standards.** Like other public schools, DMCS is required to meet or exceed the academic standards set by the state of California. Parents can access these standards at [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov)

At DMCS student progress is monitored with regard to state standards, but students are encouraged to meet those standards individually. All students have different interests and strengths and each learns at a different pace. Teachers at DMCS work with each child individually to ensure that they meet or exceed State standards. In addition, students who are academically advanced will always be encouraged to work on more challenging material despite grade level.

**Children teach themselves.** This simple but profound truth inspired Dr. Montessori's lifelong pursuit of educational reform, methodology, psychology, teaching, and teacher training -- all based on her dedication to furthering the self-creating process of the child. In the classroom, the teacher's job is to direct the child toward materials that will satisfy his/her development needs.

**Promote peace.** A global education, an understanding of cultures and communities different from our own, a respect for our environment and an appreciation of nature are tools used to promote tolerance.

At DMCS we celebrate a multi-cultural environment by studying the geography of a country, discovering what plants and animals are native to a country, tasting the food native to the region, listening to the music and learning about the cultural celebrations of a country.

Through the Montessori Method, we educate the whole child. Montessori education appeals to children and adults alike by offering many opportunities to explore and embrace the world around us. Through friendships and an understanding of other cultures, students at DMCS learn to appreciate differences and work toward unity and peace.

**Inspire lifelong learners.** At DMCS our teachers, parents and members of the local community as well as our students are encouraged to become lifelong learners. Modeling a willingness to learn inspires our students and our children's love of learning inspires our own enrichment. DMCS is a place where learning is shared and enjoyed. From scientific experiments, to art projects, to drama and music, family members work with teachers to expand their own capacity for exploration while encouraging children to do the same.

"It is true we cannot make a genius," Dr. Montessori wrote. "We can only give each individual the chance to fulfill his potential to become an independent, secure and balanced human being."

At DMCS our mission is to provide an affordable quality educational option to the families in our community.

## **In Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade:**

**Allow children to learn at their own pace.** As parents and professionals involved in the development of California's education reforms, DMCS well recognizes the importance of a coherent instructional program that provides students every opportunity to succeed -- as defined through our state's academic content standards and through the daily experience, knowledge, and skills each person needs to succeed in life.

DMCS promotes strongly the belief that student success can and will be achieved best when students are motivated to learn, have family support, and have the teachers and community structures that facilitate learning; in this context students learn best at their own pace.

Through small class instruction, peer interaction and a rich academic environment, teachers at DMCS encourage a love of learning and allow all children to thrive. Montessori materials are interactive and allow students to participate in hands-on instruction.

Every child's academic journey is unique and Montessori teachers serve to guide each child's individual expedition. Learning best occurs in the student population when children are encouraged and motivated by their own success. If a child is having difficulty mastering a project or "job," the teacher might first consider whether the job was taught properly and absorbed by the student, or whether another presentation of the material might allow a child to grasp the concepts presented. Peer interaction plays a large role as the child teaches or learns a job from another child. The innate desire to assist others in the school community is fostered in a Montessori environment.

"A child's work," wrote Maria Montessori "is to create the man he will become. An adult works to perfect the environment, but a child works to perfect himself." So Dr. Montessori, an engineer, physician and educator, developed an approach to education that would aid the child in his or her work.

The Montessori Method based on careful observation of and respect for the natural development of the child, has been used in schools around the world for over 100 years. Dr. Montessori's scientific observations of children's almost effortless ability to absorb knowledge from their surroundings, as well as their tireless interest in manipulating materials led her to develop her educational method.

## In 4<sup>th</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> grade:

### DMCS Middle School Program

**How is the Middle School Program different from K-5<sup>th</sup> grades?** While the DMCS middle School program will maintain the personalized, supportive Montessori atmosphere found in grades K-5, the primary difference is in the increased challenge and expectations of the academic program. Also, in order to prepare students for the rigor of high school academics, Middle School provides additional structure through explicit course instruction and a project-based learning strategy.

**Why will instruction transition from Montessori to project-based learning in the Middle School program?** While the Montessori approach does not have a learning model for the middle grades, we feel that an instructional program featuring project-based learning provides a natural transition for DMCS students. This strategy fosters independent investigation, deep community connections, and opportunities for development of essential academic skills and habits of mind.

**What is project-based learning?** In project-based learning, teaching and learning are organized around in-depth examinations of real-world problems and issues. Students follow a rigorous learning cycle that includes problem formulation, research, interpretation, and communication, and in the process create high-quality products and presentations that demonstrate their content and skill mastery. For more about this strategy and to see videos of projects in case, visit: <http://www.bie.org>

### Student learning Outcomes

In the Middle School program at Dixon Montessori, all students will:

#### ACADEMIC CORE:

- Be prepared for high school, college and a career with the knowledge, skills and habits of mind necessary for success
- Evaluate information based on quality, relevance and validity
- Develop a desire for exactness, fidelity and craftsmanship

#### COMMUNICATION:

- Listen to others with understanding and empathy
- Think and communicate with clarity and precision in written and oral form

#### PROBLEM SOLVING:

- Access prior knowledge and transfer that knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned
- Develop a questioning attitude and seek out the data and strategies needed to solve problems and answer questions
- Gather data through a multi-sensory approach
- Create, imagine & innovate
- Think flexibly, consider situations from other prospective and be open to alternatives and options
- Persist and focus in seeing a task through to completion
- Take responsible risks

#### GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP:

- Demonstrate an awareness of their own thoughts, strategies, feelings and actions and their effect on others
- Partner with people from different cultures and backgrounds

**Continued**

## **Student learning Outcomes** *(continued)*

### **LIFE SKILLS:**

- Think before acting, approach tasks and situations calmly, thoughtfully and deliberately
- Work effectively in a team and contribute to team effort
- Take responsibility for actions
- Use time effectively and appropriately

### **TECHNOLOGY:**

- Select, utilize and develop comfort with the appropriate technology to solve problems
- Use technology as a communication tool
- Use technology ethically and appropriately

# Dixon Montessori Charter School Site Map

## Upper Playground

DUSD	DUSD	DUSD	DUSD	DUSD	DUSD
------	------	------	------	------	------

Rm. 17 <i>Ms Noelle</i>	DUSD
Rm. 16 <i>Mr Andrew</i>	DUSD
Rm. 15 <i>Mr Jeff</i>	DUSD

Room 37  
*CDC*

Room 26
Room 25
Room 24

Room 27  
County  
Special Day  
Class

Room 30	Room 29
---------	---------

DUSD

Boys	Girls
Rm 4 <i>Ms. Autumn</i>	
Rm 3 <i>Ms. Heather Rose</i>	
Rm 2 <i>Ms. Kim</i>	
Rm 1 <i>Library</i>	

Rm. 9 <i>EDP</i>
Rm 8 <i>Reading</i>
Rm. 7 <i>Resource</i>
Rm. 6 <i>Ms Danielle</i>
Rm. 5 <i>Ms Charlene</i>

Rm. 14 <i>Ms Melissa</i>
Rm. 13 <i>Ms Lesley</i>
Rm. 12 <i>Ms Guadalupe</i>
Rm. 11 <i>Ms Patty</i>
Rm. 10 <i>Ms Joanne</i>

## Lower Playground

Parking Lot



Dropoff Only - No Parking

OT	Multipurpose Room
Computer Lab	
Kitchen Cafeteria	

Nurse
Office

Room 21 Head Start	Boys
	Girls

DUSD
DUSD

Bus Loading Zone

North Almond Street

# Staff Directory

**Carolyn** Pfister  
**Linda** Delgado

**Jen** Stevens  
**Chris** Wolf

**Patty** Baldwin  
**Joanne** Green  
**Guadalupe** Medina  
**Lesley** Morris

**Melissa** Moore  
**Danielle** Perez  
**Charlene** Schmid

**Heather-Rose** DeLong  
**Autumn** Ernest  
**Danielle** Perez

**Andrew** Chen  
**Jeff** Holman  
**Noelle** Kramer

**Tami** Anderson  
**Darin** Drumheller  
**Robin** Duncan  
**Jacy** Franceschi  
**Shari** Hendrix  
**George** Pagulayan

**Shanna** Currie  
**Leann** Pritchett  
**Lindsey** Florent

**AnnMarie** Carpenter  
**Heather** Rigor

**Kelly** Briggs

**Shari** Hendrix

**Lynn** Davidson  
**Ryan** Riemer

**Penny** Florent

**Executive Director/**Grades: Kinder – 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Executive Director/**Grades: 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>

**Office Manager**

**Office Coordinator/Technology**

**Kindergarten/First Grade**

**Kindergarten/First Grade**

**Kindergarten/First Grade**

**Kindergarten/First Grade**

**Second/Third Grade**

**Second/Third Grade**

**Second/Third Grade**

**Fourth/Fifth Grade**

**Fourth/Fifth Grade**

**Fourth/Fifth Grade**

**Sixth/Seventh Grade**

**Sixth/Seventh Grade**

**Sixth/Seventh Grade**

**Teacher Associate**

**Teacher Associate**

**Teacher Associate**

**Teacher Associate**

**Teacher Associate**

**Teacher Associate**

**Situational Assistant**

**Situational Assistant**

**Situational Assistant**

**Resource Specialist**

**Reading Intervention**

**Physical Education**

**Music Teacher**

**Extended Day Coordinator**

**Extended Day Coordinator**

**Site Custodian**

## Communication with Staff

Phone calls cannot be transferred to classrooms; however our teaching staff have voice mail extensions that are accessible from the main phone directory (678-8953). The DMCS staff may also be reached via email. Staff may be reached at the following address: The staff member's first initial combined with their last name @ dixonmontessori.org

*(Example: Jane Doe would be reached at jdoe@dixonmontessori.org )*

# 2011/2012 Bell Schedule

## Grades: Kindergarten – 1st

### **Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:**

School in Session: 8:10 am  
Lunch/Recess: 11:30 – 12:30 pm  
Release Bell: 2:30 pm

## Grades: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>

### **Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:**

School in Session: 8:10 am  
Lunch/Recess: 11:30 – 12:30 pm  
Release Bell: 3:15 pm

