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AGBMS-AEHI

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL MONTESSORI SCHOOL

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AGBMS
Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School

2025-2026 Parent Handbook

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OVERVIEW

Vision and Mission

Vision Statement

We will be a thriving Montessori school, delivering exemplary outcomes for children who are hearing or deaf, from infancy through middle school.

Mission Statement

Following the original vision of Dr. Maria Montessori ~
AGBMS-AEHI delivers exemplary outcomes for children who are hearing or deaf. All who enter our doors are treated with dignity and respect. Grace and courtesy are the cornerstones of our work. All who enter our doors are treated with dignity and respect and in turn learn to care for themselves, care for others, and care for their environment.

Values Statement

AGBMS-AEHI inspires lifelong learning and encourages creativity within an innovative environment that is rooted in the Montessori philosophy and accessible to all children.

History and Organizational Structure

Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School is a not-for-profit corporation, incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois on April 18, 2005. Prior to that time, AGBMS had been operated as a demonstration program of Alternatives in Education for the Hearing Impaired (AEHI), a separate Illinois not-for-profit corporation.

AEHI, and its cornerstone program, the Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School, were founded in 1986 by a group of dedicated educators and parents whose goal was to build a school where deaf and hearing children together could experience the very best Montessori education. This school is a model, accredited Montessori program, serving as an official observation site for Montessori training programs. Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School (AGBMS) has been an official observation site as well as research partner for major educational institutions such as Illinois State University, Northwestern University, National Louis University, Northern Illinois University and Loyola University. Additionally, AGBMS has been approved by the Illinois State Board of Education to become a Vocational School which will operate our AGBMS-MTTI (Montessori Teacher Training Institute). Over the next 5 years we will provide observation, field experience, and student teaching opportunities for students in a wide range of colleges and universities as well as Montessori Training Schools.

AGBMS was “spun off” from AEHI in 2005 to allow it to be governed by its own Board of Directors, who would be committed to sustaining and growing the school, independent of the other goals and programs of AEHI. The CEO, Executive Director of the school oversees the teaching staff, enrollment, parent relations, and maintains the implementation of Montessori methodology and curriculum. Parent

networking supports the school through providing an avenue for building a sense of community amongst all stakeholders of the school.

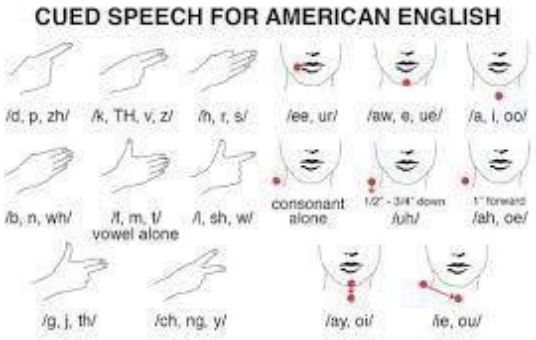
Cued Speech and American Sign Language

The student population of the school is comprised of up to twenty percent deaf or hard of hearing children and eighty percent hearing students. The children who are deaf or hard of hearing are included in the general education program and curriculum. The staff includes teachers of the deaf, speech/language specialists, speech pathologists, physical and occupational therapists, who work with children who are deaf or hard of hearing alongside Montessori credentialed teachers and assistants.

Aside from the Cued Speech program in the Montessori school and American Sign Language other AEHI programs include Cued Speech workshops and educational training for parents and teachers; training and supervision of Cued Speech transliterators who act as interpreters for Cued Speech users in mainstream situations; educational programs for audiologists, speech pathologists and pediatricians; and presentations at professional conferences.

Cued Speech

Cued Speech is a sound-based visual communication tool used to clarify lip reading and facilitate literacy for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. It consists of eight hand shapes in four locations (cues) near the mouth. When combined with the natural mouth movements of speech, the person who is deaf or hard of hearing (or have speech/language delays) can see the same language sounds that hearing people hear. Cued Speech allows a child who cannot hear to learn English as their primary language, which, in turn, provides the necessary basis for learning to read and write with fluency. Cued Speech provides complete visual access to the spoken word and is therefore an appropriate tool whether a child's hearing loss is mild to moderate or profound. It can either complement what an aided child can hear, or completely replace the sound of the spoken word while retaining the precise structure, vocabulary, idiom and grammar. Because it is a visual complement to spoken language, rather than a separate and different mode of communication, it has also been found to be a useful supplement in developing phonemic awareness for children who have normal hearing but who may be visual rather than auditory learners.



American Sign Language

American Sign Language is taught to the children in our elementary and middle school programs. It is also used with out deaf/hoh children as needed.

Licensing and Accreditation

Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School is an accredited member of the American Montessori Society and National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA). AGBMS is also registered and recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education and the National Special Education Teachers Association. In addition, AGBMS has gained recognition as a Gold Standard of Excellence in the state of Illinois. Infant and toddler programs are licensed by the Department of Children and Families.

Privacy and Dignity Standard

All children at Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School (AGBMS) are treated with dignity and respect, whether on the playground or in the classroom. A Montessori tenant is the realization that the child is a person with all the rights of a person. Adults in a Montessori environment show the child courtesy and self-respect and allow him to move freely through the classroom developing his own personality.

Policies and Procedures

Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

All staff are mandated reporters under the Abused and neglected Child Reporting Act. AGBMS-AEHI is in support of this act which states that:

> Any childcare worker or other staff having reasonable cause to believe a child known to them in their professional or official capacity may be an abused child or neglected child shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Department of Children and Family Services.

Child abuse is defined as damage to a child for which there is no reasonable explanation and includes non-accidental physical injury, emotional or verbal abuse, neglect, sexual molestation, and purposeful or inadvertent exposure to materials, conduct or events which are inappropriate for the age and development of children in question.

Health and Safety

At AGBMS-AEHI, our goal is to protect our students and keep them healthy. Health and safety are major concerns for us and we are trained and prepared to check for signs and symptoms of various illnesses. All staff are also fully trained in CPR, First Aid and have received training on the use of AED Defibrillators. In addition, all staff have been trained to follow CDC policies and procedures while working within a set of standard operating procedures that can help mitigate the spread of potential infection throughout our school. We focus on wellness education, hygiene (enhanced handwashing), ensuring a healthy environment and symptom monitoring.

Illness

If a child becomes ill at school, displaying a fever or severe discomfort, the parents will be called to take the child home. Parents, or one of their designated emergency contacts, need to be at the school to pick up their child within 30 minutes of the initial phone call. Parents also need to make sure that all phone numbers are current on the registration card so that someone can be reached quickly if their child becomes ill.

For wellness reasons, all children go outside to play every day. For safety reasons, all children will go outside if the class is going outside. Weather permitting (between 25 – 90 degrees Fahrenheit); If a child is not well enough to go outside to play, that child should not be at school.

When a child is home with a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, the child may not return to school for twenty-four hours after the symptoms subside. Examples: if a child has a temperature, they need to be fever free without medication for 24 hours. If antibiotics have been prescribed a child needs to be on them for 24 hours before returning to school.

