



# Parent Handbook

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**389 Pembroke Street, Pembroke, NH 03275**  
**[www.greenvalleyschool.com](http://www.greenvalleyschool.com)**



# Green Valley School Parent Handbook

# Green Valley School Parent Handbook

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## INTRODUCTION

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### OUR VISION

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There exists in every child curiosity, creativity and intelligence. Our vision at Green Valley School is that through a carefully prepared environment and a firm foundation in universal values, that every child will grow to their greatest potential to live happy and fulfilled lives and forever remain lifelong learners.

### OUR MISSION

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Our mission is simply to develop a child's inner potential. Our educational materials and our prepared environment provide experiences involving friendship, service, adventure and competency. We also attend with the utmost care to the foundation underlying everything: the student's practical understanding of universal moral values.



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In this way a student:

- Gains a passion for excellence.
- Nurtures his curiosity and creativity.
- Develops a strongly held set of values, which include self-respect, respect for others, honesty, integrity, responsibility, empathy, compassion, kindness, concern for others, warmth, and a sense of community.
- Develops a global perspective and a firm sense of interdependencies.
- Acquires a lifelong commitment to give something back through service to others who live in need.
- Awakens his or her human spirit.

### A SHORT HISTORY OF GREEN VALLEY SCHOOL

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Green Valley School first opened in the winter of 1976 as a single preschool classroom called The Montessori Learning Center. This classroom came about as the result of more than a year of organizational effort by interested parents.

In 1977, Bruce Dow reorganized the school as a not-for-profit corporation and it took up residence in the Concordia Lutheran Church.

Enrollment grew and by 1979 a second classroom was added in space created through remodeling an historic barn adjacent to the church.

In the fall of 1982 we started our first elementary class with a group of fifteen 6 to 9 year old children. Demand for the elementary class forced the move in the fall of 1983 to the present location, a three-acre farm in Pembroke.

In 1985, a new addition provided two more classrooms. We moved out of the facilities at the Lutheran Church and housed a preschool, a lower elementary and the newly started upper elementary all on the same Pembroke site.

From 1986 to 1992 enrollment grew in the three classrooms, we added an elaborate play structure, and we constantly grew and expanded the library. At the



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end of 1992, Bruce Dow left the school as its director and Myrta Gage took on the position.

From 1992 until 1998, under the direction of Myrta Gage, the school gradually grew to include two preschool classes, a toddler program, a lower elementary class and an upper elementary class. There were also a number of changes to the facility including expanded library space, larger coatrooms and expanded outside play space.

1998 was a transition year for Green Valley School. With a large projected shortfall, parents and the Board of Directors came together in a massive effort to rescue the school from its financial troubles. A new administration with Wanda Nichols as the administrator came on board in February. That fall we reopened the school, refurbished and renewed in spirit.



In 2000 we changed our name to Green Valley School. We added a junior high program, and continue to offer the best Montessori education in the area.



## WHY MONTESSORI?

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Studies comparing children attending Montessori schools with those enrolled in traditional programs have focused on the following educational outcomes. Why not conduct your own study of children at Green Valley School?

**Intrinsic Motivation:** Intrinsic motivation is the innate desire that drives the child to engage in an activity for enjoyment and satisfaction.

**Ability to Handle External Authority:** The student is able to accept the ground rules established by external authority as appropriate boundaries in his or her interactions within the school community. These ground rules are internalized, enabling the student to function with or without the presence of the external authority.

**Creativity and Originality of Thought:** Students are confident using the knowledge and skills they have acquired to express their own ideas and creativity. They recognize the value of their own ideas, respect the creative process of others and are willing to share regardless of risk. Students find joy and satisfaction in self-expression.

**Social Responsibility:** Social responsibility requires the awareness that one's actions impact the welfare of the group and that one cannot attain complete independence and autonomy until one contributes constructively in a group process. Individuals are able to make a positive contribution to their community and groups within that community.

**Academic Preparation:** Academic preparation entails providing students with skills that allow them to become independently functioning adults and life-long learners. As students master one level of academic skills they are able to go further and apply themselves to increasingly challenging materials across various academic disciplines. Students recognize that there is always room to grow in their abilities to read, write, speak, and think clearly and thoughtfully. Children learn how to learn by doing—experiential learning. Students are encouraged to explore materials, integrate new concepts, analyze data, and think critically. Academic skills are essential to learning and knowing, not the aim of learning and knowing.

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**Autonomy:** The autonomous child is self directed, composed and morally independent.

**Confidence and Competence:** The confident and competent child perceives himself as being successful, has a realistic understanding of accomplishment and has the ability to learn from his mistakes. Competence is the capability for success through taking risks, reflection and self-correction.

**Spiritual Awareness:** Spiritual awareness is embodied in the child who is compassionate, empathetic, and sensitive to the natural world and the human condition.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Green Valley School is a non-profit 501 C (3) tax-exempt New Hampshire corporation, governed by an Executive Board of Directors.