## All Grades:

### **Wednesday:**

School in Session: 8:10 am  
Lunch: 11:30 - 12:30 pm  
Release Bell: 1:30 pm

### **Minimum Days:** *(No Lunch Recess)*

School in Session: 8:10 am  
Release Bell: 12:15pm

**BLANK For CALENDAR INSERT!**

## 2011-2012 Calendar of Proposed Dates

EVENT	DATES
First Day of School	Wednesday, August 10 <sup>th</sup>
Board Meeting	Tuesday, August 23 <sup>rd</sup>
Spirit Day – Retro Day	Friday, August 26 <sup>th</sup>
Back to School Night <b>(Mandatory)</b>	Thursday, September 1 <sup>st</sup>
Labor Day <b>(School Closed)</b>	Monday, September 5 <sup>th</sup>
Introduction to Montessori/PBL <b>(Mandatory)</b>	Thursday, September 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Spirit Day – Literary Character Day	Friday, September 30 <sup>th</sup>
Board Meeting	Tuesday, September 27 <sup>th</sup>
Columbus Day <b>(school closed)</b>	Monday, October 10 <sup>th</sup>
Fall Photo Day	Thursday, October 6 <sup>th</sup>
Fall Festival	Saturday, October 15 <sup>th</sup>
Board Meeting	Tuesday, October 25 <sup>th</sup>
Halloween Costume Party – Spirit Day	Friday, October 28 <sup>th</sup> (props and masks after lunch)
Staff Work Day <b>(school closed)</b>	Monday, October 31 <sup>st</sup>
Parent-Teacher Conferences <b>(Mandatory)</b>	November 7 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup> (teachers will schedule)
Veteran's Day <b>(school closed)</b>	Friday, November 11 <sup>th</sup>
Attendance Recognition Assembly	Wednesday, November 16 <sup>th</sup> – after lunch
Thanksgiving Break <b>(school closed)</b>	November 21 <sup>st</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup>
Board Meeting	Tuesday, November 29 <sup>th</sup>
Spirit Day – International Day	Friday, November 18 <sup>th</sup>
Winter Program	Wednesday, December 14 <sup>th</sup> - evening
Spirit Day – Comfy Cozy Day	Friday, December 16 <sup>th</sup>
Winter Break begins <b>(minimum day)</b>	Friday, December 16 <sup>th</sup> – 12:15 dismissal
Winter Break <b>(school closed)</b>	December 19 <sup>th</sup> – January 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2012
Martin Luther King Day <b>(school closed)</b>	Monday, January 16 <sup>th</sup>
Sharing Night	Wednesday, January 18 <sup>th</sup>
Board Meeting	Tuesday, January 24 <sup>th</sup>
Spirit Day – College Day	Friday, January 27 <sup>th</sup>
Science Fair	Thursday, February 9 <sup>th</sup>
Valentine's Day – wear pink, purple and/or red	Tuesday, February 14 <sup>th</sup>
President's Day <b>(school closed)</b>	Monday, February 20 <sup>th</sup>
Spirit Day – Career Day	Friday, February 24 <sup>th</sup>
Board Meeting	Tuesday, February 28 <sup>th</sup>
Parent-Teacher Conferences <b>(Mandatory)</b>	February 27 <sup>th</sup> - March 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Attendance Recognition Assembly	Wednesday, March 7 <sup>th</sup> – after lunch
Spring Photo Day	Tuesday, March 13 <sup>th</sup>
Family Math Night	Wednesday, March 14 <sup>th</sup>
Board Meeting	Tuesday, March 27 <sup>th</sup>
Spirit Day – Crazy Hair Day	Friday, March 30 <sup>th</sup>
Spring Break	April 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>
Board Meeting	Tuesday, April 24 <sup>th</sup>
Talent Show Auditions	Wednesday, April 25 <sup>th</sup>
Spirit Day – Historical Character Day	Friday, April 27 <sup>th</sup>
May Fair Friday <b>(minimum day)</b>	May 11 <sup>th</sup> – 12:15 dismissal
Board Meeting	Tuesday, May 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Talent Show	Wednesday, May 23 <sup>rd</sup>
Parent Appreciation Event	Thursday, May 24 <sup>th</sup>
Spirit Day – Hawaiian Day	Friday, May 25 <sup>th</sup>
Memorial Day <b>(school closed)</b>	Monday, May 28 <sup>th</sup>
End of Year Assembly	Wednesday, May 30 <sup>th</sup>
Free Dress Week	May 29 <sup>th</sup> – May 31 <sup>st</sup>
Last Day of School <b>(minimum day)</b>	Thursday, May 31 <sup>st</sup> – 12:15 dismissal
Staff Work Day	Friday, June 1 <sup>st</sup>
Meet and Greet Picnic	Saturday, August 4 <sup>th</sup>

# School Policies and Procedures

## Arrival and Dismissal

Students may not arrive at school before **7:45 am**, as supervision is not provided until that time. Please help us keep your children safe by making sure your children arrive to school and leave at the proper time. The school day begins at **8:05 am** for ALL students.

**Kinder/1<sup>st</sup> grade** students are released at 2:30 pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday.  
**2<sup>nd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade** students are released at 3:15 pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday.

On Wednesdays, ALL students are released at 1:30 pm.

On minimum days, ALL students are released at 12:15 pm & will not have a lunch recess.

Students should be dropped off/picked up at the west side of the Multi-Purpose Room at the edge of the large parking lot.

**DROP OFF & PICK UP IS NOT AVAILABLE IN THE BUS ZONE DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL.**

Parents wishing a student to be released early from class must come to the office to sign their child out. Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds during school hours unless they accompanied by a parent or guardian. Children will only be released to an adult listed on the emergency card, that is 18 years or older.

Students should know who will pick them up after school and the designated person must arrive no later than the release bell. Please let your child's teacher know if your child is allowed to walk or ride a bike home without an adult. No children will be permitted to do so without prior parent permission. Use of the office phone after school is limited to emergency situations.