When a child is diagnosed with a contagious illness, the child may not return until the time so written by a doctor's note. *The school must be notified of all contagious illness so that proper notification of the illness can be posted.*

Prescription Medication

Illinois state law mandates that children can only be given prescription medication at school. When arriving at school with prescription medicine, the parent needs to fill out a Medical Consent Form. This form is given to their child's teacher or the office. The medication needs to be in the original container from the druggist, clearly marked with the child's name. The school may only give one dose per day at lunch time. At no time, should medicine be placed in a child's lunch box. **No child is allowed to self-administer any kind of medication while at AGBMS.**

Accidents/Incidents

While AGBMS' first commitment is to the safety and well-being of the children, accidents do happen. When your child is hurt a determination is made regarding the seriousness of the accident. If the accident is deemed serious, parents will be called immediately. All injuries to the head, regardless of severity, will warrant a phone call to parents.

If the incident is deemed to be of a non-serious nature, first aid will be administered. Attending staff will fill out an incident report. This report tells parents how the incident happened and what help was given to the child. The parent reads this report, signs it, and returns it to the staff member.

Emergency Treatment

Every child enrolled at Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School is required to have an emergency card on file. Upon registration, this card is signed by the parent and gives staff authorization to seek medical care for a child if necessary.

If a child receives an injury that requires immediate medical treatment, one staff member will remain with the child while another staff member will call 9-1-1 immediately. This staff member will also obtain the child's Emergency Card and hand it to the staff that is treating the injured child. One staff member and the Emergency Contact Card will remain with the injured child at all times. After reaching 9-1-1, staff will then call the parents or the emergency contacts until one of them is reached to let them know what happened.

Once the EMT's arrive at the school and a determination is made that the child needs to go to the hospital, one staff member will accompany the child to the hospital. This staff member will take along the Emergency Card, which allows the staff person to sign on behalf of the parents all forms which are required to obtain treatment. The staff at the hospital may make a photocopy of this card for their files. The card gives the hospital the following information: Doctor, Hospital, Insurance information, and parent's names and emergency numbers. At the same time, staff at the school will again call the parents to let them know to which hospital their child is being taken.

Once the parents arrive at the hospital and are given an update on their child, the staff person will be allowed to return to school.

Diapering/Toileting Learning Policy – Infant & Toddlers 6 weeks to 35 months of age

Toilet learning is a big step in independence and is part of the curriculum in our toddler program. Children gain voluntary control of their bladder and bowels about the time of their first birthday, at which point they need to learn how to use them. To help children develop a sense of awareness of these functions, they will wear thick cotton underpants at school (even if they arrive in diapers). The staff will assist with diaper and clothes changes as needed always working towards independence. Teachers will model how to put on and take off diapers, underpants and pants, guiding the children through the process with verbal commands and physically helping only with the parts the child cannot do himself. The teachers will also remind children to utilize the toilet at different intervals in the day, based on each child's patterns.

The bathroom in is equipped with wipes, disposable gloves for the adult, and bags to place soiled clothing in. With the child standing, the soiled diaper/underpants will be removed by the teacher with the aid of the child (working towards independence so that the child removes it himself as he is ready). The child will be asked to clean himself with the wipes and the teacher will assist as needed. Through modeling and verbalization, the teacher will help the child put on clean underpants. Early on in toilet learning, the children wear their underpants without pants during the work period thereby heightening their awareness and easing the process.

When children wet or soil themselves during the day, teachers show them how to clean up after themselves, using paper towels to clean up any urine on the floor. (The adult sanitizes the area afterwards.) Children then change into their clean clothes. The adult provides the child with a clean plastic bag for dirty clothing. If a child cannot clean his body sufficiently, an adult, wearing rubber gloves, assists in the bathroom. The door of the bathroom remains open at all times. The bag is placed in the child's cubby and is sent home that day.

All families are encouraged to keep several changes of clothing at the school at all times. If a child has wet or soiled clothing and no extra change of clothes is available, the parent or guardian will be notified to bring fresh clothes. The bag with their soiled clothing is sent home and a new change of clothes should be brought in the next day. By age three, the expectation is for students to be fully potty trained.

Arrival and Departure

The following process should be shared with any designated person picking up your child.

Parking Lot Safety

We all know that pick-up and drop-off is a very busy time. We are asking all our families to abide by the following guidelines to make it easier on everyone!

- Please form the drop-off line directly in front of the building. Stay to the right of the island even if you plan on parking. Do not drive around a car dropping off a child.
- **Cell phones** are **not allowed** to be used in the school parking lot or school. Your full attention should be on driving safely in the parking lot. Keep in mind that recent laws have been passed that make it illegal to be on a cell phone or texting in school areas.
- Please stay in your car. Wait for your turn at the front door and your child will be brought from the car by the teachers.
- When leaving, make the turn around and head out of the parking lot. Our parking lot is one way only.
- The teachers are not available to talk during pick up and drop off times. If you need to speak with your child's teacher, please make an appointment via email or leave a message in the office.

Morning Drop Off

- Drop off is at the front door from 8:00 to 8:30 a.m. (Elementary students may arrive early and read or work in the library)
- Infants/Toddlers should arrive between 8:15 and 8:30 a.m. Parents will drop off at the front entry and the infant/toddler will be brought into the building by a staff member.

Half Day Pick Up

- Our Nest half day students can be picked up at 12:00 p.m. Parents must park and come in to lobby.
- Children's House students who attend half days will be picked up at 12:10 p.m. at the front entrance area.

After School P.M. Care Pickup

- If you have signed up for P.M. Care you must pick up your child by your invoiced pick up time (4:00, 4:30, 5:00 or 5:30 p.m.) Please come into building front lobby.

Fire Drills, Tornado and Other Safety and Security including Active Shooter

This school is equipped with clearly marked exits, emergency lighting, fire doors, and a sprinkler system. Regular fire drills are held so that the children and staff know what to do in the case of fire. The school is checked annually by both the state and village fire marshals.

Since Illinois is in the Tornado Belt, tornado drills are practiced each fall and spring. If weather becomes inclement, the office listens to the radio for alerts. If there is a tornado warning or the tornado sirens have been heard, the children are asked to move into the safe rooms in the building.

AGBMS also provides Active Shooter Drills and trainings which have been reviewed and approved by the police officers who have been specifically trained to make recommendations for this training.

The building is kept locked except during children's arrival and dismissal times. Children are allowed to leave only with the people designated in writing by their parents, either on the registration card, or in a email with a photo to an administrator. People unknown to AGBMS staff will be asked to show proper identification. Visitors will be asked to register in the office before entering the building.

Release of Child Information

Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School believes in the privacy of each child and their family. With that in mind, AGBMS will not release any information regarding the child's health or immunization records, cumulative academic record, or any other testing information that may be on record unless we have a signed release by the parent or guardian.

A copy of the release will be kept on file at AGBMS which states the Agency name and address of where the records are to be sent, along with the date they were sent. The records will be sent by Certified Mail to the agency listed and documentation will be retained showing that the file (s) has been sent.

AGBMS reserves the right to keep a copy of each child's test scores which shall be used for acquiring information for Case Studies on our program or keeping statistics to validate the success of our program. The school also will keep on file any private information that was gathered solely for teachers at AGBMS.

Privacy of Child Information

The teachers at Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School are not at liberty to discuss a child's background and record with anyone besides that child's parents. We realize that parents ask questions with the best intentions or out of curiosity. However, in consideration of the children and their families, parents must respect the privacy and confidentiality of all students.

