



FRANCISCAN
MONTESORI EARTH SCHOOL
EXPANDING MINDS. NURTURING SPIRITS. STEWARDING THE EARTH.

Founded 1977

Parent/Student Handbook

2025-2026

(Revised March 2025)

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Mission Statement

The Franciscan Montessori Earth School provides students from early childhood through young adolescence the skills to acquire individual fulfillment, academic excellence, moral and spiritual development, confidence and independence for lifelong learning. Through the academic and experiential learning process developed by Maria Montessori, and influenced by the spirituality of St. Francis, students are guided to respect themselves and others, and to be stewards of the earth.

Dear Parents:

This handbook has been prepared by the staff of the Franciscan Montessori Earth School.

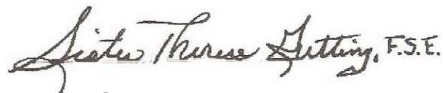
We have found the policies developed in this handbook an aid in fostering harmony and cooperation among the staff, parents and students.

We realize that our role as a school is as a secondary partner and collaborator with your child.

Please read this information and use it as a reference throughout the year. We hope by working together we can “Follow the Child” into new levels of growth and challenge for all of us.

In the words of St. Francis of Assisi we bless you and your family. May the Lord bless you, may He show His face to you and grant you peace.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Sister Therese Gutting, F.S.E." in a cursive script.

Sister Therese Gutting, F.S.E.
Head of School

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ABBREVIATIONS & DEFINITIONS

FMES Franciscan Montessori Earth School
AP Adolescent Program (Middle School)
FSE Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist
WCEA Western Catholic Educational Association
CH Children’s House
LE Lower Elementary

UE Upper Elementary
MA Montessori Aspect (Before & After Care)
N2 Noon Nutrition
E2 Earth Experience
RA Responsible Adult
FACTs School Administration Software
ParentsWeb The FACTs Portal for Parents

School History

The Franciscan Montessori Earth School was established in 1977 for children six years of age to 12 years of age, as a direct response to many parents wishing a continuation of the exceptionally positive Montessori Pre-School experience for their children. Under the stewardship and administration of the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist, the first classroom opened in a rented facility in Northeast Portland with 17 students. In September 1981, the first Children's House was opened to accommodate children ages two and a half to six years. The Transition-Erdkinder (Adolescent Program) was begun with 17 students in 1985. With the Children's House Environment and the Adolescent Program, the Franciscan Montessori Earth School developed a Montessori program for children ages two and a half to 15 years, the first in the Pacific Northwest.

The Franciscan Montessori Earth School of Portland, Oregon is an integral part of the Franciscan Life Center Network, the apostolate of the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist, which identifies with the life and doctrine of the Catholic Church and knows continuity through the pattern of community life lived within the Life Centers of the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist. The Franciscan Life Center Network consists of four major centers.

Vision Statement

The Educational Programs of the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist maintain that all life is sacred, and therefore this religious community is dedicated to protect and promote the inherent value of each individual human life:

By teaching the respect for human life in all its phases of development;

By maintaining that individual uniqueness is an entrance into the dynamic of becoming;

By recognizing that autonomy (the unfolding of personhood) is achieved in following harmoniously the natural rhythms in nature, through mutual human interdependence, and reverence for all life forms;

By establishing prepared environments, that provide elements and experiences of created matter of the natural and human environment, valued in themselves for their inherent integrity, order and beauty, and as media of personal growth;

By providing protected environments, based on the respect for human work and the integrity of social relationships.

Recognizing the need for balanced relationships, all FSE programs offer guidance as a means to realizing and accepting one's own personal dignity and uniqueness as a way of entering Transcendence.

We further believe "the family is the nucleus in which every living culture is rooted and grows . . . the family must be considered the privileged foundation for the transmission and enrichment of a people's wisdom, the soil in which are cultivated the ethical and spiritual values that give a living culture its fullest dignity." (*Gospel Message and Human Cultures. From Leo XIII to John Paul II*, Herve Carrier, S.J., Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987, page 65.)

Therefore we believe and uphold the sacredness of marriage. Strong, supportive relationships between husband and wife, parent and child, family and school, and family and Church, provide the environment in which students can know a security permitting them to face the challenges of growth and development (recognizing that this family configuration is not always operative).

Respect for family life is a prime family value. An integral part of family life, education requires a balance of prayer, work and recreation.

Roman Catholic religious doctrine is inherent in all our programs, with the invitation for those not of the Roman Catholic faith to participate according to their ability, while simultaneously respecting their own religious beliefs.

FMES Affirmative Action Policy

The Franciscan Montessori Earth School admits students of any race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to all schools. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, tuition assistance and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.

School Affiliations Internationale, Amsterdam, Netherlands

The Franciscan Montessori Earth School has been recognized by the Association Montessori International, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

As a private Catholic pre K-8 School, the Franciscan Montessori Earth School is an accredited member of the Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA), is registered with the State of Oregon, Department of Education, and is recognized by this state as a legitimate private school, qualifying for Block Grants, Title I funds and any other such services available through the State of Oregon Department of Education for private schools. The Before and After School Care Program (Montessori Aspect) is licensed with the State of Oregon's Children's Services Division. All salaries and operating costs come principally from tuition. Outside of salaries for staff, administration, and services rendered, no profit accrues to any individual. All monies received are used to provide a highly qualified staff, a well-equipped and maintained learning environment, and an effective program of learning. An Annual Fund is active and necessary to continue to provide this excellent Montessori education.

School Goals and Objectives

The major goals are:

1. Students have an inner guide, a natural force, which drives them to "construct" themselves toward their unique potential. With this process "a new beginning for humanity takes place."

Our educational aim with children must be to aid the spontaneous development of the mental, spiritual and physical personality, and not to make of the child a cultured individual in the commonly accepted sense of the term . . . "after we have offered to the child such didactic material as we adapted to provoke the development of his senses, we must wait until the activity known as observation develops. And herein lies the art of the educator; in knowing how to measure the action by which we help the child's personality to develop."

--Maria Montessori

2. Students develop and educate themselves in a way that is natural. The goal developmentally is that the child may remain in touch with his/her own nature and develop a reverence for the organic order of the universe, resulting in a whole, integrated human being vitally involved in his/her own development and sensitive to the needs of others. Such development includes a healthy, well-coordinated body, active and creative imagination, and resourcefulness with a sense of interdependence; sound attitudes toward

home, school and community; attitudes of cooperation, balanced emotional integration; and an aesthetic sensibility.

3. Students can develop a complementary social structure, which will balance the contrasting needs of the individual and the needs of the group. Guidance that follows the natural human tendencies, the prepared environment, and lessons in "grace and courtesy" are catalysts to this end.
4. Students should experience consistent expectations throughout the school environment. The Before & After Care environments, known as Montessori Aspect, should act in concert with the expected Montessori pedagogy in the classroom. Objectives for achieving this goal focus on the reality that Montessori is not merely a method of education but a philosophy for life.

Specific processes for experiencing learning in this context include:

1. Providing a carefully prepared environment with specific materials, activities, and opportunities that are developmentally appropriate to a particular plane of development;
2. Connecting the child to the environment by providing carefully prepared presentations or lessons, using a specific material that relates a specific concept;
3. Affirming that students have natural human tendencies in their own development that are evidenced by their spontaneous activities;
4. Incorporating consciously these natural human tendencies within the learning process;
5. Providing opportunities for students' relentless exploration through their natural senses and freedom of movement, cooperative work and observation;
6. Maintaining a program that will free students to explore their inner spiritual resources through exposure to religious paths and moral development.

Montessori education is based also on the observation that children learn according to their physical, psychological, and spiritual stages of growth. In the first three years of each stage, new development occurs; it is crystallized in the second three years of each plane of development. Children exhibit a great deal of insecurity, disorder, and signs of non-conformity at the beginning of each new plane. They

need the recognition of their peers, in addition to that of their family.

The policy of the school is to accept all eligible students regardless of racial, cultural, religious or socio-economic background.

Learning Differences

FMES recognizes and values the academic potential of students of diverse learning abilities. Although our program is not geared specifically to students with learning disabilities or attention problems, students can experience success at FMES when supported by an honest and cooperative teacher-student-parent relationship. Parents are expected to inform the School if their child has a previously diagnosed learning or attention difference. If a student is having serious academic or behavior difficulty, the Guide and/or Administrator may request that he or she be evaluated by an independent professional diagnostician who can hopefully clarify the nature and source of the difference. Such an evaluation may be a prerequisite for the student's continued enrollment at FMES. The results of such an evaluation will be used to develop strategies to help the student. The School may also decide that the student's interests will be served better in a learning environment different from the one the School can offer.