### **Drop-off/Pick-up etiquette:**

Students should be dropped off between 7:45 am and 8:00 am at the west side of the Multi-Purpose Room at the edge of the large parking lot. Please allow enough time to drop off your children and be very careful when driving in this area.

A staff member will be on hand to greet each student between 7:45 am and 8:03 am. The instructional day will begin at **8:05 am**. Please see the above bell schedule.

Students who ride a bike to school should enter at the Main entrance gate & walk their bike to the bike racks outside of rooms 3 and 4. Bike riders must walk their bikes while on campus & in all crosswalks. Bikes should be locked to the bike rack. DMCS is not responsible for damaged or stolen bicycles.

Under no circumstances should a child be dropped off before 7:45 a.m. **there is NO adult supervision.**

# Absences & Truancy

There is a high positive correlation to excellent school attendance and academic achievement. Students need to be at school whenever possible.

DMCS supports student achievement by spending the majority of its financial resources on staffing the school with a very low student to teacher ratio. This allows each child to receive more individualized attention and it allows us to individualize learning more effectively for all of our children. The majority of our school's budget is based upon the average daily attendance of the students who attend DMCS. Anytime that a student misses an entire instructional day of school because of illness, appointments, vacation, or any other circumstances, the school loses out on all the money that is allocated to educate that student on that given day. However, the school's fixed costs do not change. When school attendance is low, it jeopardizes the school's ability to maintain the low student to staff ratios that we all value for our children. We urge you to schedule appointments and vacations outside of school time whenever possible, to make use of the school's independent study option when absences of one or more days are anticipated and to keep your children home only on those days when they are too ill to attend school.

In California, people between the ages of 6 and 18 are subject to full-time education. DMCS is required by law to keep a record of all student absences and truancy. Student illness, dental and medical visits and the death of an immediate family member are the only absences excused by the State of California. Students are expected to be in class prior to 8:05 each morning as tardiness disrupts the learning process. DMCS defines habitual tardiness as tardiness in excess of 10 days of the total days in the school year. A student who exceeds this number of days will be notified in writing by the school's director that the child's placement at DMCS is in jeopardy if there are further incidents of tardiness. A student who is absent in excess of 3 days without a letter authenticating an illness from a physician will be notified in writing by the school director that the child's placement at DMCS is in jeopardy if there are further absences from school. When the child has 3 more absences without a doctor's note or 5 more days tardy, the student will be referred to the school Attendance Review Team that is composed of the school director and Dixon Montessori Governing Board Members. The Attendance Review Team will determine whether the student will be expelled from DMCS due to attendance concerns or decide if the student may remain conditionally enrolled at the school. Charter schools are considered schools of choice and habitual tardiness or unexcused absences may lead to a student's expulsion from DMCS.

Under AB 1610 which became effective January 1, 2006, charter schools are required to notify a student's district of residence if a student leaves a charter school. Please let DMCS staff know if you plan to take your child out of DMCS before the school year is over.

Please **call the school at 678-8953 before 9:00 am** if your child will not be in attendance for ANY reason, this includes illness, vacation, doctor's appointments, etc. Absences are excused by State Law for reasons of: illness, medical or dental appointment or attendance at a funeral (1 day in state, 3 days if out of state) of an immediate family member.

Anytime a student is absent from school, **even when excused**, the school loses state funding.

When a student has had 6 days of consecutive absences or 10 days of non-consecutive absences in the school year for illness, which were verified by a note or phone call to the school office, the school requires that any further absences be verified by a physician.

At a time when funding for public education has become increasingly scarce, there is a need to be concerned about unnecessary losses of revenue. Our families can help reduce this loss by scheduling vacations to coincide with the many school holidays. If your child must be away from school for 3 or more consecutive days for travel or other non-excused reasons, he/she may be eligible for an Independent Study Contract.

**Extended unexcused absences will result in children being un-enrolled from DMCS.**

# Tardiness

Students are required by law to attend school and to arrive on time. A note or telephone call is required for late arrivals and absences. Tardy students must go to the office before they enter class to get a Tardy Pass. Students will not be allowed to enter class without a tardy pass from the office even for a minute late. Please help your child to arrive on time. The arrival of even one late student disrupts the class start time.

# Independent Study

Independent Study is a program that allows DMCS students who will be out of town for a minimum of 3 days & a maximum of 10 days, to keep up with their school work and get credit for their attendance. Circumstances requiring more than 10 days need to be approved by the DMCS Governing Board.

Parents need to FIRST notify the school office a **MINIMUM** of two weeks in advance of their travel date, so that the appropriate paperwork can be started. The office will then give the classroom teacher the contract to be completed. Independent Study contracts cannot be given in conjunction with the end of a school year.

# Communication with our School

**Parent Newsletter** - The school sends home the "Dragonfly Digest" once a week.

**Calling the School** 678-8953 - Please call to report any student tardy or absence before 9:00 am. The office is open from 7:30 am- 4:00 pm daily.

**Calling to Leave Messages for Students** – No phone calls are put through to classrooms. Please make arrangements for carpools, appointments and after school care before your child comes to school. Teachers are assigned duty during lunch recess, so messages may not be received before students are released. However, you may call the office to leave a message for your child in an emergency.