In the event that a concern arises about a particular student, a parent's first course of action is to discuss this with the child's teacher. Keep in mind that the staff works very diligently behind the scenes to rectify problems. The teacher may refer the parent to the administrator if necessary.

Smoke/Gun-Free Environment

Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School is a smoke-free environment. Smoking, vaping, the use of any tobacco or cannabis are prohibited in the building and on the property. This includes chewing, smoking, or holding smoking material, lit or unlit. Look-alike tobacco products, including herbal cigarettes are prohibited.

Illinois passed a concealed carry law, approved last summer in response to a federal court order. House Bill 0183 mandated that **guns** are **not allowed in schools**, churches, government agencies, and liquor stores—and that those places must post 4-by-6-inch stickers of the "no guns allowed" symbol to remind conceal carry permit-holders of that fact.

Communication

Field Trips

Notification of all field trips will be given to parents in a timely manner. Parents will sign the permission slip and return it to the school. Transportation by a bus with seat belts is arranged for all field trips. A ratio of five children to one adult is used for field trips for students in Children's House. A ratio of ten children to one adult is used for field trips for students in the Elementary and Middle School. Some of the adults may be parent volunteers acting as chaperones. In this case, clear instructions on safety for the children and a clear description of the field trip will be given to the chaperones. Field trips are planned with the comfort and safety of the children being the first and most important factors of the trip.

School Closings

During periods of bad weather, on occasion the school has had to close. We will close for bad weather or a power outage for a long period of time at the school. If the weather is bad overnight, please listen to WGN, or WBBM radio, or watch channel 2, 5, 7, 9, FOX, look for an email from the executive director or check the EEC website at www.emergencyclosings.com to see if the school will be closed. The decision to close is usually made **before 6:00 a.m.**

If the weather becomes bad or the school has lost power after school has started, each parent will be called to let them know we will be closing early. **If it is difficult for you to arrive back at the school within an hour, we ask that you contact one of your emergency contacts to pick up your child.**

Attendance & Punctuality Policies

It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility sign your child in via Transparent Classroom each morning. For absence, call the office, email administration or post in Transparent notes on the day of the absence by 9:00 a.m. Failure to call the school within 24 hours of the absence will result in an unexcused absence.

- Parent/guardian must identify themselves
- Provide student name
- Reason for absence

It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to notify the office if the student will be arriving late. The call must be made prior to the student's arrival. If the reason is not a valid reason it will be marked as unexcused tardy/absence.

Illinois law requires children ages six to 17 to attend school including children attending a private or parochial school or children being homeschooled where certain requirements are met.

A child may not be absent from school without valid cause for 5 percent or more of the previous 176 regular attendance days, or 9 days. Prior to 2011, Illinois law prohibited a child from being absent from a public school for 10 percent or more of the previous 180 regular attendance days, or 18 days. Valid cause is defined as illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family or a family emergency. Please see 105 ILCS5/School Code for further information.

Excused Absences

An excused absence can be defined as, but not limited to:

1. Medical appointment verified by a medical note
2. Testing and/or assessment
3. Observation of a religious holiday
4. Illness confirmed by a medical professional with a medical note to return to school
5. Court appearance demanded by official summons
6. Funeral (confirmed with a parent/guardian note – maximum 3 days)
7. Family emergency
8. Extenuating circumstances that have been approved by administration

Unexcused Absences

1. Any absence that is not confirmed with a parent/guardian, medical staff
2. Any absence from school without notification from the parent
3. Vacation days outside of the regular school closing days (unless prior approval of administration)
4. Oversleeping
5. Shopping
6. Message left on voicemail with no reason given for absence

Parents will be notified by the school after a student's 9th unexcused absence of the year. Parents will be informed by letter, and concerns will be shared about their student's attendance. A meeting will be

required to discuss further steps and the need for the child to make up work that has been missed during the time of absences.

Tardiness

Punctual attendance is expected of all children, for reasons other than illness. Consistent tardiness disrupts the classroom and shows disrespect for the teacher and other students. It is not uncommon for children who regularly arrive late to school or miss school frequently to exhibit negative behavior. If a parent and child are consistently arriving late, the parent will be asked to come in for a conference with the teacher/administration to discuss rectifying the situation. If the behavior continues, we may ask that the child be taken home upon late arrival to school. Should it become apparent that a family cannot be supportive of the school's mission or goals, it may be necessary for the administrator to consider whether it is in the best interest of the school to keep the child enrolled.

Parent Communications

Parents will be kept informed of programs and events happening at the school primarily through the Transparent Classroom posts and emails. Additional notices will be sent out as needed. At the beginning of the school year each family will be provided the link to our website to access the parent handbook; parents may receive an updated copy of the parent handbook if requested. This handbook will contain school policies and procedures such as drop-off and pick-up, sick children, discipline, fundraising, etc.

Throughout the year teachers will prepare monthly *Montessori Mornings* to educate the parents about Montessori methods and philosophy as well as child growth and development. In addition, parent teacher conferences will be held in November and April. At this point teachers will share written progress reports about each child with the parents.

Each family will provide the school with contact phone numbers, including additional family members or friends who can be called in the event of an emergency. Families will also provide an active email address to teachers as an additional means of communication. Families will be provided with the email addresses of all staff members as well. Parents will be contacted immediately in the event their child becomes sick or suffers any type of injury to the head, even a minor one. In the event a parent cannot be reached, attempts will be made to contact those on the emergency contact list. Incident reports will be filled out by the teacher in the event of any accident and signed by the parent upon pick-up of the child.

Curriculum and Program Descriptions

The Curriculum

The Montessori curriculum is organized into the following key areas:

- Practical Life - lays the foundation for all other work to be done in the classroom.
- Sensorial - this aspect of the curriculum is the starting point for intellectual growth.
- Math - Introducing math at an early age lays the foundation for later cognitive development.
- Language - Activities across the curriculum foster vocabulary development, communication skills,

writing, and reading readiness.

- Reading - Reading is an integral part of the academic program at AGBMS-AEHI.
- Cultural - this portion of our curriculum provides a sound introduction to botany, zoology, chemistry, physics, geology, history, geography, and astronomy.

A low student/teacher ratio:

- Generally, we have one adult for approximately every 15 students.
- U.S. average for public elementary schools is one teacher for every 18 students.
- U.S. average for private elementary schools is one teacher for every 16 students.

A flexible program to accommodate individual differences:

- We have flexible grade levels within developmental ranges (ages 3-6, 6-9, 9-12-12-15).
- Our curriculum expands in response to your child's needs in each developmental stage.
- Each elementary child consults with the teacher to negotiate a unique path through the curriculum.
- Each elementary child participates in creating significant parts of his/her own goals.

Motivated students develop their own interests:

- Our classrooms are planned in advance to support and promote independent, student-initiated project work.
- Children acquire knowledge by working with hands-on projects.
- Children answer their own questions through discovery.
- Each child engages in individual and paired research projects beginning in first grade. This enhances the child's motivation to work with and go beyond the hands-on materials.

