



*making a difference ~ one student at a time*

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## Student & Family Handbook

2018-2019 School Year

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**[www.hillviewmontessori.org](http://www.hillviewmontessori.org)**

*The mission of Hill View Montessori Charter Public School is to provide a grade K-8 public education that promotes academic excellence using the Montessori philosophy.*

## Table of Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>ABOUT HILL VIEW MONTESSORI.....</b>               | <b>1</b>  |
| Who We Are, Mission, Core Values.....                | 1         |
| About MA Charter Schools.....                        | 2         |
| <b>CHARACTERISTICS OF HILL VIEW MONTESSORI .....</b> | <b>3</b>  |
| Where did the Montessori Method Originate? .....     | 3         |
| The HVM Learning Environment.....                    | 4         |
| Board of Trustees and Governance.....                | 6         |
| Accountability .....                                 | 6         |
| Funding .....  | 7         |
| The Community Partnership Organization .....         | 7         |
| <b>ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT.....</b>                 | <b>6</b>  |
| Enrollment Policy.....                               | 6         |
| Applications .....                                   | 7         |
| Lottery .....  | 7         |
| Wait List .....                                      | 7         |
| <b>GOING TO SCHOOL .....</b>                         | <b>8</b>  |
| School Year and School Day .....                     | 8         |
| Arrival .....  | 8         |
| Dismissal .....                                      | 8         |
| Attendance Guidelines.....                           | 9         |
| Absence Procedures .....                             | 9         |
| Absences During Testing .....                        | 10        |
| Tardiness.....                                       | 10        |
| Early Dismissal.....                                 | 10        |
| Before Care and After Care .....                     | 10        |
| School Closings or Delays .....                      | 11        |
| Snacks, Lunch and Celebrations.....                  | 10-11     |
| <b>SCHOOL CULTURE .....</b>                          | <b>13</b> |
| Social Events.....                                   | 13        |
| Appropriate Dress.....                               | 13        |
| Cell Phone Policy.....                               | 13        |
| Personal Property .....                              | 14        |
| Library Use .....                                    | 14        |
| Computer Use.....                                    | 14        |
| Video Taping/Photography .....                       | 14        |
| Code of Conduct.....                                 | 15-22     |
| <b>COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL .....</b>   | <b>23</b> |
| Wednesday Notes.....                                 | 23        |
| HVM Website .....                                    | 24        |
| Parent Education .....                               | 24        |
| Parent Conferences .....                             | 24        |
| Observations .....                                   | 24        |

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Communicating with Staff.....   | 24           |
| Grievance Procedures .....  | 24           |
| <b>SUPPORT SERVICES .....</b>   | <b>25</b>    |
| District Curriculum Accommodation Plan .....                                    | 25           |
| Teacher Assistance Teams (TAT).....   | 25           |
| Special Needs .....   | 25           |
| 504 Plans.....  | 25           |
| Counseling Services .....   | 26           |
| Health Services .....   | 26           |
| <b>HEALTH SERVICES .....</b>  | <b>25</b>    |
| School Physician.....   | 25           |
| Mandated Periodic Health Screenings.....  | 25           |
| Procedures for Illness and Infectious Diseases.....                             | 26           |
| Physical Exam, Immunizations, and Pre-School Vision Screening Requirements..... | 26           |
| Medication Administration at School .....                                       | 26           |
| Medication on Field Trips.....  | 27           |
| Allergy Awareness Policy.....   | 27           |
| Children with Asthma, Allergies or any other Special Medical Needs.....         | 28           |
| Emergency Treatment Plan.....   | 28           |
| Contacting the Health Office.....   | 28           |
| <b>SCHOOL SAFETY AND EMERGENCIES .....</b>                                      | <b>30</b>    |
| Locked Doors.....   | 30           |
| Required Background Checks (CORI).....  | 30           |
| Fire Drills .....   | 30           |
| Emergency Evacuation or Lock-Down .....   | 30           |
| Fire, Weapons, Illegal Substances and Tobacco.....                              | 30           |
| Child Abuse and Neglect .....   | 30           |
| Harassment and Discrimination.....  | 29-30        |
| Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) Plan.....                        | 30           |
| Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) .....                           | 31           |
| Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA).....                                | 31           |
| Physical Restraint .....  | 32           |
| <b>Appendixes.....</b>  | <b>33-53</b> |
| A: Discipline for Students with Disabilities                                    |              |
| B: Reflection (Accountability) Worksheets - Middle School, LE, UE               |              |
| C: Expulsion Policy   |              |
| D: Non-Discrimination Policy  |              |
| E: DCAP (District Curriculum Accommodation Plan)                                |              |
| Parent Sign-Off Form  |              |

## **ABOUT US**

### **Who We Are**

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School (HVM) is a public school serving students primarily from Haverhill, Massachusetts. HVM was established by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) under the Educational Reform Act of 1993. The purpose of the organization is entirely educational, operating in full compliance with all laws and regulations governing charter schools.

### **Mission**

*The mission of Hill View Montessori Charter Public School is to provide a grade K-8 public education that promotes academic excellence using the Montessori philosophy. In partnership with teachers and parents, children will attain high levels of academic, personal and social achievement and so prepared, become constructive contributors to our community.*

HVM was awarded its charter in 2003 and opened the following year with 120 students in grades K-3. Each subsequent year an additional grade was added so that full enrollment of 296 students with a K-8 grade span was reached in 2010. HVM was allowed an amendment to our total enrollment and will expand to 306 students for September 2012. The school was founded by a volunteer group of educators, parents and city activists who had met through their children's pre-school. The founding group believed in the value of Montessori education and worked earnestly to make public Montessori education available to all children in Haverhill regardless of socioeconomic status or educational background.

As a Montessori school, HVM offers its students differentiated curriculum and instruction in multi-age classrooms. Learning is maximized by teaching to student's individual academic level and by accessing each child's unique learning style. Classrooms contain a complete complement of scientifically-designed Montessori manipulatives and resource materials to facilitate, inquiry and provide a concrete understanding of abstract concepts. HVM is also committed to character education and integrates this into the Montessori classroom with ongoing lessons in grace, courtesy, respect and responsibility.

Students enroll in HVM by means of a public lottery for Massachusetts residents with preference first given to siblings of currently attending students and second to residents of Haverhill. Finally, non-residents are offered admission if there are no siblings or residents on the waitlist and there is space available.

*For the school's Enrollment Policy, see the HVM website.*

### **Core Values**

The HVM core values are drawn from the mission statement and are used as guiding principles to direct the work of the school. The core values are organized into four overarching categories as listed below.

#### **Preeminent Public Montessori**

- Provide a free Montessori education enhanced to ensure alignment with the MA Curriculum Frameworks
- Promote high levels of student achievement
- Measure achievement in multiple ways and use assessment data to inform instruction
- Promote a school wide culture of respect, open and honest communication, high expectations, and continuous growth through self-reflection
- Welcome learners representative of the diversity in Haverhill, including socio-economic, cultural, and learning needs and styles

#### **Holistic Student Development**

- Support students' personal, social, and academic development
- Engage students in activities that teach them how to be competent, caring contributors to our community
- Model and promote Montessori values of grace, courtesy, respect, and responsibility
- Teach cooperative learning and conflict resolution skills
- Respect each student's unique learning style by individually tailoring learning supports

- Foster students love for learning
- Encourage students to take ownership for their academic and personal development

### **School-strengthening Collaboration**

- Create teacher-parent-student partnerships to support student learning
- Involve and vest parents, teachers, and students in the school’s decision making process and volunteer efforts
- Develop partnerships with local agencies, community service organizations, and businesses to enhance children’s health and learning (e.g. internships, service learning, etc.)
- Share information and best practices with other educators and community members

### **High Quality Staff**

- Require lead teachers to hold Montessori certification and to obtain highly qualified status
- Educate all staff regarding Montessori philosophy and HVM curriculum, culture and processes
- Maintain high standards for accomplished teaching and learning, and provide adequate compensation

### **About MA Charter Schools**

Charter schools are public schools started by parents, teachers, businesses and/or community leaders. Massachusetts charter public schools, authorized by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, are public schools that operate tuition-free for students residing in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In Massachusetts there are two types of charter public schools: Commonwealth Charter Schools and Horace Mann Charter Schools. Both operate independently of the local school system but Horace Mann Charter Public Schools must have approval of the local school committee and teachers’ union in order to open. HVM is a Commonwealth Charter Public Schools and is governed by a Board of Trustees which functions independent of the local school system. Commonwealth charters do not typically operate with a teachers' union. All Massachusetts charter public schools are governed by a board of trustees.

The application process for charter public schools is rigorous. It is during this application process that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education determines whether a charter school application is thorough, thoughtful and executable. If awarded a charter, the grant is for a five year period. At the end of five years, charter schools must apply for re-chartering.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF HVM**

#### **Where did the Montessori Method Originate?**

Maria Montessori was born in Chiaravalle Italy in August 1870. She became the first female physician in Italy upon graduation from medical school in 1896. Through her medical practices and clinical observations she analyzed how children learn and concluded that children “build themselves from what they find in their environment”.

In early 1900, Montessori shifted her medical career and returned to school to study psychology and philosophy. In 1906 she began working with sixty young children of working parents in the San Lorenzo ghetto of Rome. Here she founded the first “children’s house” or Casa dei Bambini. Through scientific observation of these children and note of their ability to easily absorb knowledge from their surroundings and manipulative materials, Maria Montessori’s methodology was born.

Her vision and innovative techniques, known as the Montessori Method, have produced positive results throughout the world. In the US there are approximately 5,000 Montessori schools of which about 500 are public.

The Montessori name is not a trademark and is associated with many organizations. Unfortunately, there are schools that are “influenced” by Montessori but that actually bear little resemblance to schools that have a closer lineage to Maria Montessori’s intended methodology.

## **The HVM Learning Environment**

The HVM learning environment is premised on the Montessori Method and emphasizes the development of the whole child. It recognizes that children have a desire to learn and, given the proper environment, they develop intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically. This “prepared environment”, as Dr. Montessori called it, includes not only the classroom and materials, but the social setting or atmosphere as well as preparation of the adults who guide the children.

The educational characteristics that support HVM’s mission and distinguish this school are:

### ***Individualized, Differentiated Instruction***

Montessori education is built upon the tenet that all learners are individuals - in style, pace, and interests. At HVM, classrooms and class work are structured so that teachers can deliver instruction individually or in small groups. This maximizes curricular options so that students can progress at a rate that meets their needs and challenges their abilities. HVM’s individualized curriculum allows children to strive for their own personal best.

### ***Concrete Representation of Abstract Concepts Using Didactic Materials***

Montessori instruction progresses from concrete explorations and concept development to abstract understandings. Elementary classrooms have an abundance of carefully sequenced Montessori materials to support this learning progression. A majority of the materials are didactic, or self-correcting, and allow for greater autonomy of the child, provide opportunities for the child to learn by making corrections; and reduce the emphasis on competition to learning. As children progress toward middle school and develop higher-level thinking, Montessori materials are increasingly reinforced by research and reference materials and information technology used to pursue independent research projects.

### ***Prepared Environment***

HVM teachers facilitate learning by carefully observing each child’s behavior and growth, then guiding each child using changes in the environment, invitations for inquiry and direct instruction. Teachers work to create and sustain a classroom and school culture where demonstrations of respect, initiative, risk-taking and persistence in learning are the norm. In the younger grades, teachers work with individuals or small groups of children. In middle school, teachers provide more whole class instruction, and continue to challenge and extend the self-directed habits of the elementary years as students begin to direct the development of their progress and pursue research and service learning projects.

### ***Mixed-Age Classes and Looping***

Students are grouped into mixed-age classes that span three years in the elementary program and two in the middle school program. Mixed-age classrooms provide numerous benefits including a greater range of curriculum options and reduced competition. Older children mentor and teach younger children, which builds confidence and competence and encourages leadership. Peer tutoring also promotes cooperation and a sense of community. In addition, students have the potential to remain with the same teacher for the duration of the Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, or Middle School program. The process of “looping” allows teachers to begin the school year without lost time determining students’ academic strengths and weaknesses and their learning styles.

Kindergarten is the only single-age group within the school because students should be grouped with children starting at 2.9, which would be preschool age.

### ***Character Education***

Character education is integral to the Montessori classroom and curriculum. Children are given opportunities to grow both personally and socially. Classroom life emphasizes the Montessori values of grace, courtesy, respect and responsibility. Teachers and staff members model these values throughout the school and expect them from students and parents as well.