The primary functions of the Executive Board are:

- To establish the school's institutional mission
- To establish policies under which the school will operate
- To select a chief administrator who will translate the school's mission and objectives into day-to-day operation
- To oversee the on-going operation of the school within board policy and government regulations
- To look to the future and plan for long-term institutional growth and development.

The Board consists of six members and fills vacancies through internal selection of new members.

As this edition of the handbook goes to press, the members of the Executive Board of Directors are:

Joan Freed

Deerfield, NH

Kristen Farrell

Pembroke, NH

Janet Horne

Tega Cay, SC

Clare McCallum

Amesbury, MA

Doran Timm

Concord, NH

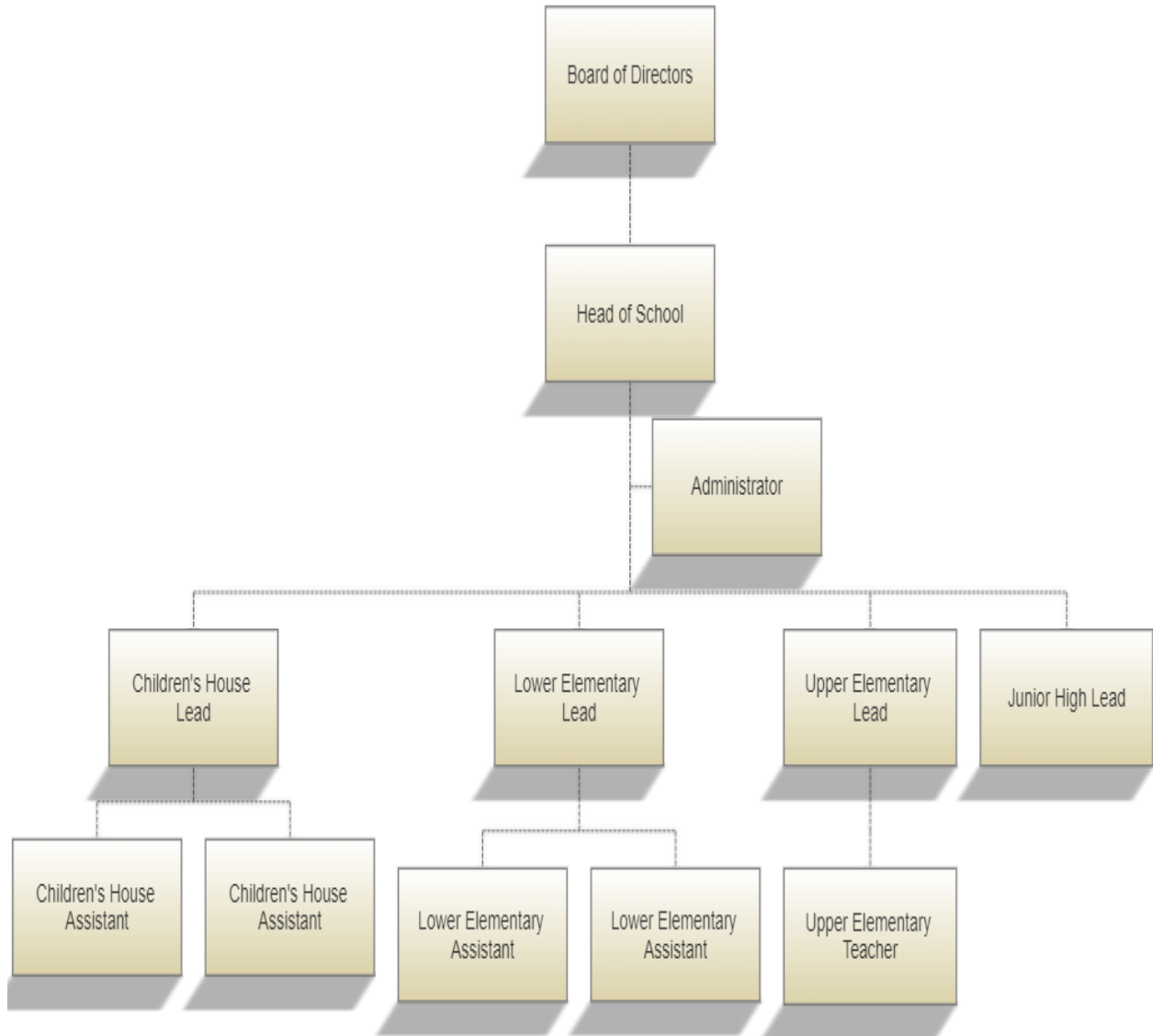
Siza Mtimbiri

Pittsfield, NH

# Green Valley School Parent Handbook

## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

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## DAILY PROCEDURES

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### SCHOOL HOURS

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#### Children's House Class (3 to 6 year olds):

Half Day -- 8:30am to 11:30 am

Traditional Day -- 8:30am to 3:00pm

#### Elementary and Junior High (6 to 15 year olds):

8:30am to 3:00

#### Extended Care

7:30am to 8:30am and 3:00pm to 5:45pm

#### School Office Hours

8:30am to 3:30pm



### ARRIVAL

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School, for all classes, begins at 8:30am. Please be on time because late arrival can be very upsetting for a child. Once the children have begun their work the late arrival feels left out and out of synch. Once your child is comfortable in the classroom, we suggest that you do not accompany them into the school. Part of the Montessori classroom curriculum involves independence in dressing skills and that is difficult to implement with too many adults in the coatroom.