An environment that promotes self-development:

- We emphasize one-to-one relationships between each child and the teacher.
- Communication is based on mutual understanding. Children are guided to treat each other with respect.
- There is a daily balance of individual project work, small group cooperative work, small group lessons, and large group lessons.
- Social interaction is promoted in the classroom within the context of the children's normal academic time.

A program that builds self-confidence

- Each child works as long as needed during extended periods of uninterrupted time. The teacher is present to work as a consultant and facilitator.
- The children work on projects and use the teacher as a consultant to help them reach their goals.
- The children reinforce their knowledge by working repeatedly on logically connected projects to satisfy their curiosity and build their own sense of competence.
- The child's rhythm of work is accepted and encouraged.
- Self-esteem rises from the child's authentic pride in their own accomplishments.
- Young children discover mistakes through feedback given by the project materials rather than by the teacher. Older children are given the opportunity to identify and correct their own mistakes.
- Instead of judging and correcting, the teacher advises the use of different complimentary project materials.

Infants/Toddlers

Infants/Toddlers
Ages 6 weeks - 3 years

First Plane of Development: During this stage of development, infants/toddlers have a unique ability to absorb knowledge quickly and effortlessly. Maria Montessori referred to this as the "absorbent mind." These children are sensorial explorers and learn through the senses; therefore, all experiences within the classroom are hands-on. This concrete experience of learning by doing is essential to the child's development as it enriches her/his understanding of new concepts

Children's House

Children's House
Ages 3-6 years

First Plane of Development continued: In this classroom, the ultimate goal for each individual is, to achieve concentration, self-regulated behavior, independence, confidence, and an interest in learning about her/his world. Children at this level take great joy and pride in real and purposeful work, and in their ability to contribute to their community as active and helpful participants. Social development is fostered in the Montessori environment allowing them to develop helping, caring, and sympathetic relationships with others in natural, real-life situations.

Lower & Upper Elementary

Lower & Upper Elementary
Ages 6-11 or 12 years

Second Plane of Development: During this plane of development, children 6-9 and 9-12, are operating at a higher level of consciousness and we see the development of the "reasoning mind." The 6-9 student is very interested in morality and what society (the child's peers) considers to be right and wrong. Students explore the wider society outside of family by learning and experimenting with social order among their peer groups. This allows for opportunities to practice grace and courtesy and develop resilience. Students in this plane of development enjoy working with others so collaborative projects and group work is encouraged. This allows students to learn to listen and respect the ideas and thoughts of others in their group. Students 9-12 move from concrete representation to abstract thinking. They bring order to various disconnected facts and are able-to think hypothetically. No longer focused on right and wrong, good and bad, the Montessori student now seeks to understand the motivation behind behavior, and when confronted with moral issues, the student seeks to imagine and develop possible solutions.

Middle School

Middle School
Ages 11-15 years

Third Plane of Development: During the third plane of development, adolescents experience significant cognitive, physical, emotional, social, and moral growth. The adolescent is a study in contradictions: energetic yet slothful, concerned about others yet egocentric, desiring autonomy yet seeking adult help. Adolescents spend significant time finding their identity and searching for who they are and who they want to become. The three most significant areas of intellectual development at this time are: metacognition, the ability to think about one's thinking; hypothetical reasoning, the ability to consider the "what ifs"; and, abstract reasoning, the ability to grapple with enormous complex concepts such as democracy, revolution, and integrity.

Classroom & Program Needs

Infants / Toddlers

The Bare Necessities

An infants' schedule varies in terms of timing based on the needs of each individual baby. The environment is prepared thoughtfully at the infant's level to allow free movement and maximum exploration. Infants will need several bottles as well as multiple changes of clothes and diapers. The following are a list of activities that will take place every day in accordance with the child's needs, at various time throughout the day:

- Feeding
- Sleeping
- Tummy time
- Comforting
- Outdoor time

- A multitude of activities to stimulate the physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of the infant. Lessons/activities are designed to build both gross and fine motor skills such as grasping, batting, reaching, rolling over, crawling, standing, cruising and walking
- Activities that boost language development – teachers singing, talking, naming objects, describing pictures and reading; activities encouraging spatial awareness, and sensory exploration

Toddlers will need several items of clothing on a daily basis. Learning to dress and undress is a very big step in independence, and it is something your child will be working on every day in this classroom. Toilet learning is another big part of our curriculum. After the first few weeks, all children, 24 months and older will wear underpants when they are at school. We will go outside in all-weather except when it is below 25 degrees (we may even go for a walk in the rain!). We have lots of activities involving water and paint, so your child may get wet or dirty during the course of the day.

- Clothing should be practical – your child should be able to put it on and take it off.
- Indoor Shoes – you child will need to keep a pair of indoor shoes at school that should say they are non-marking (usually you will find this printed on the bottom of the shoe). Shoes should slip

on or fasten with Velcro and permit slippers are acceptable indoor shoes flop styles).

graceful walking. Simple (no large character or flip

- Outdoor Shoes – the child should wear shoes appropriate for the weather. These shoes should be good for walking, running, and climbing and should say they are non-marking (usually you will find this printed on the bottom of the shoe).
- Extra Clothing – each child should keep 3-5 extra outfits (bottoms, tops and socks appropriate for current weather conditions) at school at all times. Pants should have an elastic waist, no zippers or snaps and shirts should easily go over your child's head and should not need to be fastened in the back.
- Underpants – multiple pairs of thick training underpants. If toilet learning is something new, send 10 pairs, they will be worn for a short amount of time which will be increased each day. During the first few days, children who have not used the toilet before may bring diapers while they are getting acquainted with the classroom and the teachers. If necessary, please send a package of diapers which we will store and notify you if we need more.
- <u>All clothing must be clearly labeled with your child's name.</u>
- Rainy Day Attire – you may want to keep a pair of rain boots at school for adventures outside when the ground is wet and for working in the garden. When there is rain in the forecast, send your child to school with a slicker/rain coat.
- Winter Attire – we will go outside unless it is below 25 degrees. Children will need hats, mittens, snow pants and non-marking snow boots (usually you will find this printed on the bottom of the boot).
- Clothing will be sent home for washing. Please allow your child to carry his/her own bag.
- Each child will have a designated spot in our classroom to store extra clothing and indoor shoes.

Birthdays – When your child has a birthday we will celebrate as a class. We would encourage you to bring a special snack but please not a sugary snack or one that contains peanuts or tree nuts. Examples: fruit and dip, veggies and dip, crackers and cheese, fresh bread or muffins.

Sharing Basket – This is a great way for you and your child to help provide toddlers with healthy snacks and replenish some of the consumable items needed for our classroom. It is an opportunity for you to interact with your child and gives your child the opportunity to contribute to his/her classroom community. We ask that you and your child shop together. Families will take turns; a reminder will be sent home when it is your turn, along with the list of things needed for that week.