With the assistance of the School Social Worker, HVM has also integrated the Second Step and/or Steps to Respect into each level. These programs teach social emotional skills such as empathy, emotion management, and problem solving. Second Step focuses on friendships, recognizing feelings, and how to recognize, refuse, and report bullying. These programs have been added into the curriculum as a response to state requirements, but HVM has seen the students respond and apply what they have learned their lessons.

### **Community Connection**

As children grow, they learn in and contribute to increasingly expansive and diverse human and environmental communities. Students at HVM first come to understand the world and their part in it by discovering community within the classroom, then by contributing to the life of the school and caring for the surrounding plant and animal habitats, and finally, by supporting the improvement of the larger community beyond the school. As a result, community service and service learning are important parts of the curriculum throughout HVM

### **Integrated Teaching and Learning**

Montessori education emphasizes interdisciplinary teaching to encourage connections across the curriculum and to students' personal lives. Emphasis is placed on projects that require open-ended research and in-depth study using primary and secondary resources as well as other materials. When students understand the purpose for and connection among their activities, they become motivated learners.

- **Mathematics**

Math is initially presented through manipulative materials with the student progressing from the concrete to the abstract concepts when he/she shows readiness to do so. Further, the study of mathematics includes real-life word problems and applications.

- **Language Arts**

English/Language Arts emphasizes reading skills and includes fluency, comprehension and vocabulary as well as the etymology of words, syntax and formations of words. The writing process exposes students to a variety of writing forms including composition, creative, expository, persuasive, descriptive, technical, informational, and narrative. It also includes oral forms such as debate, speeches and group discussions.

- **Cultural Studies**

Social studies and science are called Cultural Studies in the Montessori curriculum. They integrate anthropology, astronomy, biology, chemistry, economics, geography, geology, government, history, philosophy, physics and sociology.

### **Enrichment and Specials**

Art, Music, and Fitness are part of the HVM curriculum and are planned to correlate with classroom studies as much as possible. Art and Music classes are held weekly. The format addresses the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks while connecting with the content of each individual class. Children are encouraged to pursue their own strengths and to explore multiple mediums for expanding their talents. Fitness classes are held once a week with an additional class every other week. The program focuses on cooperative games, team sports, individual sports, aerobic activities, and fitness. Physical education is also blended into the curriculum in a variety of ways.

### **Classroom Configurations**

Kindergarten is a single aged classroom of 5-year old children. HVM has two kindergarten classrooms with a lead teacher and assistant teacher and no more than eighteen students.

There are five Lower multi-age elementary classrooms of approximately 22 students each and four Upper multi-age elementary classrooms of approximately 26 students each. Each class has a Lead Teacher with Montessori credentials. A second Instructional Assistant (IA) works within the classroom to support the teacher and the small group learning, providing a student-teacher ratio of about 11 to 1 for Lower Elementary and 13 to 1 for Upper Elementary.

- *Lower Elementary* classes include grades 1, 2 and 3; students are referred to as first year, second year or third year students.
- *Upper Elementary* classes include grades 4, 5, and 6; students are referred to as fourth year, fifth year or sixth year students.
- *Middle School* classes include grades 7 and 8.

In middle school, there are approximately 68 seventh and eighth grade students with four subject teachers as well as additional support personnel for a student teacher ratio of less than 17:1.

## **Parent/Guardian Involvement**

HVM considers all caregivers vital partners in the education of their children. Therefore, parents are welcome at HVM and are given many opportunities for participating in and setting the direction of school life. All parents and school volunteers are required by law to have a criminal records check (CORI) and be CORI-approved by the school. Please inquire with the Business Manager to fill out the CORI paperwork.

In conjunction with teachers, parents discuss current progress academically, socially and emotionally during parent teacher conferences which occur in November and March. In an individual setting, parents can express concerns and communicate their commitment to doing their part at home to ensure their children's success. In an effort to protect student confidentiality, parents are asked not to share private information about their child in an email. Parents are also the opportunity to attend Community Partnership (CP, HVM's version of a Parent-Teacher Organization) and Board of Trustees (BOT) meetings. At these meetings, teachers will share student work and/or offer Montessori lessons as part of a commitment to exposing and informing all to Montessori materials and the method.

## **Field Trips and Going-Out**

Teachers will periodically coordinate field trips to provide cultural, scientific, social or educational experiences. Notices will be sent home in advance describing the objectives of the field trip and requesting drivers, if needed. Students who are unable to attend the overnight field trips will participate in equally fun and educational activities and projects at the school. Parents who volunteer to chaperone for field trips are expected to adhere to chaperoning guidelines and be CORI approved. *Visit the HVM website for Chaperoning Guidelines.*

Families for whom the expense of a fieldtrip is a hardship are encouraged to speak to the school and financial assistance can be provided.

"Going-out" is a term unique to the Montessori approach. It is a mini-field trip, usually involving four to six students who have a particular interest in a certain area. The children plan all the details and arrange the logistics of the trip. These excursions encourage ownership and responsibility for learning. They provide research opportunities that are an integrated extension of the curriculum. At the beginning of the school year, we request that parents/guardians sign a general permission slip that will cover goings out for the year.

## **Board of Trustees and Governance**

HVM is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees. The Board has ultimate responsibility for the success of the school and is accountable directly to the Massachusetts Department of Education (DESE). The Board sets policy for the school and hires and supervises an Executive Director, who, in turn, hires the staff of the school. Working through the Executive Director, the Board ensures that all laws and regulations are being followed and that day-to-day operations are consistent with the mission of the school. In consultation with the Executive Director, the Board develops and approves the budget for the school

The Board of Trustees performs most of its work through committees. These committees consist of trustees, parents, and members of the community. The Board has regular monthly meetings that are open to the public. The dates and times of all meetings are posted at the school and city clerk's office and listed in local papers and the school's Wednesday Notes which are sent home weekly. The Board discusses issues, sets policy, and conducts business for anyone to observe; public comment is invited at the beginning and end of the board meetings. *See the HVM website for current Board of Trustees meeting dates, membership and contact information.*

## **Accountability**

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education through charter school law, holds charter schools accountable for their mission and vision. During every year of a charter school's existence, it is monitored via an oversight and evaluation process that includes the establishment of an Accountability Plan, annual reporting on goals identified in the school's accountability plan, and site visits. In addition, every five years a charter school must undergo a more rigorous accountability process during which time is "reapplies" for its charter. If a charter school is determined to be underperforming, it can be closed. This high level of accountability is accepted by charter public schools in exchange for the "freedom" to structure, organize, and create their own mission and academic programs.

The annual accountability process requires the school to reflect and provide evidence on the following three questions:

1. Is the school academically successful?
2. Is the school a viable, stable organization?
3. Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?

*See the HVM website for a copy of the school's Accountability Plan and its annual reports.*

### **Administration of State Mandated Assessments**

As a public charter school, HVM is required to give the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests for all students in grades 3-8. We review the performance scores and track the results over time as one way of determining academic success. The results of the school's performance on MCAS tests are available on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website at [www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu).

### **Funding**

HVM is funded by a yearly allotment from the State of Massachusetts that is based on per-pupil expenditures from the sending district where the student resides. For each child that enrolls at HVM, HVM receives a tuition amount from the State equal to the per-pupil amount that the child's sending district funds the local school. The State then deducts the same amount from the sending district's state aid account. Like other public schools, charter schools are eligible to receive federal and state grant funds including Special Education, Title 1, and Safe and Drug Free Schools funding.

While per pupil charter tuition covers basic operational expenses, it does not cover the school's facility costs nor the complete costs associated with an authentic Montessori program. As a result, the school is committed to ongoing annual fundraising and grant writing. Direct solicitations for support to both the parent body and the greater HVM community will include invitations to support the annual appeal and attend special events such as an auction, etc.

### **The Community Partnership Organization**

The Community Partnership (CP) organization is a body of parents and school educators united in helping HVM students have a successful school experience learning in the Montessori Method. The CP is much like a traditional school might have a PTA or PTO. The group meets monthly and all parent/guardians are automatically members and invited to attend.

The CP performs a number of functions including fundraising (administering Box Tops for Education, Square 1 Art and the SCRIP program for example), hosting events and supporting school staff.

### **Community Partnership Mission Statement**

The Mission of the CP is to act as a resource to aid students in their goals of a Montessori charter education through high levels of academic, personal, social achievement using the Montessori Method of teaching.

Its purposes are several:

- To provide a forum for open discussion with each other;
- To sponsor family-oriented activities and programs to support and enhance parental involvement;
- To inform on issues about which we have particular knowledge and experience;
- To enhance the capacity of parents, educators and caregivers to guide, support and nurture all HVM students;
- To ensure continued financial support and aid in maintaining the high quality of education of our student population;

*For CP meeting dates and times and CP contact information, please visit the HVM website.*

## **ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT**

### **Enrollment Policy**

Hill View Montessori accepts applications from any child meeting the school's age requirements and residing in Massachusetts. We do not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, creed, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, ancestry, athletic performance, special needs, proficiency in the English language or in a foreign language, academic achievement, or town of residence within the school's chartered region. In addition, Montessori

experience is neither required nor used as a selection preference. HVM grants enrollment preference to siblings of currently enrolled students in an effort to keep families together in one school.

In general, the school offers admission only to students in the Kindergarten level for the spaces vacated by the graduating eighth grade students. However, as spaces become available (in all grade levels) in the school, either prior to the start of the school year or during the school year, enrollment is offered to those on the Waiting Lists in the established order. See *the HVM website the school's Enrollment Policy*.

### **Applications**

During the annual enrollment period, HVM recruits its students through broad outreach and multi-media advertising. We also hold public information sessions in order to help families understand the school's Montessori philosophy and methods to make an informed decision about whether to submit an application.

The school holds an annual recruitment period for the following academic year, including publicizing the lottery date, starting in the fall and ending in the beginning of February. Currently enrolled students who are returning need not reapply. At the end of the posted application period, if there are more applications for any given grade than openings in that grade, the school conducts a lottery.

### **Lottery**

If the annual recruitment period produces more applications than there are openings in any grade, the school runs a public lottery, a random selection process that results in a completely unbiased ranking of applicants within each age/grade.

The school offers admission to the age/grades for which there are openings in the following sequence:

1. Those on the sibling list;
2. Those on the general list; and
3. Those on the non-resident list.

### **Wait List**

Each year's lottery draws are added to the bottom of the existing wait lists. Should openings occur over the course of the year, the school will offer admission in the same order described above, using a consistent and documented process. Applicants remain on the list until they are offered admission, until they request in writing to be removed from the list, or until repeated attempts to contact them regarding their desire to stay on or be removed from the list have failed over a reasonable period of time, as specified in the school's published application procedures.

## **GOING TO SCHOOL**

**School Year**      *See the HVM website for the current school calendar.*

**School Day**      **8:40 a.m. to 3:40 p.m.**

### **Arrival**

School starts at 8:40 a.m. The staff is ready to receive children at 8:20 a.m.

The following procedures apply for students who are dropped off at school:

- Arrive at the school no earlier than 8:20 a.m.
- Upon arrival, pull to the rear of the school and follow traffic into the designated driving areas.
- **Do not park or drop off in the front of the school.** (This space is reserved for school buses.)
- If you have business in the school, pull around back into the designated travel areas and continue around the side of the building to park in visitor spaces or park in the designated parking area in the back of the school (heeding indication of the play area).

### **Dismissal**

School ends at 3:40 p.m. and the dismissal process ends by 4:00 p.m. (12:00 p.m. on half days with the dismissal process ending at 12:30 p.m.)

### ***For Students Being Picked Up From School***

- Arrive no earlier than 3:30 p.m. to pick up your child. Drive to the designated pick-up area in the rear of the school. Staff will escort children out of the building and students will typically be waiting outside as you pull up.
- There are four designated pick-up spots. Staff will direct you and your child to ensure the swiftest dismissal possible.
- A family ID tag (provided by the school) with the student's last name should be made visible. If your child is being picked up by someone else, please transfer the ID tag to that vehicle. Alternatively, if you need additional ID tags, please contact the front office at 978.521.2616 extension 121.
- If someone other than the designated pick-up person picks up and does not have the ID tag in their possession, the school needs to be notified ahead of time and the person must show identification to staff.
- If you need to speak with a staff member, please do so at another time as doing otherwise drastically slows down the dismissal process.
- If a child is picked up more than 15 minutes beyond the end of dismissal time, families will be billed. For parents who are late between 1 and 15 minutes, the charge is \$5.00; between 16-30 minutes, the charge is \$10.00.

### ***For Students Using Bus Transportation***

Bus transportation is available only to those students who reside in Haverhill. Families from outside of Haverhill must provide their own transportation. Bus routes and schedules can be obtained from the Coppola Bus Company 978.373.9891 or on the HVM web site.