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Please note the one-way traffic in the school driveway and leave your children near the school sidewalk close to the front of the school where they may enter the school grounds safely.

### Saying Good-bye: Tips for Children's House Parents on Separation

Initially, it can be difficult for parents and young children to separate at the beginning of the school year. We have found that a short and positive good-bye is easiest for the child. We do not recommend parents bringing their child into the classroom. The prolonged good-bye often makes the separation more difficult. Feel free to call the school for reassurance that your child has settled in and is adjusting well.

### DISMISSAL

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Students in the Children's House, Elementary and Junior High classes are dismissed from school at 3:00pm. Any student who has not been picked up by 3:15 will be taken to the Extended Care Program. There will be a nominal charge for Extended Care.

Before your child can ever leave campus with anyone who has not been formally designated on the release form you prepared at the beginning of the year, we will need your written permission to allow your child to leave school with this specific individual on a specific date.

We must receive a note, or in an emergency a phone call, from you in order to release your child to someone not on your list. This rule also applies to students going home with school friends. We will require, and photocopy, identification of any unlisted person you've given permission to pick up your child if he or she is not familiar to our staff. Please make sure all of your car-pool drivers are on your release list.

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### EXTENDED CARE

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Morning Care is available at 7:30am. Children's House and Lower Elementary children should go directly to their own classrooms. Upper Elementary and Junior High students who arrive before their teachers need to check in with a supervising teacher when they enter the school.

After School Care is available until 5:45pm, at which time Green Valley School closes for the day. It is essential that all children be picked up by this time. A substantial late fee will be assessed should any child not be picked up by 5:45pm (\$1.00 per minute payable at the time of pick up).

### PARKING

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There are three parking areas available at the school. The area between the barn and the garage, the two sides of the wide part of the driveway in front of the school, and along the fence on Pembroke Hill Rd. Please do not park on the grass in the school grounds. This could present a danger for children in the yard.

Please never block the driveway! It is busier than you may realize. If you will be spending more than 5 minutes in the building or playground, please park between the garage and the barn.

### STORM CLOSINGS

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We often follow the Concord School District in canceling school due to storm conditions. We will email cancellation notifications. Cancellation is also announced on the television station WMUR (channel 9) and listed on their website, [www.wmur.com](http://www.wmur.com).

### MESSAGES AND PHONE CALLS

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Business calls or messages for students or teachers can be made to the office number, 485-8550. Teachers are not available to speak on the phone during class time, but will return calls at noon or after school hours. Where possible, notes

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or emails to teachers indicating any concerns you may have for your child for any given day are preferable to verbal messages which often require interrupting the teacher.





## EVERYDAY LIFE AT GREEN VALLEY SCHOOL

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### DRESS CODE

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Students are expected to dress in outfits that are neat, clean, comfortable, and appropriate for school.

Younger children should dress in clothing that they can put on and fasten for themselves: pullover shirts, elastic waistbands, Velcro sneakers, etc. Young children usually cannot manage the shoulder fasteners found on overalls.

### WHAT STUDENTS NEED AT SCHOOL

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#### Children's House Students:

- An extra set of clothing, including socks, to be kept at school during the year, held in a one-gallon zip-lock bag labeled with your child's name.
- A pair of slippers that will be used for inside activities.
- A light blanket for children who nap consistently.
- An insulated lunch box with a thermos (for hot lunches when appropriate) that the child can open, a plastic cup, and utensils which can be sent home nightly. Include a reusable freezer block to keep perishables fresh.

#### Elementary and Junior High Students:

- Slippers
- Lunch and mid-morning snack

#### Extended Day Students:

- After school snack

## TEXTBOOKS

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The Montessori curriculum is based on library research, rather than the traditional dependence on simplistic textbooks as the primary focus of learning. Much of our students' work in school involves the use of hands-on materials that remain in the classroom or readings in a wide range of reference or source books from the school and public libraries. Some subjects do involve the use of texts that will remain with the children throughout the year.

Naturally, it is essential that the children respect and take care of their books. Students are responsible for lost or damaged texts or library books.

## LOST AND FOUND

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A lost and found area will be maintained in each coatroom. Please take the time to label your child's clothing and lunch box. Every year lots of perfectly good hats, mittens, snow pants, and sweaters are given away because they go unclaimed by children and parents.