Atrium Program (Religious Education)

All children are welcome to take part in the spirituality component of the school. The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a Christian process serving CH, LE and UE.

The following is a breakdown of the information shared in the *Christian Orientation Program*.

Primary: We focus on the life and teachings of Christ with emphasis on Messianic prophecies, Infancy Narratives, parables of love and protection, parables of the Kingdom of God, and the geography of Israel.

Lower Elementary: We continue to develop the above concepts and move more deeply into the teachings of Christ, such as the parables dealing with values and mercy.

Upper Elementary: We move further into the development of values and talents; we study Creation and Redemption, the call and response of Abraham, Moses and other Old Testament prophets, John the

Baptist and Paul--beginning to identify our unique call and response in our culture and the world today. We begin the study of two other great monotheistic religions--Judaism and Islam. Each session begins with a silent work time offering the skill of centering, meditation, prior to their work with UE materials.

Middle School: In the seventh and eighth grades the students explore the origins of religious belief. The idea of the "sacred," myth and ritual, creation accounts, origins of natural law, the Mosaic Law, and the foundations of Christianity. They then investigate the other great religions of the world besides Judaism and Christianity--Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism, viewing them in relationship to the Judeo-Christian Tradition.

The following is a breakdown of the additional information provided for Catholic students as an introduction to the sacraments:

Primary: Eucharist and Baptism

Lower Elementary: Eucharist, Baptism and Penance

Upper Elementary: Eucharist, Baptism, Penance and Confirmation

Middle School: An understanding of the Catholic church and an exploration of world religions.

Middle School Adolescent Program

The Adolescent Program is the middle school, encompassing seventh and eighth grade, of the Franciscan Montessori Earth School.

Preparation for the middle school began in 1982, as the oldest group of students approached the end of their elementary work. Several of them, with the support of their parents, wanted to continue their Montessori education. Coupled with this interest was the enthusiasm generated by a number of experiments in Montessori secondary education, which were springing up across the United States. After thoroughly researching the possibilities, the school community decided to open a Junior High program. Like most other experiments then underway, this one was to be an "urban compromise"--that is, a secondary program guided as much as possible by Dr. Montessori's insights into adolescence, but not a true rural, residential Erdkinder. In a research report developed at that time, the school declared: "While it is our hope that the Junior High (Middle School) program evolve into the Erdkinder we realize the wisdom of beginning with a program which is not only consistent with Montessori principles, but also

more easily accomplished and more traditional.” The program opened in September 1985 with 17 seventh and eighth year students. From the beginning it has offered a broad spectrum of activities--all developed as a response to the skills internalized by these young people in the course of their Montessori education.

FMES Before & After Care: Montessori Aspect

As is apparent from the school's philosophy statement, Before & After Care, (Montessori Aspect) is an integral part of the total program at the FMES.

Our Before & After Care Program, Montessori Aspect (MA), is an environment prepared and developed upon the principle of respect for the student's capacities and developing self-direction.

Appropriate materials are available for students based on their interest and developmental levels.

Consideration for the culture of the students, their home and backgrounds is apparent through the activities available and the materials used.

Students of different ages share experiences in a setting reflecting a familial environment.

We are proud of the many activities that Montessori Aspect has to offer: games, building materials, puzzles and books. These, in addition to the variety of options the school offers, such as the library, gym, and play structures, makes Montessori Aspect an integrated before and after school program. Working and playing in the Montessori Aspect environment helps us realize that the Montessori philosophy is a way of life.

Because we want the students to take pride in this program with us, we ask that parents wait patiently while the students get themselves ready to leave for the day. It is important for them to finish the process of their work by themselves. First they choose it, then they work/play with it, then they put it away properly. Sometimes parents find it hard to wait, but to continue the Montessori approach for your child, it is necessary to follow the same process as in the classroom. Your awareness of this process will help you understand why at times you wait for your child.

If you need your child immediately upon your arrival, call the office ahead of time. We can alert your child and give them a "head start" with departure preparation.

The variety of ages, activities and materials, as well as the personnel, offer a rich and captivating environment for your child. It promises to help your child gain social skills and insight into new and varied learning approaches while having fun.

Montessori Aspect consists of two segments: Montessori Aspect Before Care (AM) and Montessori Aspect After Care (PM). Montessori Aspect AM/PM is available on most days during breaks.

Children arriving at school before 8:30am and those leaving after 2:30pm (for CH), or 3:30pm (for Elementary), must be supervised; all will be charged for participation in the Montessori Aspect Program. Montessori Aspect is not offered for the half day Children's House students.

MA hourly fee is \$8.00 and is prorated based on time of participation. MA fees are billed monthly.

Care provided after 6:00pm closing time will be charged at \$3.00 per minute.

Daily Schedule

7:00am	Montessori Aspect available
8:15-8:30am	Students move from Montessori Aspect to classroom
8:30am-12:00pm	Children's House Half Day Program
8:30am-2:30pm	Children's House Extended Day Program
8:30am-3:30pm	Elementary (LE and UE)
8:30am-3:30pm	St. Francis Academy (SFA)
2:45pm	Early Dismissal every Wednesday for Elementary (LE and UE) & AP. Supervision until 3:30pm is included in tuition.
2:30-6:00pm	Montessori Aspect available

Daily Routine

Consistency in your child's daily routine and your attitude toward this routine are vital to his/her feelings of security.

We would like to emphasize the importance of the student's timely arrival in the classroom. Children's House, Elementary and AP students should be in their classrooms no later than 8:30am.

Dr. Montessori stated that work has a beginning, middle and end. It is not an exaggeration to say that a child deprived of the proper beginning in the classroom is psychologically and objectively deprived of the most important part of his/her day. Too late an arrival tends to make a child feel like an “outsider” because the work has started before he/she arrived.

Give your child plenty of time to get ready for school, the same amount every day. Travel the same route. Attempt not to rush, because we don't want to associate rushing and an accompanying sense of guilt with the school experience. Essentially, if you establish a happy pattern of beginning each day with regular and predictable events preceding your child's arrival at the school, he/she will be eager and able to get the most out of his/her day, while at the same time establishing a positive attitude.

After the initial orientation period, please leave your child at the reception area or front door of the classroom. An apprehensive child is usually quickly involved in an interesting activity.

Students are met for the 2:30pm and 3:30pm dismissals.

Morning Drop-off Procedure

The first priority is the safety of the students and the second is smooth, efficient, flow of traffic. Drivers **MUST** remain in their cars, pulling out as soon as the students are safely clear. This procedure applies to children who are able to disembark and get inside independently, or a sibling who is able to help them.

If your child needs help, or you have business inside the school (no matter how brief), please park in the parking lot or on the street and walk in.

Hints that will help this procedure be smooth and comfortable for children and drivers alike:

Be sure each morning your child's belongings are together and that last minute business is taken care of before you enter the school yard.

Make good-byes cheerful and brief.

If complications develop while you are in the car, pull into the parking lot so you can take the time you need to get things taken care of without impeding the flow of traffic.

Never park in driveway and leave your car.

Afternoon Pickup

Please arrange to have your students picked up at their dismissal time (12:00pm, 2:30pm or 3:30pm). Children's House, Lower Elementary, and Upper Elementary students leave through the Lobby door. Students who are not picked up at dismissal will go to Montessori Aspect until their ride arrives. (MA is not available for the half day CH program.) After dismissal at 3:30pm parents picking up students from Montessori Aspect are to follow the phone procedure in the lobby.

Inclement Weather

At times of inclement weather, the policy regarding school closure for the Franciscan Montessori Earth School will be the same as for the CENTENNIAL school district and/or PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS, whichever has the latest start time or closure. Listen to the radio (KINK 102 FM, KEX 1190AM, OPB 91.5FM or watch television (KOIN Channel 6, KPTV Channel 12) It is not necessary to verify the report with a phone call to the school. You will also receive a text message and email through Parent Alert. ***There is no Montessori Aspect available when the school closes, or in the morning if we have a late start time due to inclement weather.*** If we start late, Montessori Aspect will be available (on its usual schedule) in the afternoon. After 6:30am our school, whenever possible, will be mentioned by name regarding closure or late opening.

Parent Alert

Parent Alert is a mass notification system comprised of SMS text messaging to cell phones to communicate school closures due to weather, emergency situations, etc. Alerts will be sent to the cell phone numbers of your family marked as “custody” in FACTs. We may send to additional contacts within your FACTs account in emergency situations. If you do not receive a SMS text, please contact the school to add your cell phone number to our system

Illness at School

If a student becomes ill during school hours, the parent will be contacted immediately. When appropriate, the student may need to go home; your child should have the security of knowing the place where he/she is to go in case of illness and you are

not at home. If the student cannot go home, or the parent cannot be reached, the student will remain at school until the parent is contacted.