On early dismissal days, buses will pick up students at HVM at 12:00 p.m.

Expectations for conduct on the bus are the same as when children are at school. It is particularly important that students are quiet and respectful so the driver can concentrate on safely delivering the passengers. Violations of bus etiquette can result in loss of bus privileges and/or other consequences as determined by the Educational Program Director.

### **Attendance Guidelines**

It is commonly believed that student attendance rates impact student learning and affect a school's culture. The Department of Elementary and Secondary education believes attendance to be so important that it requires public schools to report on student attendance three times per year and in fact, there are regulations allowing schools to assess fines for student truancy and tardiness. Excused absences, as defined by the DESE, are only those that occur due to a death in the family, religious holidays, court appearances/subpoenas, family emergencies or documented illness. All others are considered truancy. At HVM, attendance is monitored by the Supervisor of Attendance, currently our School Social Worker.

Montessori philosophy requires that we respect the concentration and follow the level of development of each child. Teachers spend time and energy preparing curriculum and lessons for each day. Students are expected to attend school **on time** each day of the school year unless there is an emergency or a personal illness. Please help to ensure the development of your child's social and academic progress by avoiding unnecessary absences, tardiness and early dismissals.

The policy around attendance is as follows:

- When a student is absent seven times, a meeting will be held to evaluate what impact the absences are having on the child and the school.
- When a student is tardy or dismissed early five times in a month, a meeting will be held to evaluate what impact the missed time is having on the child and the school.
- For any student who is absent eighteen times, or more, at yearend, a meeting will be held to determine whether the student should repeat the grade and/or should attend summer school (at the parents' expense).

### **Absence Procedures**

When a child is absent, the parent/caregiver must notify the school before 8:45 a.m. by calling **978.521.2616 ext. 200**. Upon returning to school from any absence, the child must bring a note written by the parent/caregiver explaining the absence. All absences must be of an "excused" nature (absence types are described below). Extended excused absences, those that are more than five days, may require a note from the doctor before the child can return to school.

- Unexcused absences include oversleeping, missing the bus, car problems, family trips/vacations (which are considered unexcused by state law) or absences for illness for which no note was sent to the school. Excessive unexcused absences are subject to reporting to the district court.

- Excessive absences from school can, in some cases, be considered child neglect. As mandated reporters for the State of Massachusetts, HVM is required to report excessive absences to the Massachusetts Department of Child and Family Services (DCF).
- In situations in which the office staff has not been notified of an absence, a notification will be sent to the parent/guardian via a phone call or email.

### **Absences during Testing**

Attendance during standardized testing is expected and required. The MCAS assessments are required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Federal Government under the No Child Left Behind Act and are also a component of HVM's Accountability Plan. We need the participation of all students in order to meet objectives specified by the Adequate Yearly Progress reports.

Please have your child in school during the regularly scheduled testing periods unless there is an emergency. Studies indicate that students perform better in familiar surroundings with their classroom teachers administering tests. When a child is absent from a testing session, it creates a hardship for the child and the school to make up the test. The child is taking the test in an unfamiliar space with a proctor he or she may not know. From the point of view of the school, we do not want to take teachers out of classrooms to proctor customized make-up sessions for students who have been out of school during test times.

### **Tardiness**

The first half hour of class is very important, as that is when teachers and students discuss their plans for the day. Missing this time is problematic as it can have a negative impact on the child's whole day. HVM has a process in place for dealing with excessive tardies. **Any child who arrives at school after 8:40 is considered late.** The child must go to the front office, accompanied by the parent/caregiver, to obtain a late pass. Students cannot enter class without a late pass.

If a student is tardy five times in a month, a meeting will be held to evaluate what impact the tardies are having on the child and the school. If a child arrives at school after 12:00, the child will be marked absent for the day.

### **Early Dismissal**

Ideally children should be in school during all school hours. Please arrange appointments either after school hours or on half days. If it is necessary to make an appointment during school hours, please be sure to send a note to school. In order to dismiss your child to someone other than a parent or other authorized person, the person must provide photo identification.

For safety reasons, children cannot be dismissed between 3:25 and 3:40 unless there is an emergency. After 3:25, all families must pick up children following the standard dismissal process.

### **Before Care and After Care**

Recognizing that families have needs for their children outside of the typical school day, HVM has a fee-based before and after care program. Registration is required Before Care and is for HVM students only. Registration for After Care is required through the YMCA.

#### ***Before Care***

HVM provides an on-site before school program with the same philosophical basis as our Montessori classes. Before Care is staffed by HVM staff members and begins at 7:30 a.m. It includes (weather-permitting) outdoor playtime as well as indoor time. Breakfast is available during Before Care, if purchased in advance. There is no before care available on days with a snow delay.

For more information about the Before Care program, contact the HVM front office at 978.521.2616 extension 121.

#### ***After Care***

After Care services are provided by the Haverhill YMCA to HVM students. Bus service is provided to the YMCA.

For more information about the YMCA After Care program, visit [www.northshoreymca.org](http://www.northshoreymca.org). For After Care fee information, contact the YMCA directly at 978.374.0506. The YMCA offers financial assistance for families in need.

During school-wide scheduled conferences (two times a year), free child care is available for HVM students for the duration of the parent/guardian conference only. This option is supervised by HVM staff.

### **Returned Check Policy**

HVM has a returned check policy to curtail the financial impact of receiving “non-negotiable” check payments. In the event that three or more checks are returned by the bank and deemed non-negotiable (insufficient funds, account closure, etc.), the presenting individual or organization will be requested to make all future payments in the form of cash, money order or bank check. At the discretion of the Executive Director, services may be withheld until payment has been received in full or denied on a permanent basis. This policy may apply to all services provided by HVM regardless of the service to which the payment applied.

### **School Closings or Delays**

The Haverhill Public School District provides transportation for HVM students. When the district schools are closed or have a delayed opening due to bad weather, HVM is also closed or has a delayed opening. School closings can be heard on Channels 4, 5 & 7, on WBZ radio and are listed on the HVM website [www.hillviewmontessori.org](http://www.hillviewmontessori.org). HVM also utilizes an emergency notification system which sends out an automated message informing of closings and delays. In addition, families can arrange to have a message sent to a cell phone from WHDH Channel 7 News. To arrange for this service, visit [www.whdh.com/stormforce/closingbell](http://www.whdh.com/stormforce/closingbell).

During delays, breakfast will still be provided to students and parents will still be charged for the meal.

### **Snacks, Lunch and Celebrations**

Some classrooms are peanut/tree nut free at HVM. Teachers and staff make their best efforts to monitor lunches, snacks, and foods brought in for celebrations but it is not feasible to say that no nuts will ever enter our building. We ask that parents check labels for nuts or nut ingredients. However, please note that many foods have “hidden” nut ingredients and most people are not properly trained to read food labels for these hidden ingredients. Any so-called “safe” food manufacturer can change ingredients without warning so providing “safe” food lists is not appropriate. HVM may occasionally provide a list of healthy snacks but this list is not meant to be considered a 100% nut-free product list. It is only a guide for parents to assist them in choosing healthier snack options. We encourage students not to share foods with each other for a variety of reasons.

We also have children with other food allergies in our school. When bringing food into the school (other than packing lunch), please be sure to check with the classroom teacher or school nurse to ensure an appropriate selection is made.

If your child has a food or other allergy, contact the school nurse for information on how an individualized plan can be developed for your child to keep him/her as safe as possible while at school. Any medications that your child’s doctor has prescribed for the treatment of food allergies should be kept in the Health Office.

### **Snacks**

In keeping with HVM’s Wellness Policy and commitment to supporting the optimal growth and development of the whole child, the school urges parents and caregivers not to send sweets such as candy and soda into school to be eaten as a snack. Our school breakfast and lunch program has to adhere to the Massachusetts Competitive Foods and Beverages Nutrition Standards, and we encourage families to do the same. Please send students with healthy snacks only. The current HVM Wellness Policy is available on the school’s website at: [www.hillviewmontessori.org](http://www.hillviewmontessori.org)

## Massachusetts Competitive Foods and Beverages Nutrition Standards “At-a-Glance”

| Category  | Standards  | Category   | Standards   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Juice</b>  | 100% fruit and vegetable juice, with no added sugar.   | <b>Saturated Fat</b>   | Foods should have less than 10% of their total calories from saturated fat.   |
| <b>Juice – Portion Size</b>   | 4-ounce servings or less.  | <b>Trans Fat</b>   | All foods should be trans fat-free.   |
| <b>Milk*</b>  | Low-fat (1% or less) and fat-free milk.  | <b>Fat Exemptions</b>  | 1-ounce servings of nuts, nut butters, seeds, and reduced-fat cheese are exempt from the fat standards.   |
| <b>Milk – Portion Size*</b>   | 8-ounce servings or less.  | <b>Sugar</b>   | Foods should have less than 35% of their total calories from sugar.   |
| <b>Milk – Added Sugar*</b>  | Flavored milk with no more than 22 grams total sugar per 8 ounces.   | <b>Sugar Exemptions</b>  | 100% fruit with no added sugar, and low-fat or non-fat yogurt (including drinkable yogurt) with no more than 30 grams of sugar per 8-ounce serving, are exempt from the sugar standard.                 |
| <b>Water</b>  | May contain natural flavorings and/or carbonation.<br><br>Should not contain added sugars, sweeteners or artificial sweeteners.  | <b>Sodium</b>  | Foods should have less than 200mg sodium per item.<br><br>À la carte entrées should have a maximum of 480 mg of sodium per item.  |
| <b>Beverages with Added Sugar or Sweeteners</b>                     | Any beverages with added sugar or sweeteners not already addressed will be phased out by <b>August 1, 2013</b> . Flavored milk or milk substitutes that have the same amount or less sugar than plain, fat-free or low-fat milk are allowed. | <b>Grains</b>  | All breads or grain-based products should be whole grain (whole grain should be listed first in the ingredient statement). These include crackers, granola bars, chips, bakery items, pasta, rice, etc. |
| <b>Other Beverages</b><br>(Soda, sports drinks, teas, waters, etc.) | Only juice, milk, milk substitutes and water should be sold or provided.   | <b>Caffeine</b>  | Trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine (such as that found in chocolate) are allowed as long as the item complies with the rest of the nutrition standards.                                      |
| <b>Calories</b>   | Foods should be 200 calories or less per item.<br><br>À la carte entrées should not exceed the calorie count of entrée items of the equivalent portion size offered as a part of the National School Lunch Program.                          | <b>Artificial Sweeteners</b>   | Artificial sweeteners are not permitted.  |
| <b>Fat</b>  | Foods should have less than 35% of their total calories from fat.  | *(Including alternative milk beverages such as lactose-free and soy) |   |

### ***Breakfast and Lunches***

Breakfast is available to be ordered and is served from 8:20-8:40 am. For students who arrive later than 8:40, students will bring their breakfast and eat in the classroom.

For lunch, students can either bring their lunch or purchase it from the school's hot lunch vendor. Hot lunch must be ordered and prepaid monthly when the order is placed. Every month, breakfast and lunch menus and order forms are sent home. HVM is committed to educating the whole child and as such has contracted with a food vendor that minimizes salt and sugar additives, offers whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables and utilizes recyclable food containers.

#### Breakfast and Lunch Ordering Procedures:

- Fill out the appropriate menus for the month.
- Keep the menu at home and return the order form to school by due date.
- Be sure to have child's and teacher's name on the order form(s).

For current information about lunch and breakfast programs contact the front desk at ext. 121.

Refunds for meals are only given for school cancellations and not for absences.

### ***Celebrations***

We discourage traditional classroom celebrations of birthdays, holidays, etc. where, for example, Valentine or "Secret Santa" notes and gifts are exchanged, students dress-up for Halloween, sweets are sent in to be shared, etc. We do this for a number of reasons; some students have differing religious beliefs that prohibit celebratory activities; we seek to minimize the consumption of sweets and encourage healthy eating habits; and we are committed to educating students about mass marketing/consumerism.

As an alternative, we advocate for celebrations that teach tolerance, peace and an understanding of multicultural differences. Please contact your child's classroom teacher to determine the individual classroom policy around celebratory activities.

### ***Green/Recycling***

HVM develops students who are stewards of the earth and cognizant of the impact we, as humans, have on the planet. In this regard, we encourage families to minimize waste by packing lunches in recyclable containers. We, as a school community, will continue to pursue options to reduce our impact on the environment.

### **SCHOOL CULTURE**

One of the keys to our success as a school is the ability to balance freedom with responsibility. As students grow and mature, they are expected to take an active and independent role in their own learning; they are expected to be responsible and respectful toward other people and their environment, as well as to have a positive attitude toward their work.