## FIELD TRIPS

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Classes will periodically take field trips to local points of interest during the year. They are planned to coordinate with subjects being studied by a class or take advantage of special community events. Notice of upcoming events will be sent home in advance. Field trips may involve a small fee. Parents often help out with transportation and are welcome to join the class in these activities. If you are interested, please speak with your child's teachers.

Please review the tips for safety on the school bus, as all students will be riding on it at one time or another.



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### CAMPING TRIPS

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The Junior High, Upper, and Lower Elementary classes go on a carefully planned overnight camping trip each year. This is a strong community building activity and the children gain experience with setting up tents, stuffing sleeping bags, organizing a frame pack, gathering firewood, starting a fire, fire safety, proper dress and camping gear, cooking in the woods, map and compass reading, etc. Parents have always been very supportive of us in this work and frequently join us on the hike.

### VOLUNTEER FIELD TRIP DRIVERS

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Volunteer field trip drivers must have valid driver's license and automobile insurance (please submit a copy of proof of insurance.)

If you volunteer to drive, please plan to stay with the group during the field trip unless the teachers confirm that you are not needed to chaperone as well.

### BIRTHDAYS

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Children love to celebrate their birthdays with their friends. In the preschool, elementary and junior high classes, we have a special birthday ceremony in which we tell the class the story of the birthday child's life. Please send in a photograph of your child at each year of his life. Some families choose to honor their child's special day with a small gift, such as a book or a game, for the class. This is much appreciated, but certainly not required.

<p>Please do not send birthday invitations to school to be passed out. They should be sent through the mail or by email. You will find the addresses of Green Valley School families in the family directory.</p>
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## STUDENT HEALTH

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### MEDICAL INFORMATION

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Your physician must fill out the New Hampshire Child Health Form before the first day of school. By law a child must have all state required immunizations unless you submit a religious or medical exemption form. You may contact the school office if you have any questions.

### WHEN YOUR CHILD IS ILL

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Whenever your child is ill and won't be coming to school, please email or call the office between 7:30 and 9:00 a.m. to let us know that he or she will be absent so we don't worry.

Students with infectious diseases, such as chicken pox, strep throat, etc., must stay out of school until the contagious stage has passed. For the sake of the other children's health, it is vital that you let the office know your child's doctor's diagnosis as soon as possible.

In the case of a common cold, the student should remain at home as long as fever is present, or if there is a sore throat, eye infection, or severe nasal excretions. Students with symptoms of vomiting, diarrhea, or undiagnosed skin rash should remain at home also. The student will be sent home if any of these symptoms appear while at school.

### IF YOUR CHILD GETS SICK AT SCHOOL

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If your child ever feels ill, we will take them to the office. If they seem to be fairly sick, have a temperature over 100, or if after a brief stay they feel too ill to return to class, we will contact you to arrange for them to be picked up right away. We understand how difficult it can be for working parents to break free during the day, and yet all of our children get ill from time to time. You will want to make arrangements with a friend or relative in advance.



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Remember: Because colds, flu, and other childhood illnesses spread from child to child with alarming speed, please do not send your child to school if he has a fever, nausea, or any other symptoms of illness.

### MEDICATION

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Except under extraordinary situations, we prefer not to administer medication at school.

Antibiotics and other medications should be scheduled so that doses are due during hours when the student is at home. When children are so ill as to require frequent medication, they probably shouldn't be in school for a full day.

If your child requires medication, please fill out an authorization form for such and give it, and the medication, to your child's teacher.

### EMERGENCY CARE

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Most of our faculty and staff are trained in first aid and CPR.

In the event of any medical situation that requires immediate medical attention, we will want your child to see a doctor right away. Please remember to keep your emergency information form up-to-date in the office. We must be able to reach you at any time during the school day.

If your child needs immediate medical attention, and you cannot be reached, your emergency form authorizes us to seek medical care in your name. We will have the local emergency squad transport your child to the emergency room at Concord Hospital. Naturally, we will continue our efforts to contact you.



## PARENTS AND THE SCHOOL

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### GREEN VALLEY SCHOOL—A COMMUNITY BUILT ON TRUST, FRIENDSHIP AND RESPECT

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Once upon a time we all lived in a “Community.” Children were born, grew up, got jobs, married, and raised their own children in the same town. They attended the same schools that their mothers and fathers attended as children. Perhaps they even had some of the same teachers that their parents had as children. And, for the most part, kids grew up to be decent, honest members of society. Anytime they strayed just slightly off the straight and narrow path, there was always someone who knew them and their family who would set them straight. Some people might consider this “meddling,” but in many ways that “meddling” was a demonstration of “caring.”

In our fast-paced and very mobile society, it’s difficult to establish the community bonds that unite people. Today many of us wish that we could recreate that same type of environment.

Once we developed a sense of community simply because we lived together in the same town or neighborhood. Today, we may only know a handful of our neighbors. Our friends and, more importantly, our children’s friends move out of one neighborhood into another, or even out of town as our careers dictate. Those of us who cherish the old sense of close-knit community have to create our own by joining together with people with whom we share similar interests, concerns, and values.