In cases of extreme medical emergency, when the parent cannot be reached, 911 or emergency will be called. All efforts will be made to reach the parents and inform them of the nature of the emergency and the action taken. Parents are required to sign the medical permission in the online enrollment packet.

This form is found in enrollment packet and must be signed before classes begin in September. Please update this form immediately if phone or address changes.

Attendance Policy

The normal school day begins at 8:30am and ends at noon and 2:30pm for Children's House and 3:30pm for all other levels. Wednesday is early dismissal. Where Children's House ends at noon and 2:30pm and all other levels end at 2:45pm Prompt and regular attendance is required at all classes. Daily records of attendance are kept for each student by the Guides. If a student is absent the school is to be informed by 8:30am. If a student is absent without such notification, school staff will notify the parent or guardian by telephone at 9:00am. Besides being a state law and a school requirement, attending regularly is in a student's best interest. It ensures the maximum opportunity for learning and for completing course requirements.

Tardiness

Students are expected to be ready to work when class begins. If they are not ready to work, they are tardy. (Readiness to work means having all necessary books, papers, writing tools, or other required materials prepared for immediate use).

Absences

If your child shows signs of fever, unusual rash, etc., we ask that you keep them home. If a child is uncomfortable at school, we may call and ask that your child be picked up. If your child will be absent the school must be notified. If the child or a sibling has contracted a contagious disease, the school must be informed.

It is inevitable when students are together that they will come in contact with other students' germs.

Unfortunately, symptoms often do not appear until after the class has been exposed.

Medication at School

If a student is to take medication during school hours, the *Medication Form* must be completed and left with the office staff who will give it to the school nurse. Medication Forms can be requested found in the Lobby. *Leave the form and the medication at the front desk in the lobby.*

All medication is kept in the nurse's office. The medication will be administered during the day per your instructions. Please indicate whether the medication is to be refrigerated and if it will be picked up each day.

Nonprescription drugs such as cough drops, vitamins, aspirin, etc., are also left at the nurse's office. *Do not put them in your child's lunch box or allow your child to keep nonprescription drugs on their person.*

Allergies

If your child has food and/or medicine allergies, please be sure to notify the school, and to fill out the **medical portion** of the enrollment form on FACTs.

Health

Students entering FMES must have a complete physical checkup before entering school. The Oregon Certificate of Immunization Status is required when your child enters school.

Immunizations

An Oregon Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS) form showing all pertinent vaccination information or applicable exemptions is required to be on file for each child by the first day of school, or an official record of vaccinations given by your Doctor.

Ensuring that the school has a signed and dated, current and accurate Certificate (CIS), or a current Doctor's record for each student is the Parent's responsibility. If you have any doubts, check with the office to ensure accurate and complete records are on file. If needed, blank forms are available here at the school.

If your child's records are incomplete or not on file with the school:

1. Get a Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS) form from the school, or from the State Health Department and fill out the month and year for each dose of vaccine your child has received.
2. Submit a complete and accurate record clearly indicating it was issued by your Doctor.
3. On the CIS form indicate that your child is exempt from being immunized for the following reasons:
 - a) Medical (please submit a letter signed by a licensed physician with CIS form)
 - b) Nonmedical (parent's signature required on page one, page two and in the Nonmedical Exemption box)

Again, your child's Doctor is the best resource for all immunization questions. You may also call the school if you have general questions about current requirements.

Clothing

Our Mission Statement says "The Franciscan Montessori Earth School provides students from early childhood through young adolescence the skills to acquire individual fulfillment, academic excellence, moral and spiritual development, confidence and independence for lifelong learning. Through the academic and experiential learning process developed by Maria Montessori, and influenced by the spirituality of St. Francis, students are guided to respect themselves and others, and to be stewards of the earth."

It is within this context that we expect students to dress in a manner appropriate for a Catholic Montessori educational program. It is the responsibility of both the student and parent to understand that the **school expects its students and staff to conform to its dress code.**

Modesty is an attitude. It begins by being comfortable with oneself. When we teach modesty we teach that one does not try to attract too much attention to oneself. We encourage the students to dress in a moderate and comfortable way, discreetly covering their body with reverence and respect. Consequently we teach the students to **avoid** fad styles and immodest dress.

Each Guide, Assistant and Staff person is responsible for the application of the code.

The Dress Code on campus is considered "school attire."

Appropriate school attire includes:

All clothing should be in good condition without holes or tattered hems.

- **All clothing** should be without branding and/or graphics that could be deemed offensive (i.e. profanity or suggestive language; promotion of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis or illegal substances)
- **All clothing** should be without political branding
- **All clothing** should be neutral in theme (i.e. no princess dresses, military fatigues, goth-look)
- **All shirts** should cover the midriff, be modestly cut and not sheer
- **Leggings** should be worn with shirts that fall at the lower hip
- **Skirts/Dresses** should fall to a length of two inches above the knee
- **Skirts/Dresses** should not have slits that extend past two inches above the knee
- **Hats/Caps** should not be worn inside the school building.
- **Shoes** should allow the student to kick without loss of a shoe.
- **Hair** should be of natural color (no dye) and styled modestly (i.e. no mohawks or spiked styles)
- **Makeup** is not appropriate at the Children's House and Elementary levels. At Middle School, it should be modestly applied
- **Piercings** of the ears only
- **Tattoos** should not be visible (this includes temporary and henna tattoos)

Unacceptable school attire includes:

Clothing with holes or tattered hems

- Clothing with branding and/or graphics that could be deemed offensive (i.e. profanity or suggestive language; promotion of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis or illegal substances)
- Clothing with political branding
- Themed clothing (i.e. princess dresses, military fatigues, goth-look)

- Clothing that is sheer, immodestly cut or bares the midriff
- Leggings worn with shirts that fall above the lower hip
- Skirts/Dresses that fall more than two inches above the knee or have slits that extend beyond two inches above the knee
- Dyed hair and extreme hair styles such as mohawks or spiked styles
- Makeup for Children's House and Elementary students; heavy makeup for Middle School students
- Body piercings beyond ear piercing
- Visible tattoos, including temporary and henna tattoos

For the Children's House. Students should be provided with clothing they can manipulate by themselves. For example, students should wear pants without large belts so the pants can be removed easily when using the bathroom. For the younger students we suggest elastic-wasted pants that can be pulled up and down easily.

This is not meant to be a complete list of unacceptable items. If the staff finds something to be inappropriate, the student will be asked to remedy (the next day) his or her attire when they return to school. A second inappropriate incident concerning dress will require the parent to be contacted.

Pets in School

Children love to share their pets at the Earth School. We have such a diverse school population we must remember to be respectful of all families when pets are visiting. Cats need to be in arms or carrier, dogs in arms or on a short leash. Rodents and birds are in cages. Owners are responsible for their animals at all times and all pets should be updated on their vaccinations.

Outside Play

Students will be expected to participate in outside play at school, except on rare occasions when a written request explains to the teacher reasons for remaining indoors. Most days students will spend some time out of doors.

Authorized Pick Up List

If your child is to be taken out of school by someone other than the authorized person(s) on the school's records, that person must have permission **IN WRITING** to remove your child from the school premises. For reasons of personal safety for your child, *a phone call will not suffice to release your child. In case of an emergency, a phone call will suffice to release your child.*

School Safety

Great effort is expended to secure the safety of the children during their time at school. For all Parents and staff who work and or volunteer to be with the students, three steps are required:

1. Once during the time your child is in our school attendance at a *Code of Ethics* presentation, must be attended by the persons volunteering. The Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist require this code be presented to all staff and volunteers working with our children.
2. Meet all Children Services Division state requirements for volunteers and staff who work with children. This includes a Criminal Background Check.
3. Driver must be at least 21 years of age and provide a copy of valid driver's license, driving record, proof of adequate insurance coverage and initialed agreement from the school.

Family/Visitor/Volunteer ID

When you visit the school or volunteer, it is necessary to wear your Family/Visitor ID while you are in the building, alerting all students and staff of your purpose. These are available at the Lobby desk.

Observations/Conferences

Contact between parents and Guides is very important. You will notice on the school calendar specific conference times have been set aside. The staff expects the same professional courtesy of other professionals when appointments need to be made or canceled. These meetings serve to keep you abreast of your child's progress in school.

When you wish to discuss a problem regarding your child, please speak with his/her guide.

It is most important that you keep the guides informed of any changes in the home situation that might affect your child, or anything that comes up in conversation with him/her that you think the school should know.

Observation appointments for parents, friends and potential students begin in November. When you or your friends come to observe, please report to the Reception desk before going to the classroom.