### **Social Events**

Throughout the year, the members of our school community come together for many different reasons, such as educational meetings, student performances, open houses, and fundraisers. We usually plan for a part of these gatherings to have a social component, so we can make new acquaintances and see our children's friends and their families.

Whenever we have these events on school grounds, **we ask parents to be responsible for their children** unless the child is under the supervision of a staff member. Further, we ask everyone to respect the classroom learning environments by not touching classroom materials unless it is a part of the program. A Montessori classroom is a carefully prepared environment and the sequential order of the materials is important for the child and the materials are costly.

### **Appropriate Dress**

The general atmosphere and environment of the school must be conducive for optimal learning. Dress can affect behavior and influence both the atmosphere and learning environment. As the Montessori philosophy is a hands-on learning process, students are often working on the floor. This should be a consideration when students dress each day.

**The following items of apparel are not allowed:**

- Clothing with vulgar, indecent, obscene or insulting messaging;
- Any dress, skirt, blouse, shirt, or trousers of any length or fabric that is suggestive, overly tight, or revealing;
- Length of dresses, skirt, shorts, etc. needed to be at least measured to the tip of the thumb (arms hanging straight down at the side)
- Hats and hoods. These items can be worn outside but should not be worn inside the school building during the school day.

The teacher or administration reserves the right to address the student if he/she believes that the clothing is inappropriate. Students not in compliance with the dress code will be asked to change their apparel or they will be sent home to change.

**Cell Phone Policy**

HVM discourages students from bringing cell phones to school. The school recognizes, however, that for some families this is a necessity. HVM will not be responsible for phones that go missing due to theft or loss.

- There will be no use of cell phones for any purpose during school hours
- Cell phones must be turned off during school hours.
- Cell phones must remain in the student backpacks during the school hours, including during recess and field trips.

If a student chooses not to follow the conditions outlined above, his/her phone will be confiscated. A parent or legal guardian will be required to speak *in person* with the teacher who confiscated the phone in order for the phone to be returned to the student.

Regarding this policy, we recognize that traveling to school to retrieve your student’s cell phone represents a significant inconvenience. Our intention is not to inconvenience parents, but to remove the temptation to use a cell phone inappropriately during school hours. Any student who needs to call home is allowed to use a school phone. We ask that you speak directly with your child to be certain that he/she understands this policy and how any violation will affect him/her and his/her parents/guardians.

**Personal Property**

- Students **are not** to bring electronic devices to school. Therefore, there will be no use of electronic devices at any time while on school property. This includes, but is not limited to CD or MP3 players, gaming devices, pagers, etc.
- Students are not to use trading cards and collectable card games such as sports cards, Pokémon, Magic, and other trading/gaming cards at any time while on school property.

Violation of these guidelines will result in confiscation of the items. We are not responsible if the items are broken, lost or stolen.

**Library Use**

Library time is provided primarily by volunteers and is offered at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Students manually check out their own books on the honor system. Two students at a time, at the discretion of the classroom teachers, use library passes to visit the library. Students may also visit the library as a whole class with their classroom teacher.

**Computer Use**

Most classrooms, with the exception of kindergarten, have access to computers and the internet. Technology is compatible with the Montessori philosophy as a teaching resource because it allows students to become familiar with the global nature of information and to form links with children around the world. Nonetheless, access to computers and the Internet is a privilege. HVM expects that all of its students adhere to its Acceptable Use Policy and will use the computer resources responsibly, respecting the rights of other computer users and keeping in mind that the school’s computers are there to support the educational goals of the school.

It is important that students understand and abide by the school's technology usage rules in order to use HVM computers. As such, parents are required to discuss with their children and sign off on computer usage rules. Violation of any of the rules can result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school in certain instances, at the discretion of the school leaders.

**Note on Computer Supervision and Monitoring:** HVM, its network administrator, and other authorized individuals monitor the use of information technology resources to ensure that uses are secure and in conformity with school policy. Administrators reserve the right to examine, use and disclose any data found on the school's information network to further the health, safety, discipline or security of others and/or to protect property; may share findings with law enforcement and use it to determine disciplinary actions.

### **Video Taping/Photographing**

Videotaping/photographing is occasionally done in the classroom to support staff and student development, as well as the promotion of the school. This includes photographs taken by local news sources and published locally. At the beginning of the year, HVM asks parents to sign-off to allow their child to be videotaped/photographed. If you do not want your child photographed, please inform the school.

## **Code of Conduct Policy**

*Hill View Montessori Charter Public School complies with all applicable Commonwealth and Federal law having to do with non-discrimination on the basis of age, ancestry, athletic performance, color, creed, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, homelessness, mental or physical disability, national origin, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, prior academic achievement, race, religion, sexual orientation, and special need in its educational programs and activities.*

At Hill View Montessori Charter Public School (HVM) our educational philosophy is to individualize instruction to the greatest extent possible. We recognize that every student undergoes a unique learning process, and that we must honor each student's individuality. We also believe that our educational responsibility extends beyond academics to character development, including self-control, sound decision making and respect for others and the environment. In that spirit, we approach our Code of Conduct and disciplinary actions with the same intention of providing an individualized response to each incident. Though illegal or egregious actions will require the school to abide by Massachusetts state law and due process guidelines, lesser infractions allow us to evaluate the circumstances of each situation and craft a disciplinary response that we believe best serves the educational interests of the students while protecting the safety and integrity of our learning environments.

As a Montessori school, our primary goal is to create a positive learning environment in which all students are provided an opportunity to grow academically, emotionally, and socially. In order to attain this goal there must be a shared commitment among parents, staff and students to understand and accept a balance between individual freedom and responsible behavior. As Dr. Montessori stated, "*To let the child do as he likes when he has not yet developed any powers of control, is to betray the idea of freedom.*" ~Maria Montessori

The Code of Conduct is intended to clarify student behaviors and actions that are encouraged, as well as those which are considered unacceptable in the HVM community. The Major Discipline section of the Code also reflects the current status of Massachusetts law as it pertains to student conduct, and more specifically, the subsequent discipline that may be imposed when students engage in certain types of extreme or illegal behavior. This Code of Conduct has been reviewed and adopted by the Hill View Montessori Charter Public School Board of Trustees, supersedes any Code of Conduct previously issued by HVM.

It is important to remember that the Code of Conduct applies to students in all schools settings, including while at school, traveling to and from school, on school property, at school sponsored events and on school field trips. If misconduct occurs during any of these times and/or events, a student shall be subject to a disciplinary response from the school. Additionally, state law permits a school to respond to any incident that happens off school grounds or outside of school hours if that incident has a significant impact on the learning experience of students during the school day.

The Individuals and Disabilities Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provide eligible students (those with disabilities and those in the pre-referral process) with certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline. These rights are in addition to the due process rights applicable to all students as described below in this Code of Conduct. In addition, IDEA protections apply to a child who has not yet been found eligible for services under the statute if the district is “deemed to have knowledge” that the child was eligible for such services before the conduct that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The district is “deemed to have knowledge” if the child’s parent had expressed concern in writing to district supervisory, of administrative personnel, or the child’s teacher, that they believe the child needs special education or related services, or if the child’s parent had requested an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services, or the current teacher, or other district personnel, had expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior by the child to district personnel. The school district is not “deemed to have knowledge” if the students were determined not eligible for special education through an evaluation or the parents refused an evaluation for the child of IDEA services. Should a request be made for evaluation to determine eligibility while a student is subject to disciplinary measures, the district will conduct an evaluation in an expedited manner. Pending these results, the student will remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without services. If determined eligible, the district will provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with IDEA. *See Appendix A of this Code of Conduct for more information.*

## **RESPECT, GRACE & COURTESY**

Mutual respect and commitment to grace and courtesy among all members of our school community is the cornerstone of our interaction and behavior. We seek to acknowledge and honor the dignity and value of every school member. We strive to celebrate our differences and create a welcoming and supportive atmosphere through courtesy to others and respectful conduct.

A commitment to respect, grace and courtesy will ensure that HVM is a physically and emotionally safe environment. In order to achieve this goal, all staff and students share several common core responsibilities:

- *To act as kind individuals and refrain from physically or emotionally harming others*
- *To refrain from any actions that compromise the health or safety of others*
- *To accept difference and seek to resolve conflicts in a mutually agreeable manner*
- *To value and respect personal and school property*
- *To express opinions and emotions in a positive and constructive manner*
- *To always be honest*
- *To support other school members in their efforts to maintain a safe, positive, and respectful school*

### **Student behavior that falls outside these common core responsibilities is subject to a disciplinary response from teachers or administration.**

Examples of behavior outside the common core responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- *Any disrespect toward staff members from students*
- *Mistreatment or abuse of school or personal property*
- *Abusive, profane, harassing or threatening language, either verbal or written*
- *Physical or emotional intimidation of aggression*
- *Minor physical assault, including hitting, shoving, kicking, biting, etc.*
- *Harassment, bullying or violations of civil rights*
- *Cheating*
- *Stealing*
- *Forgery or plagiarism*
- *Misuse of electronic devices or Internet access*
- *Major physical assault with malicious intent*
- *Possession, use or distribution of tobacco products, drugs, or alcohol (pursuant of M.G.L., see below)*
- *Possession or use of any dangerous device or weapon (pursuant to M.G.L., see below)*

School response to such behaviors may be informal or formal, depending upon the severity and/or frequency of the misconduct. The intention will always be to encourage growth and reflection on the part of the student in order to help them build the skills and judgment required to make better choices in the future.

Our procedure when responding to student discipline issues will always be grounded in a problem-solving approach. We will wait until the students are not agitated or in crisis, and then hold a conversation seeking the facts of the situation and asking students to reflect on their actions. Below are some examples of the types of questions that may be asked during these conversations:

- “Can you share with me what happened?”
- “How do you feel about how you handled the situation?”
- “How could you have handled the situation differently?”
- “What impact do you think your actions had on the class/other student(s)?”
- “What do you think can be done to resolve this situation?”
- “What can you do differently in the future?”
- “What lessons have you learned from this experience?”

We value the voice of the student in resolving disciplinary situations and will encourage student participation in the process as warranted by each individual situation.

Parents are encouraged to keep the school and the child’s teacher informed about extraordinary social, emotional, physical or medical events in the child’s life that may impact the child’s ability to abide by the common core responsibilities.

Repeated and/or significant misconduct will be recorded using an Incident Report Form. This form will be completed by the staff member most directly connected to the situation. A copy of the Incident Report Form will be available for parent review and signature along with a student reflection sheet, and will also be kept in the student’s school file. *A copy of the Incident Report Form and Reflection Sheet is attached as Appendix B to this Code of Conduct.*

## **Minor Discipline**

Almost all of the disciplinary actions taken by HVM staff are in response to minor infractions. Such informal discipline will often take the form of a logical consequence designed to discourage similar future behavior and encourage student growth, or to provide resolution of interpersonal conflict.

Examples of minor disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to:

- Facilitation of peer to peer discussions
- Limitations of classroom freedoms and/or privileges
- Restricted seating
- Temporary removal from the classroom or other educational setting
- Verbal reflections or apologies
- Written reflections of apologies
- In school or after school community service
- Meetings with school administration
- Meetings with parents and teachers
- Other appropriate disciplinary consequences

Teachers have the authority to use these types of consequences at their discretion. Our approach to discipline is to have the response match the circumstances, severity and frequency of the infraction, so each situation will be handled according to the discretion of the adults involved and the individual needs of her student(s).

A safe and positive learning community is best fostered when parents support the school’s disciplinary action. However, should a student and/or parent disagree with any informal disciplinary action that is imposed; every effort should be made to resolve these concerns directly with the staff member who imposed the action. Nothing in this policy, however, should be construed as limiting the right of any student or parent to discuss concerns with appropriate school administrators.

## Major Discipline

Massachusetts General Laws (Chapter 71, Section 37H, 37H/1/2 and 37H3/4 govern due process for disciplinary removals from a public school (suspensions) and the services that a public school must provide during such removals. While such events are rare at HVM, it is important for families to know their rights and the procedures that the school will follow in order to comply with state law.

One aspect of these formal procedures is worth noting. Every school district must have an appeal process in place for any disciplinary removals from school. In a typical district, appeals would be made to the superintendent. As a Charter school, our Executive Director serves as the superintendent, so the Director cannot also serve as the primary arbiter in disciplinary decisions regarding suspension. Consequently, the procedures that follow list the Educational Program Director as the administrator who will hear and decide upon all disciplinary cases that may result in the removal of a student from school. This leaves the school Executive Director available for any appeals that students or families may decide to pursue. See *Appendix C for HVM's Expulsion Policy*.