You will often hear the word ‘community’ used to describe Green Valley School. It offers, for those who wish one, an authentic community. Relationships tend to grow strong and friendship runs deep here. Teachers, students, and parents enjoy an old-fashioned sense of friendship and collaboration.

This opportunity for continuity, stability, and a true sense of community within the school means a great deal to many of us at Green Valley School. Students will know that they belong, that they are respected, and that they are cared for not only by their parents, but also by the larger community of fellow students, teachers, and other parents in the school.

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Green Valley School brings together families who have chosen to identify with a common commitment to the shared concerns, values, and expectations they have for their children. We come from different backgrounds, but our sense of community exists in spite of, or perhaps because of it. Green Valley School teaches our children to understand and appreciate cultural differences and shared human values: peace, independence, human dignity, and a celebration of life.

In a time when it is often difficult to establish the same positive feelings of continuity, unification, and stability in our own neighborhoods, Green Valley School is succeeding in recreating that positive sense of identity, mutual caring and concern among its students, teachers, and parents that truly define Green Valley School as a community.

### VOLUNTEERING—THE GIFT OF TIME AND TALENT

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Parents play a crucial role at Green Valley School. This is a community of parents and educators (many of whom are parents here too). Our ideas and input literally help to shape the school. Few schools are so open and responsive to suggestions and concerns.

Green Valley School strongly encourages families to feel at home and to participate in the broader life of the school. There are some things that even money can't buy, and one of the most valuable contributions that families make to Green Valley School is the gift of their time and expertise. Parents, grandparents, and friends of the school are often found helping out in the office, assisting in the

classrooms, serving as field trip drivers, planning the next special event, coaching, or serving on parents' associations.

Parents and grandparents who give of their time and talent share with their families special memories of experiences and friendships that endure well beyond their children's graduation.



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### A FEW WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN HELP OUT AT GREEN VALLEY SCHOOL

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- Add your name to our substitute list.
- Lend your time and support to our fundraising efforts.
- Help the teachers organize field trips or special lessons.
- Help organize special events.
- Volunteer your time to help the school prepare major mailings.
- Share your talents and special interests, such as a musical instrument that you play, a second language that you speak, a craft that you enjoy, or a field that you've studied.
- Volunteer your time to coach a team or after school club.
- Help to organize a reunion for former students and their families.

Green Valley School depends on our combined talents.

### SPECIAL EVENTS

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During the year we find various ways to invite parents into the school. We would like your suggestions, support and participation in these activities. Some of the possible/planned events are:

- **Parent Meetings:** Montessori philosophy, informal discussions of child development, curriculum demonstrations, understanding discipline, etc.
- **Family Night:** in January the children bring you to school to demonstrate the range of materials with which they work.
- **Arts Night:** an evening of musical performances by class groups and individual students, along with a display of artwork that has been created during the school year



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- Field Day: games and competition for the children and parents.
- Barn Dance: old and young contra dancing together in the barn.

Please consult the Green Valley School Calendar for more specific information.

### OBSERVING THE CLASSES AT WORK

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Parents are invited and even urged to observe the children at work. Contact your child's teachers to let them know when you would like to visit. Unless arrangements have been made in advance, they may not have time to speak with you. You will want to see the class in its normal routine and not responding to the novelty of your presence; therefore, when you visit, please sit in the designated visitor's chair in the classroom. A great deal can be learned by patient and quiet observation of your child and his or her classmates at work.

During the first sensitive weeks of the school year, students (especially the younger children) are familiarizing themselves with a new routine and new environment. For this reason, we ask parents to avoid class observations during this period.

### POINTS TO LOOK FOR WHEN YOU OBSERVE

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As you sit down to carefully observe in a Montessori classroom for the first time, what catches your eye? What do you notice on your second or third visit?

How is the classroom organized? What do you notice about the layout of activities, furnishings, and shelves?

Pay attention to the way the adults interact with the children. What do you notice?

Perhaps during your observation you will see the teacher correct or discipline a child. What do you notice?

As you observe, try to look for any unwritten rules and procedures that the children are following. What do you notice?

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Focus on a particular child other than your own. Follow his or her work during the course of at least a half hour. How do they spend their time? How does he or she select work?

Hopefully you will see the teachers present several different lessons during your visits to either small groups or individual children. What do you notice about the way they teach?

What do you notice about the educational materials on the shelves and how the children work with them?

What about the Montessori materials seems to be most attractive to the children?

Focus on a few different Montessori materials. What concepts or skills does each isolate?

How do the teachers introduce the children to the materials? Try to catch one child learning from another.

Focus on the control of error built into several of the materials. How do they self-correct? Try to observe a child correcting their own work through the built-in control of error.

As you observe the children at work, do you sense that there are certain tasks that the children prefer? Are there any that they seem to avoid?

How do you as an adult respond to the Montessori materials? Are you drawn to them? Do you wish that you could have gone to a Montessori school?

What sort of interactions do you notice between the younger and older students?