Special appointments can be made directly with your child's Guide.

Observing in Children's House

One frequently hears the Montessori environment referred to as an "ocean of activity." Activity is truly the keynote of Montessori: mind and muscles must function freely and together and with a purpose. To help our visitors recognize the various types of work the children are involved in, we are listing some of the very important principles to keep in mind.

The student is helped to become independent, confident and self-controlled. This is why the structured materials are designed for individual use. These materials are also self-controlling and self-correcting. They create patterns of success and progress and encourage precision requiring small muscle manipulation. Free movement of the body is involved in nearly every exercise. This freedom helps to fix interest and attention, leads to concentration and prevents fatigue. So you will see students on the move: carrying, kneeling, sweeping, polishing, etc.

Observing Elementary and Middle School

In order to release the creative power present in every healthy student, all exercises are geared for success and accomplishment and to reduce chances of failure. Outside pressure is eliminated. This covers competition, comparison, external rewards and punishments. The guide tries to "reveal the child rather than mold him."

During your visit, then, notice the variety of purposeful activities (including group work) which are self-chosen and self-directed, the amount of movement, the lively and natural (rather than directed) social interaction of the student, the relaxed, unhurried atmosphere, the spontaneous interest in work. Watch the adults moving within the flow of activities, assisting, but not interfering, remaining calm, patient, respectful. To be noted, too, is the student's freedom to respond in his own particular way

(provided he does not disturb) so that his individual needs and inclinations can be met.

Please keep in mind that your observation is only for a short period of time, and that each hour of every day within a Montessori classroom varies. There is no set schedule or routine. Student's moods and requirements are different, and we try to interpret their particular needs and satisfy them.

"Who touches the child touches the most sensitive point of a whole child which has roots in the most distant past and climbs toward the infinite future. Who touches the child touches the delicate and vital point where all can yet be decided, where all can be renewed, where all is pulsating with life, where the secrets of the soul lie hid."

--Maria Montessori

Birthdays and Holidays at School

The moment of birth, which is the beginning of children's own personal time line, is of great importance to them.

The time line in Children's House. If you can loan us a few snapshots of your child as he/she has grown, the children always enjoy sharing these in the birthday celebration. They like to see each other as babies and toddlers!

In an effort to make birthday celebrations more meaningful, we have compiled a list of suggestions for you to consider when you are preparing a snack for school. One possible snack would be a plate of sliced cheese and a plate of crackers that the children would serve themselves, family style. Another possibility would be containers of vegetable dip and carrots and celery or containers of yogurt and bowls of granola and fruit pieces. When the children prepare their own snacks the experience is much more significant to them. They decide what fruit they want in their yogurt and they pass each of the things around. They decide how many pieces each person can get. They find a way to share the food so that everyone is satisfied. Suddenly a birthday party turns into an excellent opportunity for community building! We ask that you please think carefully about what you send for birthday treats or snacks. A snack that involves some simple preparation on the part of the children. Send sufficient snack so that it can be divided between all the children with a few to spare.

The previous food suggestions are only the tip of the iceberg and should by no means be considered the

only choices. If you are interested in preparing this kind of snack with your child, feel free to call your guide for other ideas or clarification. Birthdays only come once a year.

Noon Nutrition/(N2) Program

The Noon Nutrition/N2 program is our hot lunch program. Options will be communicated before the start of the new school year.

FMES Food Mission

As a grower, and server of food, FMES embraces and celebrates its responsibility toward our children's healthy minds, bodies, soul and the world. In this capacity we strive to:

- Teach children how to cultivate a garden, and we incorporate school-grown fruit and vegetables in our school lunches and snacks.
- Involve our children in preparing food, a practice that contributes to offering healthy, fresh, from-scratch snacks and meals and that teaches students the arts of the kitchen, emphasizing Maria Montessori's educational focus on personal independence.
- Eat our daily meal in a relaxed manner while emphasizing the art and grace of communal eating.
- Integrate food into our curriculum, as it provides a rich platform for learning about history and other cultures.
- Partner with local farms and markets to obtain as much of our food as possible from nearby growers who care about the quality of their product and who attend to healthy growing practices.

Grace and Courtesy

Lunch and snacks are a very important part of the Montessori day. At FMES we strive to encourage "Grace and Courtesy" at all times. As part of this education our children take part in exercises that include practicing our table manners at lunchtime, carefully setting the table, laying out the food, and after an enjoyable meal together, clearing the dishes and tables. Meals begin with a moment of "Thanksgiving and Gratitude".

Hydration

While most of us know the health benefits of drinking plenty of water each day, sometimes we forget the importance of water for our children. Water makes up almost 90% of your child's brain and 75% of their muscles. To stay properly hydrated, children need to consume as much fluid as they lose, and kids tend to lose a large percentage of their body fluid during the day, simply because they are growing and so active.

Classroom Snacks

Classroom snacks provide students an important nutritional bridge between meals. Food choices affect classroom behavior and student learning. When providing snacks for your child or for the whole class, we ask that you make choices with optimal nutrition in mind with a focus on simple, healthy foods. We ask that you include the following:

- Vegetables (example: carrot sticks, celery, zucchini sticks with dip etc.)
- Fresh fruits
- Whole grains (example: crackers, pita bread, rice cakes)
- Rich protein source (example: yogurt, cheese, hummus, tofu salad, nuts)
- When providing dairy products, please ensure they are free from Bovine Growth Hormone (rBST)

Gardening at FMES

As part of our school's mission to assist children in caring for the Earth, we maintain various gardens on the grounds. These form the outdoor classroom for a sequence of garden-related lessons taught by the garden specialist over a child's six years in Lower and Upper Elementary. Though they do contain some flowers, natives, and other ornamentals, their primary focus is vegetables, and the vegetables are meant to supplement our children's nutrition through snacking and as part of the lunch program. Children are allowed to wander in the garden during their recess and after school and can eat the following crops, intentionally planted for snacking, at will: peas, carrots, cherry tomatoes, golden raspberries, kale, beans, and various herbs. In addition children participate in harvesting, preparing, and eating other crops from the garden, both as part of their lunch and at special cooking classes. These crops might include: potatoes, beets, carrots, Brussels sprouts, leeks, parsnips, radishes, squash, herbs, turnips. We have observed that a child's participation in

gardening radically increases his or her chances of trying a new vegetable, and as a result of the school's garden program, many children have asked their parents to buy and prepare nutritious vegetables, such as kale, at home.

Carpools

Carpooling is encouraged by FMES as a way to more efficiently transport students to the school, benefiting the environment and the families involved. When FMES families choose to form carpools it should be acknowledged by all students and adults involved in the carpool that safe transport is the first priority and that driving an automobile safely requires the driver's full attention. Seat belts must be worn by all passengers at all times and additional restraint devices (car seats for small children) need to be provided to all drivers by the parents of the children needing them.

Considering the above, families involved in the carpool are strongly encouraged to set ground rules for behavior in the vehicle so that drivers and children are fully aware of the expected behavior and the consequences of failure to comply. For example, unruly behavior that is distracting to the driver could be handled by a plan such as the following:

When the driver feels that they are distracted by the behavior of one or more children in the car the driver can respond with:

- reminders by the driver and discussion of the rules of the road,
- if behavior persists, safely pulling off the road and waiting until everyone is in control,
- if behavior persists, discussion with the parents and children involved,
- if behavior persists, exclusion from the carpool.

Families involved could also discuss rules for making up days when scheduled drivers are unable to drive, what to do when drivers/students wish to stop for errands in route, payment terms for inequities in driving share, etc.

Arrangement of carpools is left up to the families, FMES cannot be held responsible for carpool organization, implementation or problems. A list is made available of families interested in carpooling.

Financial Policy

The school operates solely on revenues from tuition and fees, or those generated by its own internal fundraising activities (we receive no outside support/subsidies).

Tuition Payment Options

Annual (2% discount): One payment in full, due July 15, 2023 by cash/check. Visa/Mastercard payments are accepted, but do not qualify for discount. There is a \$30 fee for failed transactions.

Semi-annual (1% discount): Two payments of one-half tuition, due July 15, 2023 and January 15, 2024 by cash/check. There is a \$30 fee for failed transactions.

Monthly: 12 monthly payments; July 15, 2023 through June 15, 2024 online via Smart Tuition. There is a \$25 account set-up fee.

- Monthly payments are invoiced 20 days before the due date.
- Payments accepted via checking account, Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express (credit/debit transactions incur 2.85% convenience fee).
- For failed transactions, Blackbaud bills a \$30 fee.
- For students moving to a new level or starting school after the first instructional day, a pro-rated tuition is assessed based on the number of instructional days remaining in the school year.