### ***Provisions Governing Due Process for Disciplinary Removals and Services during Removals***

Student disciplinary offenses resulting in removal from the school setting (i.e., suspensions) are subject to due process procedures, including notices, hearings, appeals, and educational services during removals. The following sections provide information about these rights.

Please note that students have the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense, at any and all hearings concerning student discipline. If you wish to bring an attorney to any hearing or meeting at the school, please inform HVM immediately. If you fail to inform the school prior to bringing an attorney to a hearing, and HVM's attorney is not present, then HVM will exercise its right to cancel and reschedule the meeting to ensure that its attorney can attend. This rescheduling may delay the hearing or meeting, and if so, your child's disciplinary removal will be extended until a decision is rendered following the rescheduled hearing or meeting. HVM hereby notifies you that it may have its legal counsel present at any hearings and meetings involving student discipline.

#### **A. Notice of Student and Parent Rights Under G.L. c. 71§37H**

This ***Notice of Student and Parent Rights*** applies to student misconduct that involves weapons, drugs or assault on school staff.

Students who are suspended under §37H are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension. If the student withdraws from the HVM and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension, the new school/district/ district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's educational service plan.

#### **B. Notice of Rights under G.L. c. 71§37H½**

This Notice of Student and Parent Rights applies to student misconduct that involves student criminal or felony delinquency charges, findings, or admissions.

### **Suspension Following Criminal or Felony Delinquency Complaint**

Upon the issuance of a criminal or felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Education Program Director may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by the Education Program Director if he or she determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student is entitled to receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his/her right of appeal and the process for appealing such suspension, provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any hearing conducted by the Executive Director.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Executive Director. The student shall notify the Executive Director in writing of his/her request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Executive Director shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Executive Director shall have the authority to overturn

or alter the decision of the Education Program Director, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Executive Director's decision shall be the final decision of HVM with regard to the suspension.

Students who are suspended or expelled under §37H are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension. If the student withdraws from the HVM and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school/district/ district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's educational service plan.

**C. Notice of Student and Parent Rights Under G.L. c. 71 §37H¾**

This section governs all students offenses that may be subject to short- or long-term suspensions that *do not* involve dangerous weapons, assault on HVM staff, felony, felony delinquency charges, and/or felony delinquency findings or admissions, all of which are governed by G.L. c.71 §§37H and 37H½, as detailed above.

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, the Education Program Director is required to exercise discretion in deciding the consequences for the offense, consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. The following document outlines student and parent rights when the Education Program Director is considering and/or decides to implement a removal from school as a consequence for student misconduct.

Students who are suspended under §37H¾ are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension. If the student withdraws from the HVM and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension, the new school/district/ district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's educational service plan.

**Notice of Suspension and Hearing under §37H¾**

Unless the Education Program Director determines that an emergency removal is required (*see* Emergency Removals section below) or decides to implement an in-school suspension of ten or fewer consecutive days (and no more than ten(10) cumulative days per school year) (*see* In-School Suspension section below), the Education Program Director may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent with verbal and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing.

The Education Program Director is required to provide this verbal and written notice to her student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice must set forth the following information:

- a) The disciplinary offense
- b) The basis for the charge
- c) The potential consequence, including the potential length of the student's suspension
- d) The opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the Education Program Director concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing.
- e) The date, time, and location of the hearing
- f) The right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate
- g) If the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the Education Program Director, the student's short and long-term suspension hearing rights and the right to appeal the Education Program Director's decision to the Executive Director (*see* Hearing Rights section below).

The Education Program Director is required to make and document reasonable efforts to notify the parent verbally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. The Education Program Director is presumed to have made reasonable efforts, and therefore may conduct hearing without the parent present, if the Education Program Director has sent written notice (by hand delivery, first-class mail, email, or any other method of delivery agreed to the Education Program Director and parent) and has documented at least two attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

## **Emergency Removal**

The Education Program Director has the authority to remove a student from HVM temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the Education Program Director determines that the continued presence of the student poses danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Education Program Director's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. *The Education Program Director is required to notify the Executive Director immediately in writing of the emergency removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student.* The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Education Program Director is required to:

- a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the Hearing Rights outlined below
- b) Provide written notice to the student and parent
- c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Education Program Director that complies with the rights outlined below in the Hearing Rights section, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of the time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Education Program Director, student, and parent
- d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day

The Education Program Director may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

## **Hearing Rights**

### ***Education Program Director's Hearing under §37H%: Short-term Suspension***

Short-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less.

The purpose of the hearing with the Education Program Director is for the Education Program Director to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident; provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances of her alleged incident; determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the Education Program Director is required to discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student and parent both shall have an opportunity to present and offer information, including mitigating facts, that the Education Program Director should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate. Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the Education Program Director shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The Education Program Director is required to provide written notification to the student and the parent of the determination and reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

Please note that if the student is in grades pre-K-3, the Education Program Director is required to send a copy of the written determination to the Executive Director and explain the reasons for imposing the short-term suspension before it takes effect.

### ***Education Program Director's Hearing under §37H%: Long-term Suspension***

Long-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any single year.

The purpose of the long-term suspension hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing. At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights during a long-term suspension hearing:

- a) In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Education Program Director may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
- b) The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
- c) The right to produce witnesses on his/her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;

- d) The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
- e) The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Education Program Director, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the Education Program Director shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

The Education Program Director shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student’s conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Education Program Director should consider in determining consequences of the student.

Based on the evidence, the Education Program Director shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy of consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The Education Program Director shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Education Program Director and the parent. If the Education Program Director decides to suspend the student, the written determination will:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Education Program Director
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school
4. Include notice of the student’s opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the Education Program Director’s decision to the Executive Director or designee (only if the Education Program Director has imposed a long-term suspension). Notice of the right to appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:
  - a. The process of appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Executive Director within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Executive Director an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days, and that
  - b. The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Executive Director decides to reverse the Education Program Director’s determination on appeal.
6. Serious case is defined as involving the possession of or use of illegal substances or weapons, assault, vandalism, or violation of a student’s civil rights. In practice, the decision to suspend rather than expel in serious cases may depend on whether the principal determines that the student’s continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

If the student is in grades K through 3, the Education Program Director shall send a copy of the written determination to the Executive Director and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long term, before the suspension takes effect.

**Executive Director’s Hearing under §37H¾**

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Education Program Director has the right to appeal the Education Program Director’s decision to the Executive Director.

In order to appeal the Education Program Director’s decision to impose a long-term suspension, the student or parent must file a notice of appeal with the Executive Director within five calendar days of the effective date of the long –term suspension (parent may request and receive from the Executive Director an extension of time for filing written notice for up to seven days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the Executive Director may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Executive Director shall hold the hearing within three school days of the student’s request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven additional calendar days, in which case the Executive Director shall grant the extension.

The Executive Director must make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing and will presume to have made good faith effort if he or she has attempted to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Executive Director to participate. The Executive Director shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Executive Director will conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence will be. An audio recording of the hearing will be made, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request.

The student and parent shall have the right afforded them at the Education Program Director's hearing for long-term suspension, as detailed in the sections entitled Education Program Director's Hearing under §37H¾: Short-term Suspension and Education Program Director's Hearing under §37H¾: Long-term Suspension.

The Executive Director shall issue a written decision within five calendar days of the hearing. If the Executive Director determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, The Executive Director may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Education Program Director, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Education Program Director's decision. The decision of the Executive Director shall be the final decision of the school.

#### **In-School Suspension under §37H¾**

The Education Program Director may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

The Education Program Director is required to inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the Education Program Director determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Education Program Director must inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed 10 days, cumulatively, in a school year.

On the same day the Education Program Director decides to impose an in-school suspension, the Education Program Director must make reasonable efforts to verbally notify the parent/guardian of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension.

The Education Program Director shall also invite the parent/guardian to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, if not, as soon as possible. If the Education Program Director is unable to reach the parent/guardian after making and documenting at least two attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purpose of verbally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The Education Program Director shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and length of the in-school suspension (and inviting the parent/guardian to a meeting with the Education Program Director, if such meeting has not already occurred). The Education Program Director shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the Education Program Director and the parent.

#### **Removal from Privileges and Extracurricular Activities**

The Education Program Director may remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. A removal from privileges and/or extracurricular activities is of subject to the procedures set forth herein.

#### **Education Services and Academic Progress under §37H¾**

Students serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school.

Students who were expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, have the opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide Education Service Plan.

### **Services during Removals and School-Wide Alternative Options**

Students who are suspended from school for 10 or fewer consecutive school days, whether in or out of school, have the opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension; make up assignments; including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects. The Education Program Director or designee shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion, to make up assignments, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed.

These services may include, but is not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, and Saturday school and/or online/distance learning.

If HVM suspends a student for more than 10 consecutive school days, HVM is required to provide the student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school or school district shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service.

### **Bullying Prevention and Intervention**

Children learn best when they feel safe, respected, and cared for. Hill View Montessori Charter Public School (HVM) has made a commitment to the safety and security of all students in order to limit the interruption to the educational environment. Every child and adult in the school plays an integral part in ensuring this goal. However, there are times when students may feel excluded or bullied. Our Steps to Respect program defines bullying *as unfair and one-sided. It happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening, or leaving someone out on purpose.* Our students and our school staff have been taught to recognize and report bullying. Students know they can report bullying to anyone and at any time.

HVM has created and implemented a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (BPIP) which has been approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in response to the Public Law [M.G.L. c. 71, § 370](#). This plan defines bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation and outlines the actions which will be taken. HVM investigates all reports and claims of bullying. We have an open reporting system in which any concerned person (students, staff, parents, guardians, or others) may report a suspected incident of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation. We are a community committed to address each incident and empowering students and families to be a part of the solution. The Educational Program Director will receive all reports. The primary goal is to restore a sense of safety and security for all parties involved.

HVM Staff participate in annual training which provides them with the knowledge and skills to: understand the role of friendship skills in preventing bullying, recognize bullying, support children who are involved in bullying situations, and intervene safely and effectively in bullying situations. They are taught to handle all reports of bullying in the Four-A Response Process: Affirm, Ask, Assess, and Act.

The HVM BPIP addresses bullying behavior, including cyber bullying, on the part of students enrolled at Hill View Montessori Charter Public School at the time of the incident. The scope of the plan includes any activity (whether initiated within the classroom or other parts of the school building, on school grounds or the school bus, at school-sponsored or related activities or functions both on or off school grounds, or within the home) that has demonstrated adverse educational impact on a targeted child. It also applies to the use of electronic devices (including computers, the internet, cell phones, etc.) as well as the use of school or home computers, programs, or networks.

The Code of Conduct will address any negative or disruptive behaviors not defined as bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation. This Code, instead, behaviors that are not defined as bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation are addressed through the school's educational program and code of conduct which integrate the teaching of tolerance, compassion, and harmony between and among students.

*See the HVM website for a copy of the school's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, under Families/Documents & Forms.*

## **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL**

Effective communication supports the Montessori triangle of child, school, and parent. HVM has put several structures in place to ensure ongoing communication.

### **Wednesday Notes**

Each week families are emailed a newsletter called “Wednesday Notes,” along with other relevant flyers, order forms, etc. The Notes contain information about upcoming events, school information, parent education articles and calendar information for the month. Families who do not have internet access may request hard copies.

### **HVM Website**

The HVM website has additional information related to the school, including the original charter contract with the State. Use of the website is encouraged and serves as an invaluable means for ongoing communication. An event calendar is included on the web site and is updated regularly.

### **Parent Education**

Each year, HVM provides parent education on topics pertaining to Montessori education and/or child development. Suggestions for topics are welcome from parents.

### **Parent Conferences**

Parent conferences provide an avenue for parents and teachers to track and evaluate the progress of their child (ren). Parents are provided with their child or children’s progress report prior to this meeting and occur twice during the school year in November and March. The progress report is sent home in June and parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting if they have questions for the teacher. At each conference, parents and teachers discuss the child’s current performance and share ideas and plans to support the student over the upcoming school year.

### **Observations**

HVM opens its classrooms for scheduled observations beginning in October. *See the HVM website for Observation Guidelines, under Families/Documents & Forms.*

### **Communicating with Staff**

When a family has questions or concerns it is important that they be addressed as soon as possible. General questions related to busing, lunch, and other scheduling issues should be directed to the front office 978.521.2616, extension 121. Questions related to learning and the classroom should be addressed to the lead teacher either through phone or email. *See the HVM website for HVM Staff Directory contact information.* Should the lead teacher be unable to address a concern, it should be brought to the Educational Program Director. If the concern is still not addressed, it can be brought to the attention of the Executive Director.