**Calling to Pick Up a Student Early** – Please call no more than 15 minutes before your arrival to pick up your student. The office will then call to have the student waiting in the office for you. Sending a note to the teacher on the morning your child will leave early is also recommended.

**Calling Home by Students** - This is a service that we cannot provide except in an emergency or if requested by the teacher.

# Student Identification

Students are identified by their full legal name as given on the birth certificate, adoption papers, or other legal document.

# Emergency Cards

**New emergency cards are required each year.** Please make sure that you take special care to provide names and telephone numbers of individuals who are authorized to care for your child when you cannot be reached. All contacts must be over the age of 18. Please call the school if you have changes in the information listed on the card. In an emergency, every minute counts. Please provide current phone numbers. Cell numbers are also encouraged. **Children cannot be released to anyone whose name is not on the child's emergency card.**

## After school care

After school care is available through the DMCS Extended Day Program. The EDP program is run on-site by our own personnel, on a for-fee basis. The program is available daily immediately after the release bell until 6:00 pm and on non-school days, Monday through Friday. Please contact the program directly for more information at 693-4990.

## Student Health

The DMCS office has first aid supplies for minor injuries. If a child is ill or hurt, a staff member will phone the parents from the emergency contact information sheet. The child will wait in the office with an adult until a parent or guardian arrives. In the event of a serious emergency, the District nurse, and potentially emergency personnel will be notified.

If your child shows signs of illness such as fever, nausea, or flu s/he should not attend school.

If a child becomes ill while at school, a parent or other authorized person will be called and will be required to pick up the child as soon as possible.

If an injury is more serious, staff will take steps necessary to obtain emergency medical care:

1. Appropriate first aid will be administered.
2. The school nurse or school health technician will be contacted, if available.
3. Parent will be contacted and emergency form instructions will be followed.
4. If necessary, an ambulance or paramedic will be contacted and the child will be taken to the nearest emergency treatment center.

**Allergies** - If your child has food or other allergies please let both your child's teacher and the office staff know what should be avoided. Sometimes snack is a communal activity and our garden harvests will be enjoyed throughout the year. Please be sure that staff is aware of any allergies.

**Prescription medication:** Students are prohibited from carrying over-the-counter or prescription medication (inhalers, allergy medication, Tylenol, cough drops, etc.) at school.

If your child's doctor has prescribed medication that must be taken during the school day, even on an occasional basis, please see the office for the appropriate paperwork & procedural information.

# General Information

**Birthday celebrations:** DMCS will mark your child's birthday with a special in-class celebration. Please check with your child's teacher for more information.

Please **do not** distribute invitations at school for off-campus private birthday celebrations. The school roster provides home mailing addresses for students invited to attend private parties.

**Roster:** A student roster will be created & then provided for each family's personal use. This roster is confidential and should not be used for solicitations including product parties or fundraisers for other entities. Please do not abuse the use of this roster.

**Calendar:** The DMCS school calendar is the same calendar used by the rest of the Dixon Unified School District. However, due to the fact that we have multi-grade classrooms, certain conference days are not observed by DMCS for the upper grade levels. For that reason, a copy of the DMCS 2011-2012 calendar is included in this handbook.

**Classroom Volunteers:** Volunteers will sign a compact stating they will respect student privacy as a prior condition of classroom service. Classroom volunteers must understand that discussing any aspect of a child's progress or development based upon knowledge gained while assisting in the classroom is against school policy. Volunteers who do not abide by this agreement will not serve in any capacity that allows them access to privileged student information.

Volunteers in our classrooms must provide the office with proof of a negative TB test from their doctor within the last 4 years.

**Classroom Observation Policy:** We welcome observation of our classrooms at Dixon Montessori Charter School after the third week of school. All observers must sign in with the office, receive a copy of the DMCS observation policy and a visitor's pass prior to their classroom observation.

**Conferences:** Parent-teacher conferences will be conducted twice per year. For the 2011-2012 school year, these will be held November 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> and again February 27<sup>th</sup> - March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Each teacher will contact families to set a time to meet and review your child's academic progress. These conferences are very important to your child's academic success and it is expected that parents or guardians will attend both scheduled conferences.

All conference days are minimum school days. Students must be picked up no later than 12:15 pm.

**DMCS Governing Board:** The Governing Board sets the overall policy for the school. In addition, Board members along with staff are responsible for creating a school budget. Issues of concern regarding school-site or classroom activities must first be discussed with teachers, and if necessary, the Executive Directors. If the issue is not resolved after those discussions, the issue may then be put on the agenda and brought to the Governing Board for resolution.

**Garden:** Children will be encouraged to work in classroom gardens, to plant, to water and harvest their "crops." From time to time children may come home a little dirtier than usual – at DMCS gardening is considered hands-on science. Parents are encouraged to assist in the garden on weekends or evenings as well as during the school day.

**Lost and found:** Found items with no identification will be placed in the lost and found bin in the cafeteria. DMCS is not responsible for lost or damaged personal belongings brought on to school grounds. It is recommended that all items are labeled before being brought to school. Unclaimed items from the lost & found bin will periodically be donated to local programs.

**Minimum days:** On these days, your student must be picked up at the school no later than 12:15 p.m. There **will not** be a lunch break on minimum days. Students should eat lunch after they leave school. School lunches can be provided only for those children who receive free or reduced lunches, please see the office if you wish your child to participate so that arrangements can be made.