Tuition contract: Contracts are sent in early June to families choosing to pay tuition in annual or semi-annual installments. Please sign and return the contract with the first tuition payment. For those paying monthly, Blackbaud registration is considered acceptance of the tuition contract.

Montessori Aspect (Before/After Care):

Hours of operation: 7:00 to 8:15am and 2:30-6:00pm

Rate: \$8.00 per hour, per child (\$3.00 per minute, per child after 6:00pm) billed monthly.

Pre-registered time cancellation policy: During school breaks parents must pre-register for Montessori Aspect. If illness or family emergency requires absence, a 24-hour notice of cancellation is

required for fees to be waived. Without advance notification, fees associated with the pre-registered time will be billed.

Possible Tax Benefits

Costs associated with the Children's House program (pre-kindergarten) and Montessori Aspect program (before and after school care) may be considered child care expenses and qualify for the federal Child Care Tax Credit or be eligible for Flexible Spending Account spending (an account using pre-tax dollars to pay for qualifying expenditures). For more information on the Child Care Tax Credit, visit the IRS website and/or consult a qualified tax advisor. For Flexible Spending Accounts, contact your employer's Human Resources Department.

Tuition Assistance

Tuition assistance is the Administration's attempt to be fiscally responsible yet sensitive to the needs of parents who have long supported the school through their tuitions. **Assistance is particularly intended to help families over a one year period during unexpected, temporary financial difficulties that can arise.** It is intended that such funds will, thereby, be available for use by other families facing financial difficulties in the following school year (i.e. preference is typically given to families in difficulty who did not request tuition assistance during the preceding year). Parents are free to consult with the administration for help in completing the request.

Criteria for Eligibility (Both 1 and 2 are required):

1. Any family whose combined income is determined by the school to be at a level of \$70,000 or below (applicant must include a photocopy of W-2 forms received during the current year along with a photocopy of a recent payroll stub or letter of wage verification from your employer, and/or other documentation as needed).
2. Any family registered in the school for at least one year (include estimated amount spent on your child's education through the present year at FMES).

Early Withdrawal Policy

After the tuition contract is signed, we require 30 days written notice before a student is withdrawn. Complete early withdrawal policies are:

- loss of tuition paid in July and August plus the repayment of any original discounts (e.g. 2% full payment discount);
- loss of paid fees;
- a charge of one additional month's tuition to help defray the school's fixed annual costs;
- payment of all Montessori Aspect and other accrued fees;
- completion of all exit paperwork.

If a family has received tuition assistance from the school and chooses to leave the school, the tuition assistance allotted is not valid. The entire fee is to be paid by the family.

Charitable Giving

The FMES Endowment exists to provide a longer term, asset based, financial platform which can enable the school to make spending and capital investment decisions that are independent of the income statements, cash flows, or economic cycles. This fund, in addition to providing a financial backstop during lean times, will also allow the school to time capital investments based on strategic needs and opportunities rather than based on shorter term financial cycles. While not the primary purpose of the endowment, carefully messaged fundraising activity will have the added benefit of raising the awareness level of the school in the community.

Annual Fund

Contributions to the Annual Fund is expected from every parent and is deductible by donors, but the financial aspect of the school's operations is dependent upon your tuition, voluntary services and the Annual Fund--in other words, YOU--and this is our opportunity to say "Many thanks for helping us to create a nurturing, caring environment for the total development of your child."

If there are a limited number of groups that receive your financial support, and you include FMES among them, your gift represents a commitment to a cause that you support and believe in. It is FMES staff and the work of this school that your gifts support directly, and as such, those gifts are "mission critical" to the school. If you are personally involved in the school, either as a parent, grandparent, staff member, friend, or supporter of any kind, a gift from you is not only a very meaningful gesture--it is gift in the truest sense.

Social Misconduct Policy

The goal of our Social Misconduct policy is to create the culture of respect outlined in our mission statement. Every effort is made to ensure that all children feel safe and respected at all times.

Social misconduct is any behavior that violates any school rule or policy, or that may physically or emotionally damage any person, or damage the school's welfare or educational environment.

When an incident of social misconduct occurs, it is also viewed by FMES staff as an opportunity to guide that child and if needed that community to a place of mutual respect.

The school expects and requires all students to be honest in their relationships with the faculty, the administration, and with one another.

Social misconduct does not include harassment, bullying, or electronic abuse, which are covered in separate sections of this handbook.

Social misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Actions that may physically or emotionally damage a person, including abusive language, and/or excessive profanity.
- Actions that may damage property including: stealing, vandalizing, or intentionally damaging the school or another's property or technology.
- Actions that are serious violations of school rules or policies including, violating rules related to:
 - Academic honesty
 - Facilities use
 - Individual responsibilities and safety guidelines that have been communicated to students orally or in writing.
 - Engaging in acts of academic dishonesty or lying to a member of the staff or administration.

Consequences

Students at FMES range in age from 2 1/2 to 14 years old. This wide developmental range necessitates that our responses be appropriate for the developmental plane of the student(s) involved and the severity of the incident.

Responses may include (but are not limited to):

- Student is removed from the environment for a determined period of time
- Payment for property damage
- Community Service
- A recommendation or a requirement to seek professional support
- Plan to achieve reconciliation
- Suspension and/or expulsion.

Steps to Follow during the First Social Misconduct event:

1. Student(s) in violation of the Social Misconduct policy are removed from the environment.
2. Administrator is notified immediately and a Social Misconduct report is prepared and shared with the parents involved.
3. Administrator and Guide begins a process of mindful inquiry with involved student(s).
4. Administrator and Guide determine the relative culpability between or among student(s) and also determine extent of the injury to person or property or to the School's reputation.
5. Administrator and Guide will determine appropriate consequence and inform parents of consequences as well as delineate what will happen if a second social misconduct incident should occur.
6. A written record is prepared and shared with the parents involved.

Steps to Follow during the Second Social Misconduct event:

1. Steps 1-6 as outlined in steps to follow during a First Social Misconduct Event.
2. Minimum two-day suspension in most cases
3. A requirement to seek professional support.
4. Another written record is prepared and shared with the parents involved.

A third social misconduct incident would most likely result in an expulsion.

Harassment Policy

- **We do not tolerate racism.**
- **We do not tolerate sexism.**

- **We do not tolerate religious discrimination.**
- **We do not tolerate discrimination based on any other identifier.**

The goal of our Harassment policy is to create a culture of respect. As outlined in our mission statement, “students are guided to respect themselves and others.” Every effort is made to ensure that all children feel safe and respected at all times.

Harassment is defined as conduct or behavior that may physically or emotionally demean, humiliate or embarrass a person. Harassment includes a wide range of behavior and can be directed at an individual based on any identifier such as their ethnicity, race, religion, sex or any other identifier. Harassment includes acts of microaggression.

When an incident of harassment occurs, it also viewed by FMES staff as an opportunity to guide that child and if needed that community to a place of mutual respect.

Consequences

Students at FMES range in age from 2 1/2 to 14 years old. This wide developmental range necessitates that our responses be appropriate for the developmental plane of the student(s) involved and the severity of the incident.

Responses may include (but are not limited to):

- Student(s) is removed from the environment for a determined period of time
- An effort to determine the source of the offensive language or views (if applicable) and remove the child from the source that is causing the offensive language or views
- A recommendation or a requirement to seek professional support
- Plan to achieve reconciliation
- Suspension and/or expulsion.

Steps to Follow during the First Harassment incident:

1. Student(s) in violation of the harassment policy are removed from the environment for the rest of the day and the following school day.

2. Administrator is notified immediately and a harassment report is prepared and shared with the parents involved.
3. The parents of the child or children who was the target of harassment will be consulted about appropriate next steps.
4. Administrator and Guide begins a process of mindful inquiry with involved students.
5. Administrator and Guide determine the relative culpability between or among students.
6. Administrator and Guide will determine appropriate action and inform parents of consequences as well as delineate what will happen if a second harassment incident should occur.
7. A written record is prepared and shared with the parents involved.
8. Administrator and Guide will invite feedback from all parties involved to determine if actions taken were effective.

Steps to Follow after the Second Harassment incident:

1. Steps 1-7 as outlined in steps to follow during a First Harassment incident.
2. Minimum two-day suspension.
3. A requirement to seek professional support.
4. Another written record is prepared and shared with the parents involved.
5. Administrator and Guide will invite feedback from all parties involved to determine if actions taken were effective.

A third harassment incident would most likely result in an expulsion.

Anti-Bullying Policy

At The Franciscan Montessori Earth School and Saint Francis Academy we believe that every child has the right to an education and every child has the right to be safe. We do not tolerate bullying, we educate our staff and students about bullying, we closely monitor the behavior of our staff and students to ensure that bullying is not allowed to occur and we take swift action to deal with any bullying that does occur.