During your observation, did the teachers spend most of their time with the younger or older students? If so, try to determine what factors led them to concentrate most of their attention on one age group or another? Do the teachers anticipate that the focus will switch? What conditions are they looking for?

How does your child feel about being in a multi-age classroom?

What advantages and disadvantages do you see in multi-age grouping?

### SO, WHAT DID YOU DO IN SCHOOL TODAY?

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Have you experienced frustration when asking this question? Did you get the common answer, “nothing??” Or possibly they tell you every day that they did the same thing such as play-dough or spooning beans. Don’t be alarmed. We can assure you that your child is very busy at school doing a variety of learning activities designed to support his development.

Young children often have difficulty talking about what they do at school. They have done so many things that they often cannot sort out the specifics. Sometimes they don’t remember the name of the materials that they used, such as the trinomial cube, the metal insets, or the addition strip board.

In addition to the difficulty children may have talking about their school experience, you may have noted that not many papers come home. They can be doing complex math, word building, writing in a sand tray or on chalkboards, geography, and science lessons, all with manipulative materials that will have no work papers to show you their progress.

### So how can you find out what your child is doing in school?

- Ask your child questions that are more specific. “Did you do a counting lesson today? Did you build the tower or work with colors?”
- Occasionally park after school and bring your child into the classroom to show you their favorite lessons.
- Set up a time to observe your child in class.
- Read a Montessori book.
- Stop in after school and talk to your child’s teacher, or set up an appointment for a formal conference if you prefer.
- Come to school meetings and workshops.
- Play school with your child at home. Sometimes children will show you through their play what they are learning.
- Be patient. In time it will be obvious that your child is growing and learning every day.

“JOY IS THE INDICATION OF INTERNAL GROWTH.”

Maria Montessori



## ACADEMIC POLICIES

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### CONFERENCES

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The School schedules conferences during the late fall and again in the spring. At this time you will be given information about your child's work, their general development, what your child's teacher sees as strengths and weaknesses, and what you might do at home. Please make every effort to be available on the scheduled conference day.

To encourage the best possible relationship between parents and teachers, either party may request additional conferences.

### REPORTS

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A Progress Report will be sent at the end of September. Parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled in November and March. A check-list report, indicating both academic and personal development, will be sent home in November, before conferences, and at the end of the year. This report does not demonstrate levels of development relative to the other children in the classroom, but only points out what skills have been introduced, whether or not they've been mastered, and how well their social skills have developed.

### HOMEWORK

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As a policy, we do not assign homework to elementary or junior high students unless it becomes apparent that the lack thereof will cause them to fall too far behind grade level expectations. However, a number of children will request homework from their teachers, either because they wish to imitate their neighborhood friends, or because they want to deepen their involvement in a particular subject matter. Sometimes they wish to share their work with their parents.



### TESTING

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The intent of Green Valley School is to educate the whole child. To be “whole” there must exist a balance between the physical, mental, emotional (including social) and spiritual aspects of our being. We use testing (achievement tests) as part of our curriculum, beginning in second grade, and view it as a way of gathering more information to help us understand your child. The numerical results of these tests are not a conclusive statement of who your child is. They are but one piece of a beautifully intricate puzzle. We expose students to this testing in part to prepare them for having to deal with tests at a later point. How to take a test and practical experience with tests are part of our curriculum.

### PROMOTION FROM ONE LEVEL TO THE NEXT

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Students at Green Valley School do not follow a preset curriculum for each grade level. They proceed at their own pace. As a result, the concept that a child is a first, second, or sixth grader, doesn't have the same meaning as it would in a traditional school.

At the same time, we realize that children in our culture are accustomed to referring to themselves by their grade level.

As a college preparatory school, Green Valley School has established expectations for the normal baseline achievement that we expect to see in our students. While they may surpass those standards, these represent a normal index of skills and knowledge that we expect most Montessori students to display.

Students will normally be promoted from one grade level to the next at the end of the school year if they have accomplished the goals and norms that we have established.

Advancement to the next class level (for example from the Children's House to the Lower Elementary level) is based on an evaluation of the child's total academic, social, emotional, and physical/motor development. Because the classes can individually tailor the child's academic program to a large degree, regardless of which group he or she is placed in, the most important criteria for advancement to an older group is often the student's social adjustment, independence, work



habits, and maturity. We always invite parents to work with us in reaching these decisions, and focus on what will be in the child's best interests.

### PARENT/STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

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A "grievance" under this policy shall mean a complaint which has been filed by a student or by a student's parent, on his/her behalf. Normal channels of communication from student to teacher to administrator to Board of Directors shall be used whenever feasible, in seeking clarification of questions of concern to the student, before the grievance procedure is utilized. The primary purpose of this procedure is to secure at the earliest level possible, equitable solutions to a complaint, if the complaint is justifiable. The proceedings shall be kept confidential at each level of this procedure.

**Level One** Any Student or employee who has a complaint shall attempt promptly to resolve the complaint informally by discussion with the individuals involved and school administration.