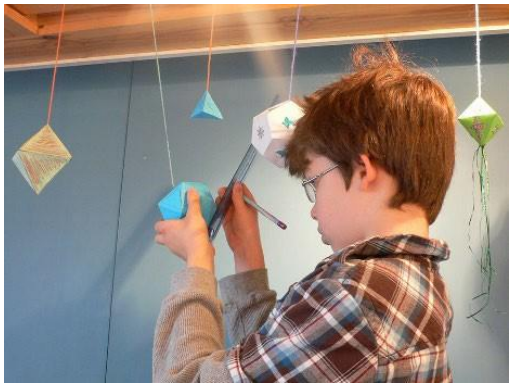
Children's House

Children's House: We have Montessori Roots

All children need to bring to school these very

important basics:

- Reminder: All children must be completely toilet trained before transitioning into CH. No diapers or pull-ups.
- A complete change of clothes, including socks, clearly labeled with your child's name. Some of the materials we have involve water or the child may get wet outside. These clothes need to change with the season or as they grow. Their spare clothes will be kept in their bins. Please be sure clothing worn to school are not of high value as they often soil/dirty and even sometimes lose items.



- Sunscreen and bug spray for the warmer months.
- Coats, snow pants, scarves, boots that say they are non-marking (usually you will find this printed on the bottom of the boot), and gloves clearly labeled with your child's name for the winter months. We go outside every day unless it is raining or below 20 degrees.
- Nappers (3 and 4-year-old children) need a nap mat/roll and small blanket.
- In winter, slippers (no large character or flip flop styles) that stay at school clearly labeled with your child's name and say they are non-marking (usually you will find this printed on the bottom of the slipper).
- Proper shoes for playing out of doors that say they are non-marking (usually you will find this printed on the bottom of the shoe).
- Proper clothes for the wear and tear of the school day.
- No toys or expensive clothing. (Show and Tell will held on Monday morning)
- Birthday celebrations are encouraged. We host all birthdays in the first week of the month for all who have birthdays in that month. Please choose a treat that is a fruit or vegetable with dip, or crackers and cheese. Also, for birthday celebrations, please send some pictures of your child from every year of his life. (Example: newborn, 1 year old, 2 years old, etc.) We ask you to put these on a poster board or large paper.
- Please send containers for your child's lunch, which they can open. This promotes independence. Please make sure your child's lunch is in an insulated bag.

Sharing Basket – This is a great way for you and your child to help provide Children's House with healthy snacks and replenish some of the consumable items needed for our classroom. It is an opportunity for you to interact with your child and gives your child the opportunity to contribute to his/her classroom community. We ask that you and your child shop together. Families will take turns; a reminder will be sent home when it is your turn, along with the list of things needed for that week.

Elementary / Middle School

- Proper shoes for playing out of doors and gym class on Monday & Thursdays.
- In winter, slippers (no flip flop styles) that stay at school clearly labeled with your child's name.
- Coats, snow pants, scarves, gloves, boots clearly labeled with your child's name for the winter months.

- Each child is required to bring a water bottle for his/her use clearly labeled with your child's name.
- Each child should bring his/her own lunch in a disposable paper bag until further notice.
- Sunscreen and bug spray for the warmer months.
- Please: No toys, video games, cell phones or other electronics.
- Birthday celebrations are encouraged. (Please see the parent intro letter received at the beginning of the year.)
- Snack: your child may bring a fruit or vegetable for snack.

Snacks:

AGBMS asks you to provide healthy, protein-based snacks for the children. Some examples of snack include non-sugary cereals, fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, cheese, crackers, and hard-boiled eggs. The children who stay for afternoon care (after 3:15 p.m.) should also bring a healthy afternoon snack.

Guidance Discipline and Transition

Upon initial enrollment, the child/ren is to begin on up to a six-week trial basis to ensure a good fit

Infant, Toddler and Children House Program

Discipline must come through liberty…We do not consider an individual disciplined only when he has been rendered as artificially silent as a mute and as immovable as a paralytic. He is an individual annihilated, not disciplined. – Maria Montessori

In the Montessori school, discipline and independence go hand in hand. Classrooms are designed to encourage movement and activity. It is the goal of the Montessori educator to guide the children to find their own inner discipline, their own independence. The role of the directress is that of role model, mentor and observer. All discipline is based in a positive direction, so children are shown how to do things rather than told not to. The goal of the directress is to allow the children more and more independence as they demonstrate more and more discipline. To achieve this end, we have one golden rule in our school and that is respect. Children must show respect to all the people and items when they are under our care.

Children are aided in their development of self-discipline and independence. When one is disrespectful to someone or something, the directress first explains the respectful way to approach the given situation. Next, the child is redirected. This simply means that the child is introduced to a new activity. Much of our "discipline" ends here. If redirection does not work, then the child is kept within an

arm's reach of the directress. On the rare occasion that the child, over the age of 24 months, is still not settled, he/she will be given the opportunity to calm down and regain control by being removed from the group while remaining within the eyesight of an adult. This removal time will not exceed one minute per year of age. When the child says that he is ready to return to the group or to his work, he is allowed to return. Positive reinforcement is used in all three steps of discipline. There is never blame or punishment. Children are encouraged to grow in their ability to achieve inner discipline and independence of spirit while learning to care for others.

Repeated patterns of challenging behavior that are deemed serious or interfere with a child's ability to engage in developmentally appropriate self-regulation or cognitive and prosocial engagement with peers or adults may be resolved by creating a written intervention plan, which includes a planned schedule of action agreed upon by the staff, parents/primary caregivers, and qualified professional resources.

In rare circumstances, a transition plan will be created for students who do not respond to intervention or students who are a serious safety threat; which involves displaying behaviors that jeopardize the physical safety of the child and/or his/her classmates and staff. The transition plan will be an individualized document developed by Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School staff and receiving early childhood programs, parents/primary caregivers, and qualified professional resources detailing tasks , and individual responsibilities required to prepare for and then execute the transition of the child from Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School to a more appropriate arrangement with as little negative and disruption as possible.

Discipline in Elementary/Middle School – See Addendum

While the golden rule remains the same for the Elementary/Middle school class, the students develop their own set of Ground Rules each year. They may elaborate on this to include: walk with slow feet, clean up after yourself at lunch time or be kind to the animals by touching them carefully, feeding them daily and cleaning their cages. At the beginning of the year, the ground rules are discussed, written out, signed by each student and teacher, and posted in the classroom.

The steps used in maintaining these ground rules are different than in the Children's House since the Elementary/Middle school children are on a different plane of development. In the E/M class, the children are empowered to work out their differences through discussion, negotiation, and through peer mentoring. While an adult may ask to be present or may be asked by the children to be present while difficulties are being worked out, it is the children who are given the responsibility to resolve differences.

The three steps for resolving conflicts are as follows:

- Ask the person to stop the behavior that is bothering you. If the person stops, simply say, "Thank you."

- If the bothersome behavior has not stopped, ask an adult to assist you. ** At this point, an adult will simply listen to the students' discussion until the problem is worked out. Usually having an adult know that a ground rule has been broken will be enough impetus to correct the behavior.

- ** If one student is too angry to discuss the problem right away, time is given to the child to cool down and collect themselves. Once they are ready to discuss the matter, then the above steps

are tried again. If the problem persists, the adult will give ideas to help guide the students to a solution that is acceptable to both of them.

If a child is being disruptive during class time, and does not respond to positive direction, then the directress may choose to give the student time away from the group – usually in the office or other quiet area. This time away lasts until the student is ready to return to the group. Again, blame and punishment are not part of the steps to inner discipline and independence in the E/M program.

Courteous, kind behavior is the foundation of the E/M school relationships. If a child continues to be discourteous, uses inappropriate language, or hurts another child, then a note will go home to the parent to let them know of the circumstances. The E/M directresses take a team approach to correcting behaviors for the students in their charge and appreciate parents helping in these instances.