For other concerns, not directly related to learning and the classroom, questions can be directed to the individual on the Administrative Team who has responsibility for the department/topic. The HVM Administrative Team includes the Executive Director (ED), the Educational Program Director, the Facilities/Business Manager, the Technology and Data Manager, and the Business Accountant/HR Liaison.

Please refer to the following list of each administrator’s responsibilities. The front office/administrative assistants are always available to assist you in directing your question or concern as well.

### **Grievance Procedures**

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School places tremendous value on grace, courtesy, respect and responsibility. As such we encourage parents/guardians and staff to develop open lines of communication with each other for the benefit of the children attending the school. We acknowledge however, that from time to time, situations may arise that are upsetting. If a parent/guardian, student, staff member or other individuals or groups are not satisfied with a school decision, policy or act; or believes that HVM has violated or is violating any provision of Massachusetts General Law they should follow the process outlined in the HVM Grievance Policy. *See the HVM website for the HVM Grievance Policy, under Families/Documents & Forms.*

If after following the Grievance Policy the outcome is not sufficient, the complaint may be submitted in writing to the Commissioner of Education.

### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

In accordance with state and federal regulations, students are ensured the right to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) within the least restrictive environment. The Montessori educational model is well-suited to the inclusion model because it assumes that all students have different needs and learning styles. Within a Montessori classroom there is an emphasis for all children to work at their own pace, using an individualized program and multi-sensory materials.

HVM provides instruction according to the inclusion model unless determined otherwise by the Special Education Team. Students who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) receive extra assistance in the classroom and when necessary, direct services in the form of a “pullout” from class.

### **District Curriculum Accommodation Plan**

Massachusetts Special Education Law requires that all school districts develop a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP). The purpose of the DCAP is to assist principals in ensuring that all efforts have been made to meet students’ needs in regular education. The intent of the plan adopted by HVM is to increase the capacity of the school to meet the individual needs of diverse student learners. The Educational Program Director (EPD) and staff are involved in implementing the DCAP for the school. *See Appendix E for HVM’s District Curriculum Accommodation Plan.*

### **Teacher Assistance Teams (TAT)**

The Teacher Assistance Team is a group of general education teachers, specialists, and Title 1 teachers who meet with the Educational Program Director (EPD) on a weekly basis. They collaborate with staff members who need assistance problem-solving and generating ideas to address student(s) needs in their classrooms. They work with teachers to develop strategies, modifications, and accommodations to ensure that by all means possible the child’s needs are being met. The TAT meets on an ongoing basis to assess whether the developed action plan is successful. If no further progress is made with the given supports, the student may be referred to special education for further evaluation. This assistance team is a mandatory component of the school’s special education pre-referral process.

The TAT process is generated by the classroom teacher if a student presents with either a learning or behavioral problem(s) in school. The teacher requests assistance in written form with the TAT Leader. The TAT Leader confers with the teacher and schedules a meeting of the TAT. At the meeting, the team makes recommendations about the types of accommodations that the teachers can try within the classroom for a specific length of time. A follow-up meeting is scheduled at which time additional accommodation recommendations may be made.

If accommodations are working, the TAT Leader will check in on an ongoing basis with the teacher to see if any further assistance is needed. If it is determined that the accommodations are not working and is supported by data, a request for evaluation will be completed.

### **New Special Needs Students**

If a new special needs student comes into HVM with an IEP, a Special Education Team meeting will be held as soon as possible with the classroom teacher, the parents/guardians, and the Special Education Team Chairperson assigned to the students in order to determine how best to meet the child’s needs in the new school setting. This Team will review the current IEP to determine how the agreed upon goals and services may be best delivered in the Montessori inclusion setting. The team may suggest amendments, further testing, or other suggestions based on the findings. The special education team will reconvene as often as necessary to monitor the student’s progress.

### **504 Plans**

The requirements of American’s with Disabilities, Section 504 define an individual with a disability as one whom: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that *substantially* limits one or more life activities; or (2) has a record of such impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such impairment. A 504 plan will be developed, as needed, to create specific reasonable accommodations to assist the student in the classroom.

## Counseling Services

HVM employs a full time school social worker and a part time psychologist who provide support to students and families to facilitate students' abilities to perform and function effectively in the classroom. In addition to facilitating various social skills and support groups, both of these individuals will provide some individual counseling. The school social worker and psychologist work with the EPD and other members of the HVM staff to formulate both specific behavior plans for some students, as well as to devise and implement a model for behavior for the school community as a whole.

The School Social worker has also connection with Northeast Behavioral Health for both emergency situations as well as ongoing counseling services.

## Health Services

HVM employs a full time Registered Nurse who provides acute medical treatment, manages chronic health conditions and provides medication administration to students while in school. The school nurse develops comprehensive medical and emergency plans with input from parents, the child's physician, and the classroom teachers in order to accommodate learning and promote optimal levels of health for those children with chronic health conditions.

Mandated periodic screenings for vision, hearing, growth, and posture are done and/or supervised by the Registered Nurse according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations to detect any potential concern that may hinder the learning of the child in the classroom. Appropriate referrals are made based on the results of the screenings.

See the following Health Policy section for further details related to health services at HVM.

## HEALTH SERVICES

### School Physician

Paula Wright-Boulanger, MD, FAAP  
Pentucket Medical Associates  
One Parkway  
Haverhill, MA 01830  
978.521.3230

The role of the school physician is as consultant. No medical care of the students is provided. The school nurse consults with the physician on an as needed basis for advice related to school health issues and health and safety policies. Dr. Boulanger also provides standing orders for the School Nurse to administer emergency medications in school.

HVM employs a full time Registered Nurse to provide care to students and staff who become acutely ill or injured. The School Nurse also provides medical treatment for students with chronic health conditions requiring nursing services or medication in the school setting. Parents are notified of treatment by letter, form, or phone call if needed.

### Mandated Periodic Health Screenings

In accordance with the Department of Public Health and Department of Education regulations, the School Nurse performs the following periodic mandated health screenings:

| Screening Performed                       | Grade(s) Screened  |
|---|--|
| Vision                                    | K through 5 <sup>th</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> grades           |
| Hearing                                   | K through 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> grades           |
| Postural (Scoliosis)                      | 5 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> grades                 |
| Height, Weight, and Body Mass Index (BMI) | 1 <sup>st</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , and 7 <sup>th</sup> grades |

Screenings are NOT comprehensive exams but may indicate the need for further assessment by your child's doctor or a specialist. Parents will **ONLY** be notified by letter of above screening results of vision, hearing, and scoliosis screenings that are **not within normal limits**. Any concerns will require referral to a medical provider and then parents will communicate follow-up outcome to the School Nurse. Results of all growth screenings (height, weight and body mass index) are confidential and will be shared with parents by letter from the Health Office. Screening results are a part of your child's health record and are securely maintained by the School Nurse in the Health Office.

## Procedures for Illness and Infectious Diseases

Our main concern when children become ill is the comfort, well-being, and readiness of the individual child to learn, as well as the health of the other children and members of HVM staff. The following guidelines should be observed by parents:

Please **DO NOT** send your child to school if they have:

- fever of 100.3 or greater
- vomiting within the past 24 hours
- diarrhea within the past 8 hours
- rash not previously diagnosed by your child's doctor
- severe cold or cough
- conjunctivitis with drainage from the eye (may return after 24 hrs. of antibiotic treatment)
- impetigo (may return after 24 hrs. of antibiotics)
- strep throat (may return after 24 hrs. of antibiotics)
- any acute illness that does not allow them to fully participate in school activities.

If it is determined that your child develops any of the above at school, the parent, guardian, or a designated individual will need to pick your child up within an hour of notification.

The School Nurse and Administration may need to periodically revise any of the above guidelines based on local, state, or federal public health guidelines or mandates related to a public health outbreak.

The School Nurse will notify parents by a memo if there are any illness trends identified. It is important for you to notify the Health Office if your child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness. If you have questions about a certain illness you may contact the School Nurse at any time at 978.521.2616, ext. 110.

## Physical Exam, Immunization, and Pre-school Vision Screening Requirements

In accordance with Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations, each child is required to have a physical examination **upon entry** to school and then **every three to four years following entry**. We require updated physical exams for students entering kindergarten, 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades. If the child has a medical condition that requires continuous assessment by medical personnel, a physical will be required more frequently. Each child must be fully immunized or present written documentation of a medical or religious exemption.

The initial immunizations required prior to school entry are as follows:

- 5 doses of DTaP/DTP (Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus)
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 4 doses of Polio
- 2 doses of MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
- 2 dose Varicella vaccine or physician-certified reliable history of chicken pox disease
- 1 dose of Tdap for those entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade

Source: Immunization Program website: [www.mass.gov/dph/imm](http://www.mass.gov/dph/imm)

Also required as documented by physician upon entry:

- Lead blood test for entering Kindergarten students
- Pre-school vision screening for entering Kindergarten students

## Medication Administration at School

The Public Health School Health Services Department requires that certain procedures are followed with regard to the administration of medications to children at school. All HVM parents and staff/faculty must follow these guidelines and procedures. Medication is given **ONLY** by the School Nurse and requires the following:

1. **Written parental authorization** which indicates that the medication is for the specific child and filled out by the parent and submitted to the school nurse.
2. **Written order from the doctor** for all long term and "as needed" medications. Short term anti-biotic treatment may be given as defined by the original pharmacy. The labeled medicine container must include the child's name; the name of the

drug; the dosage (number of times per day and number of days the medication is to be administered); and the doctor's name written by the pharmacist. The pharmacist may need to divide the medication into two bottles so that one can remain home and one can be sent to school. It is not convenient to transport this medication back and forth and may lead to missed doses.

3. All medication sent to the school **MUST BE** in their original container.

4. The School Nurse will maintain a written record of the administration of any medication. The completed medication record shall be made part of the child's health record.

5. At HVM all medications will be stored locked in the health office out of the reach of children and under proper conditions for sanitation, preservation, security and safety. All unused medications shall be disposed of, or returned to the parent, when no longer needed.

Parents may **NEVER** send medication to school with their child. It must be handed to the school nurse or teacher from an adult.

In the event that the School Nurse or Substitute Nurse is not available, no medication will be given. The parent or guardian is required to come to the school and give the medication. This includes regular scheduled medication and over the counter medications. Epi-pens are an exception to this regulation. Massachusetts law allows trained staff members to administer Epi-pens in the case of a severe allergic reaction during the regular school day, at school sponsored events, and on field trips.

#### **Medications on Field Trips**

Special arrangements must be made to allow medication on field trips. Parents must contact the School Nurse so that accommodations can be made.

#### **Allergy Awareness Policy**

HVM is committed to the health, safety, and independence of all students and seeks to balance the freedoms of the school community with the needs of those who suffer from life threatening food allergies. As such, HVM has created an Allergy Awareness Policy that highlights the general guidelines, anticipated educational requirements, school-wide precautions, classroom practices and responsibilities of HVM community members in order to maximize the safety of those who suffer from severe food based allergies. It was created after considerable research and recognizes that it is impossible to create a policy that **guarantees** the safety of those who suffer from life-threatening food allergies.

Children with severe allergies that may lead to anaphylaxis, a severe, life threatening condition must have an **Allergy/Food Allergy Action Plan** in place at the school along with specific medications the child's doctor has ordered for the treatment of this condition.

**HVM has some peanut/nut free classrooms.** Parents are notified yearly of this policy for his/her child's classroom status. Please do not send in any products that contain nuts if your child is in a Peanut and Tree Nut Free classroom. HVM teachers and staff do their best to monitor foods that come in to the school but we cannot guarantee that nuts or nut products will not accidentally enter our school. Students should not share food in the classroom because of this reason. Parents of children with severe life threatening allergies should stress this to their child to assist in avoiding an accidental exposure to a food they may cause a life threatening allergic reaction.

#### General Guidelines Regarding Peanut/Nut Free Classrooms

There are specific guidelines by level (i.e. Kindergarten, Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary & Middle School) based on ages of students, developmental appropriateness, and ability to assume responsibility for oneself. In general, older students will be expected to "take more responsibility" for their health and safety while at school and for their classroom community in general. All students with severe allergies will have written "Anaphylaxis Emergency Plans" developed by the nurse along with the students' parents and physician. Allergy information and emergency plans will be shared with teachers and staff.