Definition of Bullying

FMES define bullying as a series of repeated intentionally cruel incidents, involving the same children, in the same bully and victim roles. This, however, does not mean that in order for bullying to occur there must be repeat offenses. Bullying can consist of a single interaction. Bullying is a willful, conscious desire to hurt, frighten or threaten. Bullying is usually ongoing in nature.

It can be physical and/or verbal and includes racial, religious, sexual harassment, offensive gestures, inappropriate touching, intimidation, extortion and social exclusion. It is behavior that is designed to hurt, injure, embarrass, upset or discomfort the other person.

FMES requires all employees, and encourages parents to report any known incidents of bullying to their child's teacher and/or the Head of School. When an incident is observed, employees are required to report the incident to the Head of School.

School Commitment

FMES will:

- Encourage teachers to embody programs against bullying in their classroom curriculum in order to develop educative and positive programs to minimize bullying.
- Record incidents of bullying in a consistent way that allows for monitoring of such behavior.
- Discuss appropriate standards of behavior and school rules with all students.

FMES will support students who are being bullied by:

- Improving the self-esteem of victims through activities that build self-confidence, self-awareness, and the ability to stand up for ones self. The school employs counseling when appropriate, and/or social skills programs.
- Taking bullying seriously and thoroughly investigating.

Consequence

Consequences follow the outline of the Social Misconduct Policy.

Freedom

Our concept of freedom in the Montessori classroom is a freedom within limits. A student is allowed to

work freely so long as he/she does not disturb others. Actually, students having the freedom to follow their own interests are generally happily and busily involved in their work. "Students are **not** free to **not** work."

Filing Complaints to DHS (Department of Human Services)

To report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), you can call the abuse hotline at (855) 503-SAFE (7233). This hotline is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

What to expect when you call

- You will speak with a Child Welfare screener.
- You will be asked about your concerns, including what the child has said.
- You will be asked for information about the child, such as their name, age and where they live.
- What you share will be kept confidential.

When you call 911

If you feel an individual is in immediate danger, call 911 immediately.

Other ways to report

You can also report suspected child abuse to your local law enforcement agency.

Who is a mandatory reporter

- Many people are required to report suspected child abuse, including:
- Nursing home employees and contractors
- Psychologists
- Regulated social workers
- Licensed professional counselors
- Marriage and family therapists
- Registered child care providers
- Senior center employees
- Therapists

How to Report Abuse or Neglect – Oregon.gov

- Call 855-503-SAFE (7233), if you think a child is being abused or neglected. *You will talk to a Child Welfare screener. *

Office of Youth Protection

Mandatory reporters include many public and private officials like health care providers, law enforcement employees, school employees and members of the clergy. The full list of mandatory reporters is found in [Oregon Revised Statute 419B.005](#).

Examples of mandatory reporters include:

- Attorneys
- Certified foster care providers and their employees
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
- Elected officials in Oregon and members of state boards or commissions
- Emergency medical services providers and firefighters
- Employees of the Oregon Department of Human Services, Oregon health Authority, Early Learning Division, Department of Education, Oregon Youth Authority, local health department, community mental health program, community developmental disabilities program, county juvenile department, or alcohol and drug treatment programs.
- Health care providers including doctors, nurses, physician's assistants, home health workers, naturopaths, chiropractors, dentists and optometrists
- Law enforcement agency employees
- Members of a school district board, and education service district board or public charter school governing body.
- Members of the clergy
- Nursing home employees and contractors
- Psychologists, regulated social workers, licensed professional counselors and marriage and family therapists
- Registered child care providers
- School employees, including teachers and employees of higher education
- Senior center employees
- Therapists including physical therapists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, audiologist, speech language pathologists.

If you are a mandatory reporter, you must report suspicions of child abuse or neglect to authorities. **Call the abuse hotline at 855-503-SAFE (7233)** to make a report. The hotline is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

FMES Fair Share Volunteer Program

Parent Participation

Education is reinforced in many ways, the most important contribution being made by the parents themselves in the familial environment. Therefore, reading in the field of Montessori theory and application is strongly advised and Montessori books may be borrowed from the school. Many other books, magazines and related materials are available at the school. This includes daily reading to your child, thus indirectly sharing with your child the value of reading and concentration. When your child begins to read, it is also important that your child read aloud to you.

In the last analysis, it is the quality of the Montessori education your child receives, in combination with the parental grasp and application of the precepts that assures the life-long enrichment derived from this system of education. The Guides wish to give your child the fullest benefit of their abilities, training and knowledge. This can be accomplished if you have a clear understanding of their classroom approach and goals as discussed during the (1) parent orientation interview and during (2) individual parent-guide conferences, (3) observations, (4) parent meetings and (5) school-sponsored Parent Development Programs.

The school is only as effective as its parents and staff. Our school is based upon the principles of support, education in Montessori theory and philosophy and active participation of the school outside the classroom. It is this support which has enabled the school to provide the educational services it now offers.

You will certainly be asked and are expected to volunteer throughout the year to help the school--fund raising events, making visitors welcome, helping repair classroom equipment, providing snacks, working in the yard/gardens, working in the library, and any number of necessary tasks. If you have a special ability--carpentry, art, writing, typing, gardening--please let us know. Your investment in time is appreciated no matter how you help, and the initial investment is always returned through the children. We feel the best investment you can make is in your child's education. Remember also, no parent needs to feel responsible to participate in or purchase every item sold in the school's fundraising

events. Feel free to choose those areas and items to which you best respond.

Purpose: The FMES Fair Share Program fosters community spirit and awareness, and encourages all families to participate equally in community events, activities, and projects.

Annual Requirements:

- 2-Parent Families: 40 hours.
- 1-Parent Families: 20 hours.
- ½ Day Only Families: 20 hours.
- Families Receiving Tuition Assistance: Additional 10 hours on top of regular requirement.
- Families Starting Mid-Year: Hours will be prorated based on enrollment month.
- Staff members with enrolled students are not required to complete Fair Share hours.

Buy-Out:

- \$15 per Fair Share hour not completed.

Terms:

- Families are responsible for logging their own Fair Share hours. (See Tracking section below)
- Fair Share hours are based on our fiscal year, July 1-June 30.

Tracking:

- All Fair Share hours will be tracked and monitored through ParentsWeb. Contact Melissa McGuire for details.

Who Can Earn Fair Share Hours:

- Any person 15 years or older can contribute to a family's Fair Share hours. This includes: Moms, Dads, Grandparents, Siblings, Aunts & Uncles, Cousins, Family Friends, etc...
- Volunteers must complete the FMES Code of Ethics Course and State of Oregon or State of Washington Background Check before they can participate in any volunteer activities where children are present.

Ways to Earn Fair Share Hours:

Fair Share hours can be earned in a multitude of ways. Everything from volunteering time and efforts, purchasing RaiseRight gift cards / online App (formerly SCRIP), and participating in various incentive opportunities. Each hour of volunteer time served is equal to 1 Fair Share hour. Hourly volunteer activities include, but are not limited to the following:

During School:

- Work at events, book fairs, fundraisers, etc.
- Work in the library.
- Assist with reading practice in a classroom.
- Drive/chaperone field trips or outings.
- Work at the RaiseRight (formerly SCRIP) table.
- Participate in classroom projects or events.
- Work in the gardens or on school grounds.
- Be a Guest Presenter or Elective Instructor for the Middle School.

After School:

- Participate in the "Take-Home Work" program.
- Attend Parent Community meetings and educational events.
- Organize, coordinate, and participate in community events (Harvest Carnival, Auction, Spring Field Day, etc.).
- Chair or serve on school committees.
- Supervise and assist with clubs and activities.
- Coach athletic teams.
- Attend Open-Houses or Education/Curriculum Nights in the classroom.
- Hang flyers for Open House events at local gyms, coffee shops, doctor's offices, etc.

At Bridal Veil:

- Participate in Bridal Veil work days, typically the 3rd Saturday of each month, 9:00am to 1:00pm.
- Assist Sisters with projects and/or tasks as needed.

There are many volunteer opportunities that are ongoing throughout the year or that span a fixed period of time. To keep things as consistent as possible, these activities have been assigned a set number of Fair Share hours:

- Serve as a Room Representative: 25 Fair Share hours per school year.

- Chaperone a 1-night Earth Experience: 20 Fair Share hours.
- Chaperone a 2 or 3-night Earth Experience: 30 Fair Share hours.
- Chaperone a Week-Long Middle School Trip: 40 Fair Share hours.
- Host a Language Exchange Program Student: 30 Fair Share Hours.