The Montessori environment focuses on natural consequences and redirection when inappropriate behavior occurs. However, in the event, that a child's behavior should become physical against another child, the following policy will be enacted:

First offense:

The child who has misbehaved will write a letter of apology to the other child and both sets of parents. The child will discuss with their classroom directress about the events leading up to the offense, why the action was inappropriate, and how to avoid it in the future.

Second offense:

Parents of the offending child will be called into school for a conference with the child's directress, the child, and the executive director. Possible reasons for the child's behavior will be discussed and preventive measures will be agreed upon and put in place at school. The child will provide an act of service to the school as a consequence. This act of service will be agreed upon between the teacher, parents, and principal and will take place during recess for three days following the incident.

Third offense:

Parents will be called to pick up the child immediately, with a three-day suspension from school to follow. Tuition will not be credited for missed days. Depending on the severity of the offense and the likelihood that effective measures can be put into place to avoid any future such incidents, the child may or may not be allowed to return to school.

All inappropriate behavior will be addressed on an individual basis at the discretion of the teachers. Parent will receive behavior report as needed.

Exit Policy

A child may be dismissed from the school for the following reasons:

- The child displays a pattern of unprovoked violence toward him/herself or others in the school, or threatens such behavior, in written or spoken form.
- The child displays a pattern of disruptive and/or disrespectful behavior towards others in the school.

- The child does not demonstrate growth in any academic area over the course of the academic year.

The parents or guardians of the child may cause the child to be dismissed for these reasons:

- Displaying a pattern of disruptive and/or disrespectful behavior toward others in the school.
- Nonpayment of tuition after the 10th of the month, or as worked out with the school administrator when necessary.
- Chronic late pick-up of children
- Noncompliance with the health and safety rules of the school.
- Noncompliance with the attendance policies of the school.
- Chronic noncompliance with the request to attend parent conferences, observations of their child in the classroom, or parent education meetings.

Please refer to Challenging Behavior addendum on page 31

Sample Daily Schedules for Each Program

Toddler Daily Schedule

TODDLER DAILY SCHEDULE (Infant varies by individual need)

Time	Schedule
8:30 – 9:00	**Arrival Time** The children arrive, morning readiness encouraging independent practical skills (change shoes, coats off and put away, toileting) saying goodbye to parents, enter the classroom and greet their teacher and friends. Also, children help prepare snack for the classroom and they serve and eat together as a community. Cereal, fruit or yogurt are common snacks available to the children brought by the families in a weekly "sharing basket."
9:00 – 10:30	**Work Period** Child-directed work cycle designed to help the child become familiar with surroundings and a deeper awareness of self. Children are free to choose activities from the prepared environment. During this period the child is introduced to everyday activities that promote self-esteem, independence while helping to establish community. Lessons are presented to individuals or small groups. The work period includes social skills, toileting, language development, snack prep, care of self, care for the environment and clean up.
10:30 – 11:20	**Gross Motor Activities** (If weather permits and the temperature is 20+ degrees including wind chill) children have an opportunity to stretch, flex, and exercise on the various types of age-appropriate play equipment that we have to offer as well as take nature walks and care for the outside environment. During inclement weather, gross motor activities will be available in the gym or in the classroom such as dancing to music, use of the collapsible tunnel, balance beam, balls, tricycles and riding toys.

11:20 – 11:30	**Transition for Lunch** Children will complete gross motor activities and wash hands to prepare for lunch. If outside, the children will come in, remove shoes, coats, hats, etc. and wash hands to prepare for lunch.
11:30 – 12:00	**Lunch Time**

Time	Schedule
	Children should bring a healthy lunch and a serving of whole organic milk. The children sit in a chair, drink from a glass and use a spoon, fork and knife. Eventually these children learn to serve and pass food around the table and to use "please and thank you." Eating lunch is the perfect opportunity to reinforce the importance of grace, courtesy and good manners in the Montessori preschool classroom……it is such a special time of day!
12:00	**Dismissal -** Half Day Children go home
11:50 – 12:30	**Transition to Nap** The children put away their dishes, wipe their faces and hands and use the bathroom and lay down on their cots.
12:30 – 2:30	**Nap/Quiet Time** Children sleep or rest on their cots.
2:30 – 3:10	**Transition from Sleep to Wakefulness** As children wake, they go to the bathroom, have a snack, and get ready to go home or after school care.

Children's House Daily Schedule

Time	Schedule
8:00 – 8:30	**Arrival time - Line Time:** The whole class comes together for songs and games. Children build language skills and self-esteem by sharing "news" with the group. Social skills are enhanced through this communal experience. New Montessori work is introduced during this time. (This line can be optional depending on the teacher). Birthdays are also celebrated during this time.
8:30 – 11:00	**The Work Period** Children are free to choose their own activities in any area of the classroom (Practical Life, Language, Math, Science, Geography, Art, Library, Snack) and to work individually or in small groups. The teachers present Montessori Materials based on each child's individual readiness and interests. Work time is the core of the academic program. A second line time is held at the end of the work period and is used primarily as a transition time.
11:00 – 11:30	**Outdoor Free Play** Allows the children the space and freedom to explore the outdoor environment in safe ways. It gives them an opportunity to develop gross motor abilities, to problem solve, and allows them to interact with others in an unstructured situation.
11:30 – 12:30 **½ day children leave at 12:15**	**Lunch and Clean up** Table setting and hand washing. A pleasant part of the day in which the children can unwind and socialize. Grace and courtesy are encouraged. After lunch children clean up their own spots and wash their plates.

12:30 – 1:30	**Extended Day - Quiet Reading and Story** After the children have had the opportunity to look at books of their choice on their mat the adult will read a story to the entire group. Non-nappers will join this group to continue their works from the morning session.
1:00 – 3:00	**Nap Time** for the 3 and young 4-year-old children who continue to need this rest time.

Time	Schedule
1:30 – 3:00	The extended day allows for increased breadth and depth in the children's exploration of the curriculum. The more advanced Montessori Materials are presented throughout the year, and the extended day children are encouraged to work with these after being shown how. More emphasis is placed on the recording of learned information, so children spend lots of time writing and lengthy works. On Fridays the children will participate in physical education.
3:00 – 3:30	**Clean-Up and School Dismissal**

Elementary – Day in the Life

Time	Schedule
8:15-8:30	Arrive and prepare for class
8:30 – 12:00	**The Elementary program begins promptly at 8:30 a.m**. • If students are late for school, they miss out on greeting their classmates and any daily announcements. This experience is very important for the children, as it is the time they have, to share their news with the group, as well as hear any important news of the up-coming school day. • When the students arrive, they take down chairs, take out their recording notebooks, and begin working. Each student has a specific job that must be done each day. It is the student's responsibility to remember to complete their job. The job schedule will rotate on a weekly basis. • We work in the morning from 9:00 until 12:00. The children work hard during the day to ensure homework is not assigned. The Montessori philosophy is based on the idea of mastery. Once a student has demonstrated mastery of a concept, the next, more advanced concept is introduced. This eliminates the need for busy work. Also, because children move ahead as quickly or as slowly as they need to, a student can stay with a concept as long or as short a time as necessary. This individual work time may mean that the children are working on their own, or being presented work by the directress, or working in a small group. The ability to make choices and achieve the set goals within the time limit is a learned skill. This ability to make choices and follow through helps children reach the self-discipline and independence necessary for future accomplishments. • After individual work time, the class comes together to prepare for lunch by cleaning and setting the tables. This also is a time for compliments, sharing achievements from their work of the morning session or discussing the afternoon activities.
12:00 – 12:30	Hand washing, good table manners, and proper conversation are part of the lunchtime experience.