**Recycling Program:** Montessori Education emphasizes the importance of serving as stewards of the earth. In our school community we encourage recycling and provide bins for cans, glass and paper. Families are encouraged to recycle their home-generated items on their own at the recycle center on C Street in Dixon.

**School lunches:** Each child should come to school each day with his or her own lunch or with money to purchase the lunches available through Revolution Food Services. Please send any lunch money in an envelope labeled with your student's full name. Money is collected by the classroom teacher & credited to your child's lunch account.

A menu will be sent home each month.

Students who attend DMCS are eligible for the Federal Free & Reduced lunch program, if they meet certain criteria. Food Services have requested that all families, regardless of their income status, complete & return the application.

If your child will bring their lunch, please pack a healthy lunch with fruits, whole grains and a small treat if desired. Please do not include soda or candy in a child's lunch.

DMCS students will typically eat in the cafeteria or outdoors. Our teachers and staff will rotate the responsibility of supervising lunches and would GREATLY appreciate parent volunteers assisting in this activity.

**Snack:** The snack procedure will vary from classroom to classroom. Please check with your child's teacher regarding each room's policy. Only healthy snacks are encouraged.

**School photos:** Twice during the school year, students can have their photos taken. Life Touch Photography will come to campus and take both class and individual photos. Further information will come home regarding both our fall & spring photo opportunities.

**Speech:** Speech services are provided for DMCS students as indicated by IEP.

**Transportation:** Bus transportation is not offered. The City of Dixon does provide a for-profit bus service in town. Please contact Readi-Ride at 678-7000 for more information.

**Visitors and volunteers:** Each time an adult visits campus, they must check in with the office and get an identification sticker. This is a mandatory requirement even for those parents who frequently work in the classrooms. Signing in not only allows staff to verify volunteer hours worked but also protects the safety of our children. If every adult signs-in, staff can easily find out who was on campus at any given time, especially in an emergency. All classroom volunteers **MUST** have verification of a negative TB reading on file with the office.

**Toys and other non-school items:** Please keep toys at home unless your child's teacher makes an exception for a special event. Guns, toy guns, pocket knives and other weapons are never allowed at school. In addition, hand held video games should not be brought to school.

**Cell Phones:** Students are not allowed to use personal cell phones during school hours. They must remain completely turned off (not on silent mode) until the release bell and may not be out during class time or on the playground.

**Volunteer hours:** All DMCS families are asked to volunteer forty or more hours during the school year. A log sheet for each family will be kept in the office & is accessible during regular office hours. We ask that you keep record of the hours you contribute to our school.

**School wide discipline policy:** A new discipline policy has been approved, and is attached below. ***Please sign and return the final page.***

# Dress Code

The purpose of a dress code is to ensure that learning is the primary focus of time spent at DMCS. Students will be required to adhere to this dress code. The only exceptions to the dress code will be noted on the school calendar and may include spirit days, dress-themed days (such as crazy sock or hat day) or a free dress day as decided by the staff.

## Shirts/blouses:

- Any solid color is acceptable. No patterns, stripes, logos or words allowed.
- Must be a collared shirt.
- Long or short sleeve is fine. Students may not wear sleeveless shirts even if they have a collar. Either a button down or polo shirt is acceptable.
- Unavoidable embroidered emblems such as an alligator or deer are acceptable as long as they are smaller than the size of a quarter.
- On Friday, students may wear a DMCS spirit shirt.

## Pants:

- Denim blue jeans, khaki, light blue, white, or navy blue long pants or shorts.
- No cut off or frayed-hem shorts are allowed.
- No patterns or stripes are allowed. Identifying logos such as "Wrangler, Levi or Gap" must be limited and unobtrusive and may not be printed on the pant legs or otherwise be seen as "writing or slogans."
- Pants should be in good condition, and not stylishly ripped, torn or frayed.
- Sweatpants are not allowed.

## Skirts/skorts/dresses/jumpers:

- Skirts and skorts must be mid-thigh length or worn over tights or leggings.
- They must be a solid blue denim, navy blue, light blue, white or khaki in color.
- The material may not contain writing, slogans or embellishments.
- No prints or patterns are allowed.
- Leggings and tights may not be worn alone. Leggings or tights may only be worn under a skirt, skort, dress, jumper or shorts and must be solid navy or white in color.
- Jumpers, polo-shirt style dresses and regular dresses must be a solid navy, khaki, light blue, white or denim blue.
- Jumpers/dresses should contain no embellishments, writing, or slogans. Blouses, shirts or collars must be worn under these items must fit the above description for shirt/blouses.

## Shoes:

- Students may not wear shoes that light up or make noise.
- All student shoes must have a back or back strap on them. Flip flops will not be permitted.

## Hats:

- Students may wear hats on the playground only.
- No hats are permitted in the classroom.

## Hair bows/headbands:

- Students may wear hair bows and headbands to school as long as they do not distract from the learning environment.

## Sweatshirts or sweaters worn in the classroom:

- Sweatshirts or sweaters worn in the classroom must be solid in color.
- Only DMCS school designs will be permitted, and these will be approved by the Board and staff at the beginning of the school year.

**Continued**

# Dress Code

(Continued)

## **Jackets/backpacks:**

- May be any style or color.
- Jackets and backpacks are considered outerwear & they are worn outside and not in the classroom.