We know that many of our families have working parents and the giving of time can be extremely difficult. In light of this, we offer opportunities to earn Fair Share hours that do not require the gift of time. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- Buy RaiseRight (formerly SCRIP) gift cards: \$250 RaiseRight (formerly SCRIP) purchase = 1 Fair Share Hour.
- Participate in Fair Share incentives offered throughout the year. Examples:
 - o Return re-enrollment forms by the specified date and receive 1 Fair Share hour.
 - o Refer a new family and earn 10 Fair Share hours when they enroll.
- Participate in your employer's volunteer matching program. For example: If you volunteer 10 hours of your time and your employer gives \$10/hour to the school as a "matching gift", you will earn a total of 20 Fair Share hours.

Hardships:

Any family facing a hardship or other situation that inhibits their ability to complete their Fair Share requirement may request a reduction or exemption from Sister Therese Gutting, F.S.E., Head of School.

****Please Note:** Due to IRS regulations, we are not able to offer Fair Share hours in exchange for donations of any type of goods or services.

Telephone, Cell Phone and Electronic Equipment

The school number is: **503-760-8220**
 Fax: **503-760-8333**
 Email: info@FMES.org
 Web page: www.FMES.org

Except for emergencies, neither guides nor pupils are called to the phone during school hours. Voice mail messages can be forwarded to the Guides phone

extension. When it is necessary for students to use the telephone, they are given that permission.

Internet Usage/Cell Phone Policy

In recognition of the cell phone as a useful tool used by society members, Administration will allow students to possess a cell phone at school under strict guidelines.

Cell Phone Guide Lines:

- During school hours, a student may only make phone calls associated with a school project.
- During school hours, a student may only use the camera function in association with a school project.
- All other functions or applications (apps) may only be used in association with a school project.
- Contacting family throughout the school day must be done on the school phone system.
- The staff and administration reserve the right to modify the policy as it pertains to any specific school related event.

School Photographs

Photographs of the children will be taken each year. The photos will be available for purchase at a nominal cost. Your school calendar announces the day for pictures. Notice will be given each parent prior to the day pictures will be taken. A school Year Book is published and available for purchase. The Year Book includes all of the children in the school.

Fire/Earthquake/Disaster and Dangerous Person Drills

Fire, Earthquake, Disaster and Dangerous Person Drills are held throughout the year at unannounced and varied times. All persons should leave the building in a quiet fashion. (The Dangerous Person Drill all take immediate cover.) Each classroom has an emergency packet.

Philosophy of the FMES Extra Curriculum Sports Program

A common philosophy of the Franciscan Montessori Earth School athletics must be understood and practiced by all adult leaders--administrators, athletic director, coaches, parents and officials--to avoid

confusion, disagreements and confrontations. By understanding a common philosophy, everyone can work together to meet the needs of the young people involved.

FMES extracurricular athletics exist to provide opportunities for youth to participate in activities under conditions that are safe, enjoyable and promote positive attitudes of fair play and cooperation. FMES has concern for the whole person made up of body, mind and spirit. An attempt should be made to respond to the interest and needs of the individual by encouraging the total growth and development of the young person. Physical fitness, positive mental attitude and spiritual growth are all important in developing the whole person.

All eligible youth are given the opportunity to participate with no try-outs or “cuts.” As many teams as there are interested participants should be formed. Once the season starts, every student who has attended practices should play in every game. Participation, involvement and being able to play are far more important than winning a particular game or having the best win-loss record. Developing the individual is the focus; the game is merely the tool.

Beyond the written rule there is a proper spirit in which to engage in competitive sports. Fair play and sportsmanship are the essence of FMES athletics. Participation alone does not guarantee sportsmanlike attitudes and values, such as honesty, fair play and citizenship. Coaches, parents and other adult leaders must be role models and explain why these behaviors are appropriate. Winning is an important objective in sports. To not seek victory is to be a dishonest competitor, but winning must not be overemphasized in FMES sports. Winning must be kept in healthy perspective. Young athletes must learn that beating their opponents is not the only objective. Adults must help them to understand that there is more to sports than a win-loss record. Students must be taught that success is found in striving for victory. The important concept is that if they give their maximum effort and strive for success, there are no losers. When winning is kept in perspective, the student first and winning second, sports programs produce students who feel good about themselves, respect others, accept responsibilities, strive for excellence, improve skills, have fun and look forward to future participation in sports. This is the purpose of the FMES extracurricular sports program.

Player Eligibility

The Franciscan Montessori Earth School extracurricular sports program is intended for youth

playing on school sponsored teams through the CYO Program. The following rules and regulations governing player eligibility are in keeping with the school's basic philosophy which is designed to strengthen youth's identity with their school and to insure fair, safe and equal competition.

All school youth, upon completing the required CYO online registration and payments may participate with teams sponsored by the school.

Code of Conduct and Responsibility

The Franciscan Montessori Earth School extracurricular sports program, helps to instill in youth, positive attitudes and characteristics that will make them better adjusted youth today, and adults in the years ahead. Bringing youth together from different schools and social backgrounds in an atmosphere that fosters friendship with opponents and teaches principles of sportsmanship is an important aspect of the program. The following guidelines reinforce that the behavior of anyone involved in the Franciscan Montessori Earth School extracurricular sports program should not detract from the student's enjoyment of the sport.

Coaches

1. Individuals must be at least 15 years of age.
2. Fully knowledgeable and acquainted with the FMES Extra Curricular sports philosophy.
3. Conduct a pre-season meeting with parents to insure that everyone understands the purpose and philosophy of the program, the level of commitment expected, the responsibilities of the coaches, parents and students.
4. Obtain a current rule book for the sport being coached and be knowledgeable of the rules.
5. Take special precautions to ensure a safe playing environment. Maintain or have access to an adequate first aid kit at the playing site.
6. Teach and guide students in a way that will increase their respect for authority, their sense of fair play, and their ability to understand the wins and losses of everyday life.
7. Treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for children of the same age group.
8. Give each player sufficient playing time in every game.
9. Be aware that coaches are responsible for the actions of their team members.
10. Check out all team equipment and uniforms and return them at the end of the season.
11. Provide a schedule of games and practice times to the parents. Changes and cancellations are to be provided as they occur.

12. Insure that every player has departed the facility and the facility is secure and clean before leaving any sports activity.
13. Encourage players in a positive manner, treat others with respect and dignity and set an example of good conduct.
14. Be humble in winning and gracious in defeat.
15. A friendly handshake or positive comment should be exchanged to the opposing coach after the game.
16. Authority to discipline a student if needed within the guidelines, i.e., time-out, notice to parent, sent to MA, sit out part of a game.

Students

1. Treat opponents with respect and dignity.
2. Play by the rules; play fair.
3. Give only constructive criticism and positive encouragement to teammates.
4. Do not swear or argue about an official's decision. The coach or team captain may ask for clarification of the official's decision.
5. Be knowledgeable of the FMES Extra Curricular Sports Philosophy.
6. Commit to attend all practices and games.
7. Notify Coaches of your inability to attend a practice or game as soon as possible.
8. Arrive on time and ready to play for practices and games.
9. Behave responsibly during games and practices and accept direction and instructions from the coach.
10. A hand-shake or cheer should be exchanged by all members of the team at the conclusion of every game.

Parents/Spectators

1. Make only positive comments to players, coaches, parents and officials. There is no place in FMES sports to boo and criticize judgments made by officials.
2. Parents should not interfere with their child's coach. They must be willing to give responsibility for their child to the coach during the game and practice. Any questions or concerns should be communicated to a coach at appropriate times in a constructive manner. If the parent and coach cannot mutually resolve a dispute it shall be referred to the Athletic Director for resolution.
3. Volunteer for non-coaching team activities, such as, facility cleanup, transportation, facility setup, etc.
4. Arrange or provide transportation for your student to and from activities by the designated time.

Facility and Equipment Use

1. School facilities both indoor and outdoor are to be left orderly before departure from each sports activity.
2. Practice times must be arranged in advance for usage of the gym and the outdoor fields. Flexibility is required for school sponsored major events. Timely

notice will be given by the Administration if a scheduled practice needs to be canceled or changed.

3. Due to limited Gym space, priority will be given to Volleyball between the months of September - November and Basketball between the months of November - March.
4. When practices occur after normal school hours, the rest of the school is off limits and the facility is to be left secure.

Bill of Rights for Young Athletes

1. Right to participate in sports.
2. Right to participate at a level commensurate with each child's maturity and ability.
3. Right to have qualified adult leadership.
4. Right to play as a youth and not as an adult.
5. Right of youth to share in the leadership and decision-making of their sport participation.
6. Right to participate in safe and healthy environments
7. Right to proper preparation for participation in sports.
8. Right to an equal opportunity to strive for success.
9. Right to be treated with dignity.
10. Right to have fun in sports.