Time	Schedule
12:30 – 1:00	Recess
1:00 – 1:30	• Silent read for twenty minutes before group presentations in science, geography, or history, or the children may carry on with work begun in the morning class.
1:30 – 3:00	• Group presentations in science, geography, or history, or the children may carry on with work begun in the morning class. • Tuesday and Thursday: Participate in physical education
3:00 – 3:30	• We devote at least twenty minutes at the end of each day to a group read aloud. • One afternoon is devoted to the humanities studies.
3:30	Class ends at 3:30 and the students are responsible for checking their mailboxes before they leave each day.

Middle School – Day in the Life

1. **Respect for the Learner** – It is wonderful to witness deep respect for the learner. Since Montessori schools are learner-centered, there is a great deal of respect for the learner's choice and voice. While the teachers are clearly present, and they offer both boundaries and support, there is a wonderfully authentic type of conversation between teachers and students. There are at least five different types of furniture configurations, allowing for ample choice on the type of environment that a learner might want to use on a given day, and almost everything is mobile or able to be configured in multiple ways (like adjusting the height of a tabletop or quickly moving items around for a different activity). There are iPads for students to use (as they see fit). The room also one wall dedicated to video capabilities, a mobile video conferencing station for large group or individual use, a stationary computer for higher end video editing, and some more flexible furniture for individual work.
2. **The Subtlety and Quiet Center of the Montessori Teacher** –The room is truly not centered on or visibly orchestrated by constant commands of the teacher. The teacher talks less and observes more, playing a valuable and understated role in the learning environment. It is clear, that the teachers have a deep understanding of the learners. They offer support, guidance, and direction; but do so in a way that does not feel like a teacher-centered community. Students get up and move when the choose to do so. You don't see people raising their hands for permission to go to the bathroom. There is a truly authentic community feel to the classroom.
3. **Living as Learning** – We learn by simply living. Learning is not something that we have to force. Young people don't need to be forced to learn. However, the teachers, the physical environment, and the experiences of the young people will influence what someone learns, which is the essence of the Montessori philosophy. There are clear boundaries in the classroom and students do not have 100% freedom to do whatever they want. Yet, it still feels like a school in the sense that learning is a dominant theme of the community. Yes, there is a natural flow to the interactions and the movement of learners. This classroom has full access to a kitchenette.
4. **The Value of the Physical Spaces** – The environment in which one learns is a critical part of the Montessori philosophy. It's designed for one of the more flexible classroom spaces at AGBMS. Other parts of the main room have comfortable (and varied) seating conducive to individual work or small group conversations as well. Most of the chairs in the room are stackable that adjust to

the way everyone sits, having a practical physical purpose but also speaking to the overall philosophy of the classroom.

5. **Auto-education and Project-based Learning** – Auto-education is a key concept in the Montessori philosophy. Allow students to take ownership for their learning. Provide the time and flexibility for students to follow their interests. Part of this will be done in the form of six 6-week projects throughout the year. Students have ample choice but there are some limits. For example, one project must be tied to math, another to language arts, etc.

6. **Time for Depth** – Where many classrooms are broken into 45-minute class sessions, time is much more flexible in this school. These students have grown to a place where they can work independently on a project for upwards of three hours, and they create large blocks of time for this, understanding that some of our best thinking doesn't emerge if we are always breaking everything into 15-minute segments. This is a great contrast to other schools that try to break up classroom time into small segments to keep the attention of learners. In this school, students learn to manage their own time, work for extended period, maybe even to experience the joy of losing track of time while working on a personally meaningful project.

7. **Mixed age classrooms** – Mixed age classrooms is a common part of Montessori classrooms, usually three ages together in a classroom; there is ample opportunity for peer learning across those two-three grades.

8. **Montessori's Four Planes / Stages** – Montessori taught that there are four stages or planes of about six years for students, each leading to a different form of independence: functional and physical independence (0-6), intellectual independence (6-12), emotional independence (12-18), and economic independence experience (18-24). She wrote, "The essential reform of our plan from this point of view may be defined as follows: during the difficult time of adolescence, it is helpful to leave the accustomed environment of the family in town and to go to quiet surroundings in the country, close to nature" (From Montessori's Childhood to Adolescence, p. 67). So, this class clearly shows students how to embrace physical and intellectual independence. These are middle school adolescents, so common social challenges and the like are present. While economic independence is described by Montessori in the 4th plane, this is also part of the vision for the middle school classroom.

9. **Seminar** – A discussion-based approach to learning about different topics on a frequent basis. They explore everything from Spanish to literature to math concepts using seminar.

10. **Art** – Art is an integral part of middle school. Creating some sort of culminating artifact for their projects has a specific creative flair to it through the use-of various mediums.

11. **Guest Speakers** – They have video conferencing capabilities and mobile devices with Internet access, which makes a world of experts available to the class. These are leveraged for individual projects, but they also try to build connections with people from around the world or with unique perspectives throughout the year. Instead of going for one-time guest speakers, they make the effort of building connections where they can interact with the same person multiple times over two weeks or longer.

Policy for Bullying Prevention

The Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School (AGBMS) believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The schools and its' community have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance. AGBMS is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. AGBMS works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

The Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student. Bullying is contrary to Illinois State Laws and statutes as following: Section 27-23.7; General Assembly amended section: 27-23.7 in 2007, and, 105ILCS5/27-23.7(a). A student shall not intimidate, harass, or bully another student through words or actions; such behavior includes but are not limited to: direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; and social isolation or manipulation. "Bullying", including "cyber-bullying", is any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;

2. causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;

3. substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or

4. substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

Non-Discrimination Polices

Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, preference or identity; or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, clients, volunteers, subcontractors, vendors, and clients.

ADDENDUM TO DISCIPLINE POLICY

Although AGBMS does not use any type of restraint or isolated time out - Per the Illinois State Board of Education

Public Act 102-0339 was signed into law August 13, 2021. It amends the Illinois School Code and specifies that the use of physical restraint, time out, and isolated time out will be limited to instances in which the student's behavior poses an "imminent danger of serious physical harm." Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School complies with each of the areas outlined from this act and listed below.

Restraining a Student

Per 23 IAC 1.285(d)(5), prone restraint is prohibited in all Illinois public schools and special education cooperatives.

Prone restraint can be used in special education nonpublic facilities approved under Section 14-7.02 of the School Code if all of the following statements are true for each child who is placed in a prone restraint:

- The student's Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) specifically allows for prone restraint.
- The BIP was put into place before January 1, 2021.
- The BIP has been approved by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team.
- The school staff member(s) applying the prone restraint have completed training that fulfills the requirements set forth in 23 IAC 1.285(i).
- The school must be able to document and demonstrate to the IEP team that the use of other de-escalation techniques provided for in the student's BIP was ineffective.