Students and staff will be educated annually with general information about food allergies (recognition, reactions and treatment), the importance of not sharing foods, and best practices with regards to proper hand washing, table and surface cleaning, and prevention of cross contamination of allergens. Student specific Epi-pens and the student's "Anaphylaxis

Emergency Plan” will be kept in “safety sacks” in the classroom for use by trained teachers and staff. Whenever possible, two Epi-pens will be kept at school: one in the classroom and one in the health office. Safety sacks containing Epi-pens and student information will travel with an adult whenever the student changes rooms for electives or specials, goes to recess, etc.

Parents will be notified which classrooms **do not** allow nuts or nut products.

Parents will be informed through written communication in the form of communications in Wednesday Notes or other mailings sent home as well as more formal trainings as needed. The school nurse will ensure direct contact with every parent/guardian of those students who are in nut-free classrooms to ensure their understanding of the requirements of the classroom as it relates to food products. The nurse will also attend back-to-school nights in the fall to provide information about the school allergy policy. Additional and directed education will be provided to those parents who volunteer to support the school via the hospitality committee.

#### Kindergarten and Lower Elementary Level

These classrooms will be peanut or nut-free on a classroom-by-classroom basis depending on the needs of the students. **Classrooms that have students with severe peanut or tree nut allergies will not allow nuts.**

#### Upper Elementary and Middle School Level

These classrooms **will not automatically** be deemed peanut or nut-free but instead, will take special precautions to minimize cross-contamination of tables where peanuts and tree nuts could be consumed.

Time will be allowed for proper hand washing before and after lunch and snack times.

**NOTE:** Hand sanitizer is **NOT** a proper way to clean peanut and nut residue off of hands. It only spreads it around on the hands.

#### **Children with Asthma, Allergies, or any other Special Medical Needs**

For children who have other allergies or special medical conditions which will require limiting exposure to certain foods, pets, etc., parents must notify the school and the classroom teachers as soon as possible. Parents are required to update this information every year and are required to let the school know during the year if such a situation becomes known.

Children with other medical considerations such as diabetes, asthma, seizure disorder, or any other chronic medical condition should have an Individualized Health Plan (IHP), Asthma Action Plan (AAP) or an Emergency Medical Plan (EMP) in place. Contact the School Nurse for assistance with this at 978.521.2626 ext. 110. The School Nurse will contact any parent or guardian who lists a special medical consideration or allergy on the enrollment or medical forms. All medical plans must be updated annually.

Copies of all health forms and plans will be kept in the Health Office and only shared with those who have a “need to know” in order to assist the child with day-to-day learning or health needs. Parents are required to sign a HIPPA/FERPA Privacy Release Form at the beginning of each year along with a health update and medication administration authorization.

#### **Emergency Treatment Plan**

Parents and Guardians are required to give Emergency Contact information to the school upon enrollment, yearly after admission, and whenever the information changes. It is **imperative** that school personnel be able to contact the parent/guardian in the event of an individual or school-wide emergency.

CPR and First Aid are offered to teachers at least annually and required of the Crisis Team. HVM has Emergency Protocols that are followed in any emergency situation.

In the event that Emergency Medical Services (EMS/911) is called, EMS personnel will determine the best place for the child to be transported for medical care. The medical facilities in this area are Merrimack Valley Hospital (Haverhill), Holy Family Hospital (Methuen), and Lawrence General Hospital (Lawrence). You may alert the school of your preferences and every effort will be made to honor your wishes but the final decision is made by the professionals that transport your child to the needed services.

## **Contacting the Health Office**

The school nurse can be contacted any time with questions or concerns about the health and safety of your child or for clarification of any policies. The nurse can be reached at 978.521.2616, ext. 110.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY AND EMERGENCIES**

Safety of children is a top priority at HVM. The following procedures have been put in place to ensure staff and student safety:

### **Locked Doors**

Entrances to HVM are locked at all times. Anyone wishing to enter the school must ring the doorbell at the front entrance and wait for a staff person to open the door. Once inside, the person must sign in.

### **Required Background Checks**

All staff, volunteers, and parents who may be with HVM students in an *unsupervised* setting are required to participate in a formal background check, consisting of a CORI and a SORI. The Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) documents a person's criminal history. The Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) is a record of convictions for specified sexual offenses committed as an adult or juvenile. HVM is required to notify the person if there are any findings.

COR and SORI checks are only valid for three years. HVM encourages all individuals to maintain a current documentation with the Business Manager. You may request application forms at the front desk, and a copy of a valid form of identification (e.g., a license) must be attached to the application.

### **Fire Drills**

At the beginning of the year, classroom teachers review fire drill procedures with students. An exit plan is posted in each classroom. HVM works with the Haverhill Fire Department to hold fire drills throughout the year and is required to host at least three each year.

### **Emergency Evacuation or Lock-Down**

HVM has developed an emergency plan that deals with evacuations and lock downs of the building that are necessary due to weather, intruders, or other emergency events. A copy of the plan is available in the front office. Preparedness drills are held at least once a year with staff and students.

### **Fire, Weapons, Illegal Substances and Tobacco**

Possession or use of fire, weapons of any kind, illegal substances, or tobacco products within the school building, school facilities, or on school grounds or school buses by any individual – including school personnel, students, and parents – is prohibited at all times. In such instance that any of these items are brought into the school, the EPD will follow the consequences outlined in the Code of Conduct.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect**

HVM Employees are, by law, Mandated Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect. If there is reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon him/her which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare, school personnel are required to notify the MA Department of Children and Family (DCF). Abuse includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect, including malnutrition.

Either prior to or immediately following the notification to DCF, parents/guardians will be notified of the action taken. HVM will provide support to families in this situation whenever it is appropriate.

### **Harassment and Discrimination**

HVM is committed to protecting the rights and dignity of students, parents and staff. HVM prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Any actions that disrupt the safe learning environment of HVM will not be tolerated.

It is HVM's policy to provide equal opportunities for all current and prospective students, parents and staff regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or disability for all current and

prospective school community members. Further, HVM will make reasonable accommodations for individuals with mental or physical disabilities in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Harassment of students, parents or staff occurring in the school or in other settings in which these groups may interact is unlawful and will not be tolerated. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about harassment, or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a harassment complaint, is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

HVM takes allegations of harassment seriously and will respond promptly to file complaints. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has taken place, HVM shall impose such corrective action(s) as is necessary up to and including termination of employees and expulsion of students.

### ***Examples of Harassment***

- Verbal Harassment: Derogatory or vulgar comments regarding a person's race, gender, religion, ethnicity or physical appearance; suggestive or insulting comments, sexual epithets, jokes, reference to sexual conduct, etc.
- Physical Harassment: Infliction of unwanted bodily contact.
- Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances or comments, gestures or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Distribution of written, electronic or graphic material having the same effect. Also, the use of one's authority and power to coerce another individual into sexual relations or to punish the other for his/her refusal.

### ***Complaints of Harassment***

If any student, parent or staff member believes that she/he has been subjected to harassment, he/she has the right to file a complaint. This may be done in writing or orally to the Executive Director at 978.521.2616, extension 100.

### ***Investigation of Harassment***

All complaint allegations are investigated promptly and fairly. Investigators may include the Executive Director and members from the Board of Trustees. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent that it is practical under the circumstances. The process will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint, the alleged offender and any witnesses. When the investigation is completed, HVM will inform both parties of the results. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, HVM will work to eliminate the offending conduct and when appropriate, impose disciplinary action, up to and including termination of any employees and expulsion of students that may be involved.

### ***State and Federal Remedies***

In addition to filing a complaint with HVM, a formal complaint may be filed with either or both of the government agencies listed below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit anyone from filing a complaint with these agencies.

The United States Equal Opportunity  
Commission (EEOC)  
One Congress Street – 10th Floor  
Boston, MA 02114  
Tel: (617) 565-3200

The Massachusetts Commission Against  
Discrimination (MCAD)  
One Ashburton Place Room 601  
Boston, MA 02108  
Tel: (617) 727-3990

### ***Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) Plan***

The AHERA regulation requires each Local Education Agency (LEA) to conduct a re-inspection of all friable and non-friable known or assumed asbestos-containing building material in each building that they lease, own or otherwise use as a school building. The AHERA re-inspection is to be performed by an accredited inspector at least once every three years from the time of implementation of the original management plan.

In 2004, prior to the opening of school, HVM engaged Diversified Environmental Corp., 17 Accord Park Drive, Suite 200, Norwell, MA, to examine the building and develop an AHERA plan. That plan was filed with DESE and a copy is available for view at the school.

In January 2010, an AHERA plan for 75 Foundation Ave was developed by New England Environmental of Groveland.

## **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

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

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Educational Program Director a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the Educational Program Director, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

*Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:*

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

## **Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

1. *Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED).
2. *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of*
  - Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
  - Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
  - Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
3. *Inspect*, upon request and before administration or use protected information surveys of students; instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum

*Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:*

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

## Physical Restraint

603 CMR 46.00 was put forth by the Board of Education to govern the use of physical restraint on students in publicly funded elementary and secondary school programs. The purpose of 603 CMR 46.00 is to ensure that every student participating in a Massachusetts public education program is free from unreasonable use of physical restraint.

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School (HVM) uses the Proactive Alternatives for Change (PAC) program to train selected staff members in the appropriate use of physical restraint. As stated in the PAC Training packet, "PAC Training encompasses a wide variety of therapeutic interventions for the prevention of aggressive behavior. In everything we do, our primary mission is to insure the safe, humane and dignified treatment of individuals by equipping those trained with a broad range of mental, emotional and behavior skills." Staff members who are PAC Trained are the only ones able to administer physical restraint.

Physical restraint is the use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement. It is only administered by a trained staff member and is used to keep a child from hurting him/herself or others. It is only used when all other attempts to calm a student have not worked. A person administering physical restraint uses only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm.

In accordance with 603 CMR 46.00, restraint is defined as follows:

**Extended restraint:** A physical restraint in which the duration is more than 20 minutes. Extended restraints increase the risk of injury and therefore require additional written documentation.

**Physical escort:** Touching or holding a student without the use of force for the purpose of directing the student.

**Physical restraint:** The use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement

**Restraint-Other:** Limiting the physical freedom of an individual student by mechanical means or seclusion in a limited space or location, or temporarily controlling the behavior of a student by chemical means. The use of chemical or mechanical restraint is prohibited unless explicitly authorized by a physician and approved in writing by the parent or guardian. The use of seclusion restraint is prohibited in a public education program.

Following the release of a student from a restraint, HVM implements follow-up procedures which include: review of the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint; review of the incident with the staff who administered the restraint; and consideration of the appropriate follow-up for students who witnessed the incident. The Education Program Director or his/her designee verbally informs the parent or guardian of the restraint as soon as possible. *Refer to the HVM website for the Physical Restraint Policy.*

## Appendix A

### Discipline for Students with Disabilities

#### Students identified as having special needs

1. All HVM students are expected to abide by the guidelines as set forth in this Code of Conduct Chapter 71B of the Mass. General Laws, formerly known as Chapter 766, requiring that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and whose individualized program is described in an Individualized Educational Program (IEP).
  - a. Students with Special Needs may be suspended for up to ten (10) consecutive days, and may also be suspended in excess of ten (10) cumulative days, as fully outlined under M.G.L.c. 71B, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Such suspensions may carry out without any further or additional process.
  - b. Suspensions or exclusions in excess of ten (10) consecutive days or ten (10) cumulative days may also occur, provided that the conduct for which the student is being disciplined is not a manifestation of his/her disability, and the District provides educational services which will allow the student to access the general curriculum and to make progress toward his/her goals.
2. The Individuals with Disabilities Education (IDEA) and M.G.L.c. 71B allow school personnel to move a student with disabilities to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days, if that student is in possession of a dangerous weapon at school or a school function or on school property, is in possession or uses a controlled substance or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function or on school property, or inflicts serious bodily injury on a person, including him/herself. The appropriate interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the IEP team.
3. The IDEA and M.G.L. c. 71B also allow school personnel the option of asking a hearing officer or a court to move children with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days, if they are substantially likely to injure themselves or others in their current placement.
4. When a special needs student has been suspended for more than (10) consecutive or cumulative days in a school year, such that a substantial change in placement is occurring or will occur, the IEP TEAM will meet to conduct a manifestation determination. Relevant members of the TEAM meet for the manifestation determination, and they answer two questions, after reviewing relevant documents and misconduct of the student:
  - Is the misconduct the result of failure to implement the student's IEP? And
  - Is the misconduct caused by, or does it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?

A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the Parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review, but no later than five (5) school days after the review.