**Exceptions:** *As indicated by IEP, the school will modify the dress code as medically warranted.*

Monday through Thursday unless otherwise specified, students must wear clothing in accordance with the criteria outlined above. On Friday students are allowed to wear either clothing that is in accordance with the dress code or the official school spirit shirt with jeans, hemmed jeans shorts, a jean skirt or skirt.

Please note that Friday is not a “free-dress” day and children may not come to school in attire other than that noted above. There be several “free-dress” or themed dress days throughout the year, coinciding with holidays or other school events and parents will be notified of those days in advance.

Frequent violators of the school dress code will be asked to attend another school rather than continue to violate the DMCS dress code.

In addition, school staff may call parents if a child comes to school dressed inappropriately and ask that the parent bring a different set of clothes for the student.

Throughout the year, for various reasons, we have found that many children from all grade levels have needed a change of clothes. We recommend you supply an extra set that can be stored in the classroom should it be needed.

If financial hardship prohibits you from sending your child in the proper clothing, please see the Director.

**Cubby:** Each child has a designated space in the classroom. This is the appropriate place for children to hang their jackets and backpacks when they enter the classroom. Items should not remain in the cubby overnight.

# Discipline Policy and Process

Dixon Montessori Charter School is a school of choice with the mission to provide an excellent education to the children of our community. It is expected that *teachers* will support students in making good choices through clear, respectful communication and positive classroom management, *students* will support the fulfillment of this mission by complying with school and classroom rules, and *parents* will support school policies and practices.

The purpose of this discipline policy is to ensure the safety and well-being of the students, faculty, and staff members. This policy is intended to help students make good choices and to recognize that some infractions are more serious than others. Any student who seriously violates the schools policy will receive a **referral, or Pink Slip (printed on pink paper)**. Prior to initiating this **Pink Slip** process, it is expected that teachers will make every effort to support students in making good decisions—and Pink Slips are to be seen as a behavioral “last resort”.

School Rules include:

- Be safe
- Be responsible
- Be respectful to yourself, others, and the school

## **Teachers**

To maintain a productive learning environment, teachers are expected to use their own management and discipline practices within the classroom to keep order. Practices should be positive, clear, and followed with fair and appropriate consequences. Teachers are expected to apprise parents of class-wide policies dealing with behavior, grading, class and homework, preferably in writing. Communication from teachers to students and families is expected to be positive as emphasized in the school's mission and goals, and as outlined in the state teaching standards. This school-wide policy is not intended to supersede classroom policies, but to support and provide stepped consequences that will help students learn to manage their choices and behavior.

## **Parents**

It is expected that parents will support school policies and practices, and work with Directors and Teachers to help students make sound behavioral choices. If parents disagree with judgments, they are encouraged first to speak to the teacher, and partner closely with school personnel to help solve problems. Next, if resolution cannot be reached, parents may to speak to the Director in charge of their child's grade level. Finally, if resolution cannot be reached, parents may speak to the board at either a special meeting or by arrangement at a closed session board meeting.

## **Directors**

When students receive a **Pink Slip**, it is the teacher's responsibility to call the family and describe the behavior, plus file appropriate paperwork with the cooperation of the Directors and office staff. Directors are expected to track infractions, attending to stepped consequences as outlined below. Communication with families is expected to be positive and directed toward partnering to improve behaviors.

**Continued**

**Special Education or "504" Designated Students**

As the DMCS seeks to fully include Special Education and 504 plan students so long as is reasonable, students with these designation will also follow these processes with one important difference. An SST meeting will occur between the first and third Pink Slip, Resource representation will be present at all meetings, and suspension and expulsion meetings may include personnel from El Dorado services to see that appropriate laws are adhered to.

**Behaviors**

Behaviors that may warrant, at minimum\*, a Pink Slip include:

- Being repeatedly disrespectful to an adult or peer
- Defiance
- Repeated disruption of a learning environment
- Intentionally harming a classmate or an adult
- Leaving class without permission
- Willfully destroying the property of a peer, or school property
- Instigating OR participating in a fight
- Sexual harassment (defined by Education Code)
- Bullying behavior (defined by Education Code)
- Possession of a weapon or an imitation weapon
- Possession of a controlled substance

Pink Slips are tracked in the office and will trigger certain consequences for students and their families as outlined below. A copy of the referral is attached to this policy.

**Three Pink Slips** in an academic year require a student an in-school suspension and community service consequences that may include a variety of tasks including weeding the garden, working at beautification of the school site, or other possibilities chosen by the teacher or School Director(s). For the duration of the consequences the student will lose free-time such as play during lunch for from one to five days at the discretion of the Director. It is possible that repeated behavior may result in loss of privileges such as attendance at special events, or field trips, at the discretion of the director(s).

**Six Pink Slips** in an academic year require the parent to attend school for one full day with the student in class, during lunch, and to supervise consequences. To help the child in making better decisions, school personnel will call a Student Success Team meeting (SST) with the teacher, the Director(s), a board member, the parent and the student and when appropriate, Resource representation.

**Nine Pink Slips, or any infraction listed by the Education Code of California that so require expulsion** will automatically lead to an expulsion hearing.

The expulsion committee includes:

- The Director (or designee)
- The child's teacher
- The child's classroom aide (if appropriate)
- The student
- The family member(s)
- A second teacher, chosen by the director
- Special Education representative (if appropriate)
- The board president (or designee)

### ***Expulsion Hearing***

The purpose of an expulsion hearing is to hear evidence, discuss behaviors, determine whether the student might be better served in a different school environment or to bring appropriate consequences for extreme behaviors. The hearing will allow the family and student to address the board and, once they have done so the family and student will leave and the committee will deliberate in private. All discussions are kept confidential to protect the rights of the student. The committee designee will inform the family of the decision. The family may appeal to the board.