Supine restraint

Under PA 102-0339, supine restraint (or any other physical restraint, excluding mechanical, chemical, and prone restraint) may only be used if the student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or to others, otdher less restrictive and intrusive measures have been tried and proven to be ineffective in stopping the imminent danger, there is no known medical contraindication to its use on the student, and the staff member(s) applying the technique has been trained in accordance with 23 IAC 1.285(i).

Time out or isolated time out?

Any room used for a time out or isolated time out meets the following requirements:

- Must not have a door with a lock,
- The door must not be obstructed with anything that would prevent the door from opening,
- The room must not be a confining space such as a closet or a box, and
- The room must be a room in which the student is able to be continually observed.

Necessities provided while in an isolated time out

A student who is in a time out or isolated time out must not be denied:

- Medication,
- The use of the restroom, and
- Food or liquid at the time it is customarily served.

After each incident of physical restraint, time out, or isolated time out
The following notifications must occur after an incident of physical restraint, time out, or isolated time out, in accordance to 23 IAC 1.285(g-h):

Notification to Parents or Guardians
- The school must make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent or guardian on the same day the physical restraint, time out, or isolated time out is applied.
- Within one business day after any use of physical restraint, time out, or isolated time out, the school district or other entity serving the student shall send the form to the student's parents or guardians.

Notification to the State Superintendent
• No later than two school days after any use of physical restraint, time out, or isolated time out, the school district or other entity serving the student shall submit information about the incident to the State Superintendent via the Student Information System located in the ISBE Web Application Security data reporting system.

Opportunities are provided for parents to discuss the incident of physical restraint, time out, or isolated time out with school staff
A student's parent/guardian must be given the opportunity to have a meeting with school personnel to discuss an incident that occurs. School personnel must notify the parent/guardian as soon as possible, but no later than two days after the event. The meeting must be held within two school days of the parent/guardian request. This meeting timeline may only be extended at the request of the parent/guardian. Meeting members must include at least one school staff member who was involved in the event and at least one staff member who was not involved in the event.

At the meeting, the parent/guardian must be given an opportunity to discuss the following:
• The incident leading up to the physical restraint, isolated time out, or time out.
• Actions taken by school personnel prior to putting the student in a physical restraint, isolated time out, or time out.

• What occurred during the physical restraint, isolated time out, or time out.
• Any actions that were taken after the physical restraint, isolated time out, or time out. An entity may not exclude a student from school because the meeting has not taken place, or the parent/guardian did not attend the meeting.

If the parent/guardian does not meet with school staff, you must follow the following guidelines:
• A summary of the meeting and any agreements or conclusions reached at the meeting must be documented in writing and become a part of the student's record. Copies of such documents must be provided to the parent/guardian even if the parent/guardian does not attend the meeting.
• If a parent/guardian does not request a meeting within 10 days of being notified about the incident or if the parent/guardian fails to attend the meeting, the school must record that information and document it in the student's school record.

Addendum

Behavior Discipline and Transition Policy

Upon initial enrollment, the child/ren is to begin on up to a six-week trial basis to ensure a good fit.

Repeated patterns of challenging behavior that are deemed serious or interfere with a child's ability to engage in developmentally appropriate self-regulation or cognitive and prosocial engagement with peers or adults may be resolved by creating a written intervention plan, which includes a planned schedule of action agreed upon by the staff, parents/primary caregivers, and qualified professional resources. In rare circumstances, a transition plan will be created for students who do not respond to intervention or students who are a serious safety threat; which involves displaying behaviors that jeopardize the physical safety of the child and/or his/her classmates and staff. The transition plan will be an individualized document developed by Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School staff and receiving early childhood programs, parents/primary caregivers, and qualified professional resources detailing tasks , and individual responsibilities required to prepare for and then execute the transition of the child from Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School to a more appropriate arrangement with as little negative and disruption as possible.

Addendum

General Expectations for All Students
AGBMS believes that maintaining a culture conducive to developing great learners by promoting an emphasis on the pursuit of academics and reducing the emphasis on outward values, contributing to a positive environment in which all members are protected and respected. A dress code promotes a more serious atmosphere which emphasizes academics and promotes good behavior.

It's the parent's responsibility to make sure their child complies with the policies each day when they arrive at school. Students who are not in the proper attire or following the general appearance guidelines may receive one or more of the following consequences: a verbal warning, a written notice to the parents; or the student may be taken to the office while a parent is called regarding the issue so that it is resolved according to the expectations of the school.

General Appearance for Students:

- Good hygiene, well groomed, hair must be clean, neat, and out of the eyes.
- Clothes should be clean and neat in appearance.
- Shoes must be removed from outdoor to indoor shoes before entering the classroom.
    - No black soles, open toes, sandals, or crocs.
- Clothes should be conducive to the environment and the changing weather:
    - hats, gloves, coats, boots as needed for inclement weather.
    - layers are acceptable so that the student feels comfortable and able to attend to her/his work.
    - hoodies are acceptable, but the hood cannot be worn during class time.

Addendum

Cannabis Policy

The Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School has a commitment to the support and maintenance of a drug-free environment for our students and employees. With the advent of the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act going into effect on January 1, 2020, it is important to know that the legalization of marijuana and its related practices do not change AGBMS's alcohol and other drug policies.

As a reminder, under the federal Controlled Substances Act, marijuana is classified as a Schedule 1 controlled substance and is illegal. Consistent with that Act and the federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and the Drug-Free Workplace Act, AGBMS prohibits the unlawful or unauthorized possession, use, distribution, dispensation, sale, or manufacture of marijuana on school property or as part of any school activity. The passage of the Illinois Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act in 2019, which legalizes certain activities related to marijuana under Illinois state law effective January 1, 2020, does not affect federal law or the school's marijuana prohibition.

In addition, AGBMS's marijuana prohibition applies to both recreational and medical use. That means having a medical marijuana registry identification card under the Illinois Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Pilot Program Act does not allow you to use or possess marijuana on school property (this includes but is not limited to outdoor spaces, classrooms, and parking lots) or as part of any school activity. Compliance with these laws and acts represents the AGBMS commitment to maintaining a healthy learning and work environment.

Parent Participation

Mission of Parent Participation

To build and encourage a united, supportive parent community that reflects the diversity of our student community and to provide a network of communication support between AGBMS-AEHI parents, guardians, school faculty and administration. Together, we are committed to supporting AGBMS-AEHI philosophy of educating students with historical, scientific, artistic, and global perspective, enabling our children to think and act with integrity.

Parent Participation Goals are to:

- Provide opportunities to socially enrich the lives of the children.
- Listen and provide open communication avenues between families and AGBMS.
- Provide networking and community building opportunities for parents through various forums, groups, and activities; and,
- Offer volunteer opportunities that acknowledge parents' talents, energy, and time.

Fundraising Expectations

It is expected that each family at Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School will participate in raising funds for our school. **Each family is expected to donate or fundraise a minimum of $700 to further help cover the cost of their child(ren)'s education.** Opportunities to raise funds will come from the annual Gala and the associated ad book. Contributions can also be made in the form matching donations from the company you work for at any given time. AGBMS is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, and any contribution is fully tax-deductible.