**Level Two** If these informal efforts do not resolve the complaint at level one, the student may file his/her complaint in writing with the head of school within thirty (30) days of the original attempt to resolve the complaint, and in no event later than sixty (60) days after the action or set of circumstances occurred against which the complaint is directed. The complaint shall describe in as much detail as possible the facts of the situation. The administrator shall keep a written record of the discussion at this formal level and provide a copy to the student involved. The head of school shall arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the written complaint and subsequent meetings may be scheduled as agreed by both parties. The head of school shall provide an answer in writing to the complainant within ten (10) working days of the final meeting regarding the complaint.

**Level Three** If the complaint is not resolved at level two, the student may file his/her complaint in writing with the Board of Directors (in care of the school administrator.) The complaint shall be filed within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the level two decision. The board shall consider the matter at a meeting within forty-five (45) working days of the receipt of the complaint. The complainant and the administration and/or staff member (s) shall each have the right to present

## Green Valley School Parent Handbook

his/her position to the Board. Upon such hearing before the Board, either party upon two (2) days' notice in writing to the other party, may have counsel present and shall have full opportunity to present all relevant evidence. The Board shall within thirty (30) calendar days after the meeting advise the complainant in writing of its action with regard to the complaint.







## GROUND RULES

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### GREEN VALLEY SCHOOL'S FUNDAMENTAL GROUND RULES

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As a school founded on the Montessori ideals, we assume that every person deserves respect. As both a humanistic and college-preparatory school, Green Valley School expects students to demonstrate kindness, courtesy, and respect toward the school and fellow students, parents, teachers, and staff.

The goal of all Montessori education is to establish safe, warm, and caring environments. In these, we teach students positive and appropriate ways to handle situations, rather than to assume that misbehavior and punishment are inevitable. We strive to develop a strong sense of self-discipline, responsibility and courtesy. Lastly, we also maintain an atmosphere conducive to peaceful studies.

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When anyone at Green Valley School finds it difficult to follow the school's expectations about interpersonal conduct, we will quickly bring the student, family, and staff together to work toward a solution.

We follow an approach based on empowerment, mutual respect, and trust. Neither corporal punishment nor physical or emotional intimidation is allowed at Green Valley School. If anyone consciously or flagrantly violates the social contract regarding safety, kindness, and courtesy, our response is to identify the appropriate and natural consequences of their actions. For example, if something is broken, it must be replaced or repaired, preferably not by the parents alone, but by the student whose actions led to the damage.

Any student who repeatedly breaks the ground rules, or who on even one occasion endangers the health and safety of others, may be asked to leave the school by the Director.

We have worked together to create a system of ground rules and discipline that is firm, fair, and consistent in order to help students maintain the school's values and character. All students are expected to adhere and respect them to protect one another.

Our ground rules are essentially the same at every level of the school, although the language and emphasis changes somewhat for the older student. This is how we explain them to younger students. Please review these rules with your child:

- Be kind and gentle to one another.
- Everyone has a right to privacy and concentration. Please don't disturb anyone who is trying to concentrate on his or her work.
- Everyone has a right to his or her personal belongings. Please do not touch anything that is not yours without the owner's permission. If you accidentally lose or break something, please replace it without a fuss.
- Everyone here has the right to feel safe and secure. Please don't express anger or upset feelings in a way that insults or threatens someone else.
- Everyone here has the right to be physically safe. Please don't do anything that might hurt or endanger anyone.
- At Green Valley School, no one is allowed to fight, push, trip, or use any other aggressive behavior.
- Use the playground equipment as intended.

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- Do not climb on the rock wall or move the rocks.
- Let everyone who wants to play join in your games.
- Stop chasing or playing scary games when asked.
- Please don't tackle or trip one another in any games.
- Keep sand and sand toys in the sandbox.
- Do not throw sand or dirt.
- Do not leave your teacher's supervision without permission.
- Do not enter the parking lot or ever leave campus without an adult.
- Please do not roughhouse or play carelessly.
- Play tag and ball games in the designated play areas.
- Keep sticks and stones on the ground. Don't pick them up and never throw them.
- Please put all balls, ropes, and other outdoor equipment away when you are finished playing with them.
- Children must be carefully monitored by their parents/ guardians when playing on the school grounds after school. They must follow all of the rules above.

### GROUND RULES FOR ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH STUDENTS

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- Respect one another: We expect everyone at Green Valley School to treat everyone else in the school community—faculty, staff, students, and parents—with kindness and respect both in words and actions.
- Respect authority: We expect students to comply with teachers' directions. We further expect students to seek appropriate methods of appeal should they ever believe it to be necessary.
- You must arrange to arrive at school promptly every day.
- Dress: We expect students to dress appropriately, and in good taste, within the dress code guidelines.
- Drugs and alcohol: Although we assume that it will never happen, as the school begins to extend through the higher grades it seems important to be clear about our position. We expect our students to avoid any and all contact with drugs or alcohol. This is defined to include the use, possession, or sale of any controlled substance (drug) ---or alcoholic beverage. The possession, or sale of any alcohol or controlled substance,

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either during the school day or during any school-sponsored trip, party, or function, may be immediate grounds for expulsion.