**\*While the process above occurs for most infractions, it is important to note that students may be immediately suspended or recommended for expulsion for violent or particularly egregious behaviors such as drug possession, weapon or imitation weapon possession, or any other behaviors listed as suspension or expulsion-worthy in the education code. Three suspensions in a year will require an expulsion hearing, as outlined above.**

### **An overview of the process follows:**

Pink Slip #1: call home.

Pink Slip #2: call home.

Pink Slip #3: call home, parent meeting, in-school or at-home suspension (at the Director(s) discretion).

Pink Slip #4: call home.

Pink Slip #5: call home.

Pink Slip #6: call home, at home suspension and full day parent visit.

Pink Slip #7: call home, arrange SST meeting.

Pink Slip #8: call home.

Pink Slip #9: expulsion hearing.

# Bullying

## **Statement**

Dixon Montessori Charter School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe school environment for all of our students. Bullying has a negative effect on a child's social, emotional, and academic learning, and will not be tolerated at DMCS. Although Bullying may occur at any school, it will not be viewed as a normal part of growing up, and will be dealt with immediately using the process described below.

## **Definition**

Bullying is defined as any written, verbal, or physical act or gesture that that is intended to cause distress on one or more students in the school, on school grounds, in school sponsored vehicles, or at any school function or activity.

Bullying may include any of the following:

- Unwanted and/or repeated teasing, insulting, ridiculing, and/or name calling
- Threatening or intimidating words or gestures
- Stalking
- Pushing, hitting, kicking, or any other physical violence
- Theft or destruction of a student's property
- Spreading rumors or falsehoods
- Harassment based on gender, gender identity, physical characteristics, sexual preference, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability (physical or mental).

Cyber Bullying is defined as an attempt to inflict harm using technology, and may include use of the Internet, including email, blogs, social websites (e.g. MySpace, Twitter, Facebook, etc.) This form of bullying may include texting or instant messaging with images or words.

## **Reporting**

Students are encouraged to find any trusted adult such as a teacher, aide, parent, or Director to report bullying. Anonymity of all reporting students will be protected, and an immediate investigation will take place including collection of victim and witness statements, and when deemed appropriate by the Director or designee, the alleged aggressor will be removed from class or activities until the investigation is complete.

All teachers and staff on campus are expected to report and act on incidences of bullying, and parents are strongly encouraged to seek the support and help of the Directors for all instances of bullying.

## **Process and Consequences**

Once an incidence of bullying has been determined, a range of consequences will follow depending upon the severity of the offense, using the student's discipline record for the academic year (concerning other instances of such behavior) and the Director or designee's discretion. Consequences will travel across a spectrum outlined in the Discipline process beginning with conflict resolution and counseling, to the assignment of pro-social, positive behavior interventions tailored to the needs of each child and documented in a behavior file. Multiple incidences suggest more severe of consequences, and in repeated instances, will trigger a Student Success Team Meeting with the student, teacher, Director and parents. Should these measures prove unsuccessful in supporting improvements, or in cases of egregious or repeated behavior, a student may be provided in-school suspension, at home suspension, loss of privileges, or in extreme situations the Director(s) may recommend an expulsion hearing.

# Pink Slip

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Teacher Instructions

1. Please check all that apply, and add a narrative to the section below.
2. Meet with student, gather information, explain rules and consequences during break.
3. Call student's Parent or Guardian, explain situation and consequences, and note call and results below.
4. Give this form to Director for tracking, additional consequences or counseling if necessary.

- Repeated disrespect to an adult
- Repeated Disrespect to a peer
- Repeated defiance to an adult
- Intentionally harming a classmate or an adult

- Leaving class without permission
- Willfully destruction of school property
- Willfully destruction of the property of a peer
- Instigating a fight

- Engaging in a fight
- Possession of a weapon or an imitation weapon
- Bullying behavior
- Theft
- Sexual harassment

## Student Section:

Student explanation of events:

---

---

---

---

Did your actions accomplish what you had hoped they would?

---

---

---

---

Would you make a different choice if you could do it over again?      Yes      No

## Teacher narrative of events:

---

---

---

Called home, spoke to (name) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher:** Please fill this out, take steps outline above, and give this form and any other background information to the Director for entering in behavior log.

## Return to Class Form (Green Form)

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Total Current Number of Pink Slips for this student: \_\_\_\_\_

Director Actions Taken:

- Counseled and Warned
- In-School Suspension
- At Home Suspension
- Parent Conference Scheduled
- Student Success Team Meeting Scheduled for (date) \_\_\_\_\_
- (Teacher: In the event an SST meeting is scheduled, please clear your calendar)
- Teacher and Director Conference

(Teacher, please see the Director after school to share information and plan, preferably the day of the infraction).

**Teacher, please file and keep this record in your classroom.**



# Parent and Student Signature Page

## Academic Year 2011-2012

I have read and understand the Dixon Montessori Charter School Discipline policy, and agree to the process as described.

**(Please sign and return to the school office).**

---

Parent Signature

---

Parent Name

---

Date

---

Student Signature

---

Student Name

---

Date

---

Teacher Signature

---

Teacher Name

---

Date