Notification of Outings

Parents will receive individual notification of specific outings (i.e., OMSI, Zoo Trips, Day Field Trips, etc.) prior to the outing. These notices will be on *Permission for Outings* forms, which must be signed by the parent and returned to the school before the child can be allowed to participate.

Children's House

Children's House students ordinarily do not participate in Field Trips. Gardens and campus walks are considered appropriate for their level of development.

Earth Experiences (E2) Handbook

Earth Experiences are planned in order that the student (2-1/2 to 18 years of age) may apply his/her acquired knowledge to the world outside the class. They are an integral part of the curriculum and a required component of the pedagogy at the Franciscan Montessori Earth School. The goals and objectives of the Earth Experiences are:

1. to provide a concrete field experience to integrate the concept of the interdependence of man to the universe.
 - Space
 - Solar Systems
 - Man / Planet

2. to provide a concrete field experience to integrate the concept of the human family and its place in time
 - Miracle of human life
 - Origins of man
 - Self-improvement
 - Cosmic education
 -
3. to provide a concrete field experience to integrate the concept of mutual respect of man to his environment
 - Ecology
 - Animals
4. to give the students a safe and challenging opportunity to be independent, thus enhancing their sense of self.
5. to give the students the benefit of interests and skills of adults other than staff members in an environment away from the city setting.
6. to work with their Guides in a setting other than the classroom, enhancing and motivating lessons in the classroom.
7. to improve group dynamic skills outside the classroom setting.
8. to provide a vehicle for parent education.

Notification of Outings

*Parents will receive individual notification of specific outings (e.g. OMSI, Zoo Trips, Day Field Trips, etc.) prior to the outing. These will be in the form of **Permission for Outings Forms**, which must be signed by the parent and returned to the school before the child will be allowed to participate.*

How the Earth Experiences “Work”.

Children's House

Children's House students ordinarily do not participate in Field Trips. Gardens and neighborhood walks are considered appropriate for their level of development.

Lower and Upper Elementary

Method:

1. Teachers assume overall responsibility and delegate specific responsibility to parents for the safety and well-being of the children.
2. Parents assist in:
 - Coordinating and procuring equipment
 - Coordinating transportation
 - Coordinating communication
 - Being “Responsible Adults”
3. Teachers are responsible for determining curriculum and activities.
4. Staff attends a Survival Workshop.

Procedures at Earth Experiences:

1. Meals will be centralized.
2. “Responsible Adults” will be selected by the teachers.
3. No drugs or alcohol.
4. No non-elementary siblings.
5. No pets
6. No parent sleeps with his/her own child.
7. Students will be expected to go to their “Responsible Adult” for their needs.
8. Earth Experiences are part of the curriculum and except for medical reasons, all children are expected to participate.
9. Students will be transported in vehicles with seat belts. All students must be in a seat belt when the vehicle is in motion.

What Parents need to know

What is expected of all parents:

1. To read this handbook so you understand the purpose and procedures of Earth Experiences.
2. To return permission forms on time.
3. To fill out medication forms, if necessary, and have them and the medication at school before departure. These are turned in to the office or the Guide. They should not be sent with the child.
4. To adequately prepare your child for the Earth Experience (see: How to Prepare your Child for the Earth Experiences.)
5. To facilitate the Earth Experience by helping out before, during and after the Earth Experiences.
6. To return Driver Permission slips before leaving the school, All of those who will be driving students during the trip.
7. To notify the Guide a week prior to the Earth Experience of any changes in your commitment.

Duties of Responsible Adults (R.A.):

Being an R.A. is as energy-consuming a task as you may ever take! The young people under your care need and deserve all your time, energy and knowledge. To be with them for the duration of the Earth Experience will take considerable love and patience on your part.

There is an important separation you must make when dealing with your own child. Your child will have been assigned to another adult who is totally responsible for the care of your child during the Earth Experience - just as you will be for other children. You can make the job much easier for your child's R.A. by accepting that separation as a matter of fact and by thoroughly preparing your child for the fact that he/she needs to go to his own R.A. for his/her needs. Trust your child's R.A. to give the same loving care you will give to your group. If you feel honestly that you cannot make this separation with your child, please do not volunteer to be an R.A.

Specific duties by class level:

Lower Elementary Earth Experiences, Responsible Adult Duties (R.A.)

1. Please be sure that children are always safe and always under your observation. The students must get permission from you to leave your sight (e.g. to go to the bathroom). At all other times, they must be visible to you.
2. Assist the students in choosing a site and setting up their tents.
3. After the tents/cabins are set up, help them arrange their sleeping places, layout their pad and place, in their sleeping bags, what they will need to prepare them for bedtime – flashlight, toiletries, towel, pajamas etc.
4. After the tent is arranged, sit them down on their sleeping bags and discuss how the tent/cabin is to be kept clean and neat; e.g. where to remove shoes and boots.
5. Check to be certain all food is taken out of the tent/cabin and placed in the kitchen area.
6. Help students with general hygiene needs as necessary, especially in the morning and evening.
7. As the R.A., be prepared to remain with the children throughout the night, be ready to share a story with them (no scary ones, please!). When all are settled, assure them that 2 adults are with them to tend to their needs throughout the night.
8. Make sure the students are at their chosen activity on time and with everything they need.
9. Check with the Guide at breakfast for changes of activities. Tents/cabins are to be in order before the day's activities.
10. Help with cooking and cleaning up during mealtime.
11. As an R.A., you will be responsible for preparation to return home.
12. As an R.A., you may be responsible for the additional free time supervision.

Upper Elementary Earth Experiences, Responsible Adult Duties (R.A.)

The Upper Elementary students have gained additional maturity. Such being the case, the R.A.'s responsibility is to assist the Guides as needed.

1. Please be sure students are always safe and under your observation.
2. Students are to be responsible for themselves as much as it possible.
3. Students are to set up their campsites/R.A.'s assist the Guide as requested.
4. Oversee tent/cabin inspection.
5. Stay with students at base camp.
6. Remind students of general hygiene needs as necessary.
7. After the students are quiet, meet with the Guide and other "Responsible Adults" to discuss the day and plan for the following day.
8. Make sure the students are at their chosen activity on time and with everything they need.
9. Check with the Guide at breakfast for changes of activities.
10. Help with cooking and cleaning up during mealtime, at Guide's request.
11. 2 adults are expected to sleep with the students. Special accommodations can be made available, if needed, for the R.A.

When to Expect Earth Experiences (E2)

Fall:

- Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary are usually soon after school begins.

Spring:

- Lower Elementary Earth Experiences may be in April or May – Keep in touch with the Guides for the dates.
- Upper Elementary may be in April or May – Keep in touch with the Guide for the dates.

How to Prepare your Child for the Earth Experiences.

1. Positive expectations. Your attitude and expectations have great influence on your

child. Share your own experiences – good or not so good.

2. Included your child in the packing activity. Your child needs to know:
 - What each item is and how to use it.
 - What his/her gear looks like and how to be able to recognize it as their own.
 - Where to find each item, on their own, in their own bag.
3. Prepare your child for traveling and living with others.
 - Courtesy and manners
 - Respect for others – their feelings and their property.
 - How to keep track of his/her belongings in a crowded environment.

What else you might expect from Earth Experiences:

Sleep Gear

- Sleeping bag (must be a good camping bag to 25°F)
- 4 mil. minimum
- Extra blanket (optional)
- Insulated pad (thin camping pad is sufficient)
- No air mattresses, no down bags

Clothing (minimal list, adjust to length of trip)

- 2 pairs of heavy, long pants
- 2 pairs of shorts
- 2 long-sleeved shirts
- Underwear and socks adequate for the length of trip (extra socks recommended)
- 1 pair thermal underwear
- 1-2 warm, long-sleeved sweaters or sweatshirts

- A warm jacket
- Rain gear: jacket with hood, rain pants, boots
- Wool stocking cap or a warm hat
- 2 pairs of tennis shoes
- 1 pair well-fitting, broken-in hiking boots
- 1 pair warm gloves
- 1 pair pajamas
- Broad-brimmed hat for sun protection

ALL CLOTHES AND EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE MARKED WITH THE CHILD’S/ADULTS NAME. FMES IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST ITEMS.

Each Earth Experience is unique. Your child’s Guide will make you aware of the specific needs your child will have at each earth Experience.

How to pack the “Gear”

- Gear should be packed to keep it clean and dry. It should be in soft bags and of a size and weight that the child can carry him/herself.
- **ALL BAGS NEED TO HAVE THE CHILD’S NAME ON THE OUTSIDE.** You would be surprised how these bags look alike!