- **Violence and Harassment:** Green Valley School cannot tolerate any irresponsible and dangerous behavior, acts of violence, threats of violence, emotional or sexual harassment, or verbal abuse directed toward anyone. It is absolutely illegal and forbidden to bring or carry a weapon to school or to use any common object as a weapon.
- **Respect for the property of others:** Any theft, vandalism, or damage to property, whether deliberate or accidental, must be repaired or repaid.
- **Care of the environment:** The entire school community (teachers, students, and administrators) is responsible for helping to maintain the order and neatness of the school environment.
- Everyone is expected to help maintain the cleanliness and order of the school.
- If something is spilled, please clean it up right away.
- Everyone is expected to help keep the school litter free by picking up any trash or belongings that you find strewn around. Do not throw trash on the ground, indoors or out.
- Students are expected to help with the daily clean-up in their class areas.

### RULES FOR SAFETY ON THE SCHOOL BUS

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Please be sure that you understand and can support the following basic safety rules. Safety is our prime concern, and we must insist that every student follow certain rules of safe and courteous conduct while riding our school bus.

- Passengers must wear their seat belts at all times.
- Stay in your seat at all times while the bus is moving.
- Don't leave your seat to get off until the bus has come to a complete stop.
- For everyone's safety, do not shout, engage in horseplay, or switch seats during the trip.
- Never stick your hand (or anything else) out of the bus window.
- Never throw anything out of the bus.
- Do not play with sharp objects, such as pens or pencils, on the bus.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus unless the driver gives permission.



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- Every student is expected to set a good example for the younger children. Watch your language and behavior. Do not curse, act foolish, or break any school rules.
- Please use earphones if you wish to listen to a radio or music player on the bus.
- Remember that all of the normal school rules apply on the bus.

### FIRE DRILLS

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The office will conduct random fire drills monthly.

The alarm will be a special bell, which will ring continuously in the event of a fire or drill.

When the bell rings continuously, all classes will dismiss into designated areas and remain in their groups.

The teachers will make certain the room is empty and close the doors.

The teachers will join the class outside the building, take attendance, and notify the office of attendance.

Students and teachers are expected to remain grouped in the designated area until informed that they may return to class.

### BRINGING A GUEST TO SCHOOL

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Students are welcome to bring a friend to school for a visit, although certain arrangements must be made at least one day in advance with the teachers and office. There may be reasons why we may not be able to have a guest on a given day, such as exams or a field trip.

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Before the visiting day, the visiting student's parents will need to complete an emergency information form and submit to the office a note giving their permission for their child to visit Green Valley School.

If you would like your child to invite a friend to spend a day with them at Green Valley School, he or she will need to remember that the visitor is their personal guest, and they will be responsible for their guest's comfort. They should see that their guest is not left alone. Students may invite only one guest to school on any given day.

Guests will be expected to follow the school's ground rules and dress code.



## FINANCIAL POLICIES

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### TUITION POLICIES

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Green Valley School is a non-profit organization completely dependent on tuition as its principal source of income. Student accounts must be kept up-to-date. The school will be forced to withhold any and all services to students whose accounts have fallen behind unless written arrangements have been made for deferred payment. Your cooperation is essential and very much appreciated.

Should it become necessary to hire an outside agency to collect delinquent accounts, the collection fee will be added to the outstanding balance.

### LATE PAYMENT AND RETURNED CHECKS

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If scheduled payments are more than ten days in arrears, the School will not permit the student to attend class.

There will be a \$25.00 charge for all returned checks.

### STUDENT WITHDRAWAL

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Should you wish to withdraw your child during the school year, due to an unexpected move, financial difficulty, etc., we require a two-week notification.

### RE-ENROLLMENT

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Invitations to continue at Green Valley School are normally automatic, but are not guaranteed. Decisions are made by the administration and faculty, based on an annual review of each student's academic progress, social and emotional development, any special needs (if applicable), along with the attitudes and values expressed by the child and parents. As always, our goal is to help each child and family find the perfect match between the student, home, and school.

Re enrollment material will be mailed home in February and is due back at the school by March 15th along with the annual registration deposit. If the school has not received a student's re enrollment materials by March 15th, his or her space

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will be made available to new students who have applied for admission to the school.

No student may re enroll if there is an outstanding balance remaining on his or her account.

### TAX ID NUMBER

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Some preschool tuition may qualify for a childcare tax credit. Consult with your accountant for more information.

Our tax ID# is 02-0335895





## LEGAL STATEMENTS

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### RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION POLICY

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Green Valley School does not use restraint and seclusion techniques.

### NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

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Green Valley School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational programs or admissions policies.

### ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

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The Manager Plan for Asbestos is in the School Office.