5. If the IEP team finds that the misconduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student may be disciplined according to the discipline policy in the HVM Code of Conduct. The student will receive educational services during the period of suspension or exclusion. If the IEP Team finds that the misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, then the school may still be able to implement an IAES (see #2 and 3 above). If the IAES is not possible, then the student will remain in his/her current placement, and the team will arrange for a functional behavioral assessment (if one has not been conducted on the student) and the development or modification of a behavior intervention plan.

6. The Executive Director (or designee) will notify the Special Education Office of offenses that warrant a suspension of a special needs student and a record will be kept of such notice.

### **Students identified as having a disability and provided with a Section 504 plan**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal statute which prohibits a qualified individual with a disability from being excluded from the participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance because of his/her disability. 29 U.S.C.—794 and its implementing regulations, 34 C.F.R. 104 *et seq.*

1. All HVM students are expected to abide by the guidelines as set forth in this Code of Conduct. A student on a Section 504 plan may be disciplined like any other non-disabled student. However, if the student is going to be suspended for ten (10) or more consecutive days, expelled or suspended for more than ten (10) cumulative days (and there is a change in placement as a result), then a manifestation determination review shall be conducted. The student's 504 team shall convene, and answer two questions after reviewing relevant documents and the misconduct of the student:
  - Is the misconduct the result of failure to implement the student's 504 plan? And
  - Is the misconduct caused by, or does it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?

A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the Parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review, but no later than five (5) school days after the review.

2. If the 504 team finds that the misconduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student may be disciplined according to the discipline policy in the HVM Code of Conduct. The student will receive educational services during the period of suspension or exclusion. If the 504 Team finds that the misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, then the school may still be able to implement an IAES. If the IAES is not possible, then the student will remain in his/her current placement, and the team will arrange for a functional behavioral assessment (if one has not been conducted on the student) and the development or modification of a behavior intervention plan.

When a student with a disability is reported to the police for an alleged crime, special education and disciplinary records may be furnished to the police.

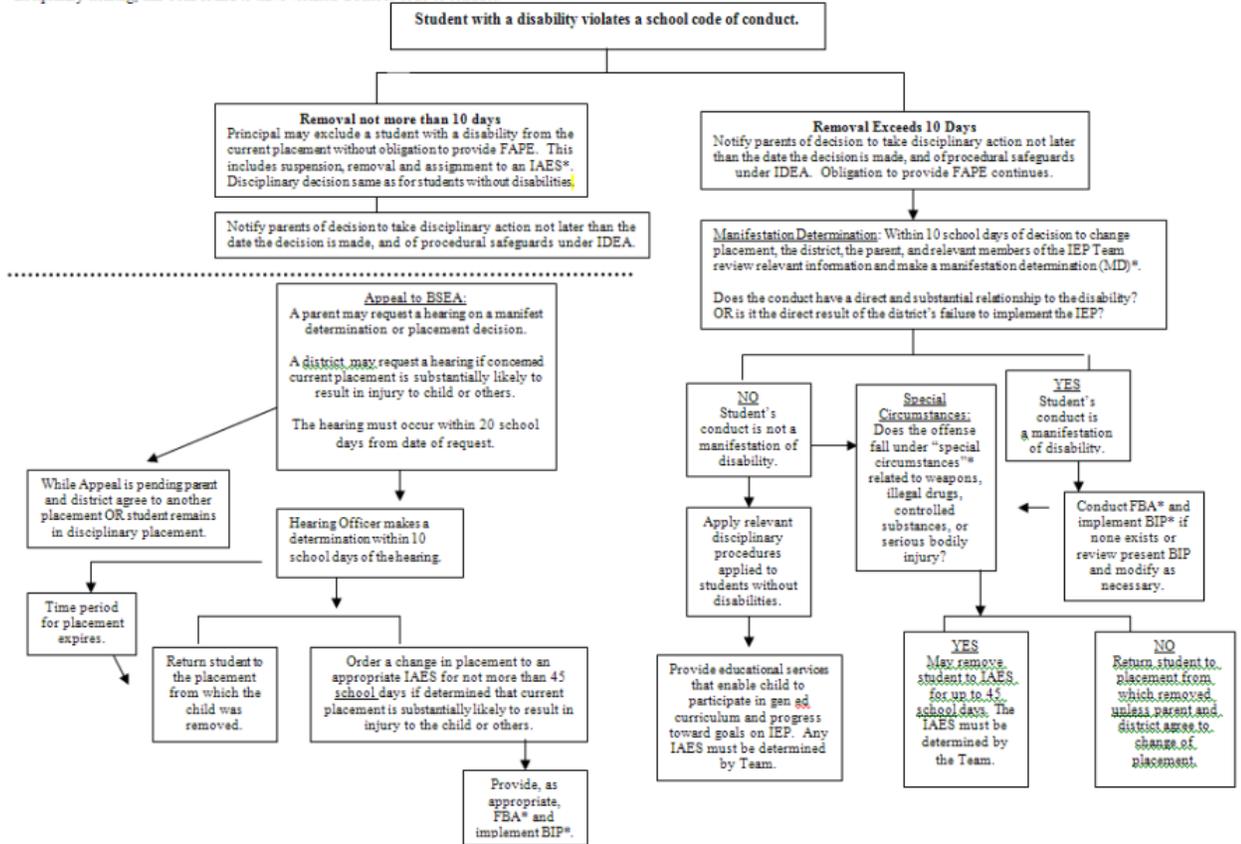
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Regulations at 34 CFR 300.535 state the following:

Nothing in this part prohibits an agency from reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities or prevents State law enforcement and judicial authorities from exercising their responsibilities with regard to the application of Federal and State law to crimes by a child with a disability. An agency reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability must ensure that copies of the special education and disciplinary records of the child are transmitted for consideration by the appropriate authorities to whom the agency reports the crime. An agency reporting a crime under this section may transmit copies of the child's special education and disciplinary records only to the extent that the transmission is permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. (Authority: 20 U.S.C 1415(k)(6).

**Placement in Disciplinary Procedures  
Under IDEA 2004: Section 615(k)**

(to be read in conjunction with state law under M.G.L. c.71, §§ 37H & 37H1/2 & 37H3/4)

A Principal may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a student with a disability who, after a disciplinary hearing, has been found to have violated a school code of conduct.



**Appendix B**

**REFLECTION (ACCOUNTABILITY) WORKSHEETS**

**Middle School**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

*This is to be used as a reflection on **your** actions/choices and how they relate to the “5 Core Values” of the Middle School. Our goal is to create a positive learning environment in which **you** share a commitment to understand and accept a balance between individual freedom and responsible behavior.*

In your own words, share with me what happened: (include date, time and person(s) involved):

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1. How did your actions show/not show **Responsibility and Leadership**?

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2. How did your actions reflect/not reflect **Trust and Honesty** within your community?

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3. How did your actions show/not show **Grace and Courtesy** within your community?

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4. How did your actions show/not show **Fun and Optimism**?

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5. Did your actions show that you **Embrace the Weirdness**? Why or why not?

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6. What are some ways you could have handled this situation differently to gain a positive response?

| <i>Your Actions</i> | <i>Results</i> |
|---------------------|----------------|
|                     |                |
|                     |                |
|                     |                |

7. What lessons have you learned from this experience?

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(A copy of this reflection will be given to the Middle School Coordinator.)

Excerpts from the Code of Conduct (p.15)

**Common responsibilities:**

- To act as kind individuals and refrain from physically or emotionally harming others
- To refrain from any actions that compromises the health and safety of others
- To accept differences and seek to resolve conflicts in a mutually agreeable manner
- To value and respect personal and school property
- To express opinions and emotion in a positive and constructive manner
- To always be honest and
- To support other school members in their efforts to maintain a safe, positive, and respectful school



**LOWER ELEMENTARY REFLECTION CONFERENCE**  
(Teaching about *boundaries and self-control, good choices and care for others and our environment*)

**STUDENT NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TEACHER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. CAN YOU SHARE WITH ME WHAT HAPPENED?**

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**2. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT HOW YOU HANDLED THE SITUATION?**

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**3. WHAT COULD YOU HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY? (DID YOU USE THE PEACE CORNER?)**

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4. **WHAT IMPACT DO YOU THINK YOUR ACTIONS HAD ON THE CLASS/OTHER STUDENTS?**

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5. **WHAT CAN BE DONE TO RESOLVE (FIX) THIS SITUATION?**

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6. **WHAT CAN YOU DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME?**

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7. **WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM THIS EXPERIENCE?**

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Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Keep a copy to share at PT conferences, if applicable.)*



**UPPER ELEMENTARY REFLECTION WORKSHEET**  
(Teaching about *boundaries and self-control, good choices*  
*and care for others and our environment*)

**STUDENT NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **TEACHER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**THINK ABOUT THE PROBLEM YOU ARE DEALING WITH AND WRITE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS.**

**1. SHARE WITH ME WHAT HAPPENED?**

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**2. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT HOW YOU HANDLED THE SITUATION?**

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**3. WHAT COULD YOU HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY?**

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**4. WHAT IMPACT DO YOU THINK YOUR ACTIONS HAD ON THE CLASS/OTHER STUDENTS?**

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**5. WHAT CAN BE DONE TO RESOLVE (FIX) THIS SITUATION?**

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**6. WHAT CAN YOU DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME?**

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Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Keep a copy to share at PT conferences, if applicable.)*

## Appendix C

### Expulsion Policy

#### **Major Discipline**

Massachusetts General Laws (Chapter 71, Section 37H, 37H/1/2) govern due process for disciplinary removals from a public school and the services that a public school must provide during such removals. While such events are rare at HVM, it is important for families to know their rights and the procedures that the school will follow in order to comply with state law.

One aspect of these formal procedures is worth noting. Every school district must have an appeal process in place for any disciplinary removals from school. In a typical district, appeals would be made to the superintendent. As a Charter school, our Executive Director serves as the superintendent, so the Director cannot also serve as the primary arbiter in disciplinary decisions regarding suspension or expulsion. Consequently, the procedures that follow list the Educational Program Director as the administrator who will hear and decide upon all disciplinary cases that may result in the removal of a student from school. This leaves the school Executive Director available for any appeals that students or families may decide to pursue.

#### ***Provisions Governing Due Process for Disciplinary Removals and Services during Removals***

Student disciplinary offenses resulting in removal from the school setting are subject to due process procedures, including notices, hearings, appeals, and educational services during removals. The following sections provide information about these rights.

Please note that students have the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense, at any and all hearings concerning student discipline. If you wish to bring an attorney to any hearing or meeting at the school, please inform HVM immediately. If you fail to inform the school prior to bringing an attorney to a hearing, and HVM's attorney is not present, then HVM will exercise its right to cancel and reschedule the meeting to ensure that its attorney can attend. This rescheduling may delay the hearing or meeting, and if so, your child's disciplinary removal will be extended until a decision is rendered following the rescheduled hearing or meeting. HVM hereby notifies you that it may have its legal counsel present at any hearings and meetings involving student discipline. The Executive Director and or Education Program Director/Principal must provide student with written notice, of the charges and of the reasons and evidence for expulsion before the expulsion takes effect. Included in the written notice to the student is his/her right to a hearing with the principal before the expulsion takes effect, including date, time and location. Student's parent/ guardian will be present at the hearing.

#### **Notice of Student and Parent Rights Under G.L. c. 71§37H**

7. This ***Notice of Student and Parent Rights*** applies to student misconduct that involves the possession of or use of illegal substances or weapons, assault, vandalism, or violation of a student's civil rights. In practice, the decision to suspend rather than expel in serious cases may depend on whether the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Specifically, any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a

gun or a knife, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the Education Program Director. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance, including but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the Education Program Director. Any student who assaults the Executive Director, Education Program Director, teacher, instructional assistants, other educational or administrative staff on school premises or at a school-related or school-sponsored events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the Education Program Director.

Any student who is charged with any of the misconduct detailed above has an opportunity for a hearing before the Education Program Director. At the hearing, the student may have representation at his or her own expense, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Education Program Director. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, the right to counsel and the rights to confront and cross examine witnesses presented by the school. After said hearing, the Education Program Director may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Education Program Director to have committed the misconduct detailed above. If the principal decides to expel the student after the hearing, the principal shall give written notification at the hearing to student and parent of student of the right to appeal, the process for appealing the expulsion and the opportunity to receive educational services. In addition, the principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing to receive education services at the time the student is expelled.

Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to GL c. 71 §37H shall have the right to appeal to the Executive Director. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Executive Director of his/her appeal. The Executive Director shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian. The student has the right to counsel, at his or her own expense, at the hearing before the Executive Director. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section. The Executive Director shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternative educational program for the student. The Executive Director shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of school district with regard to the expulsion. That decision shall be the final decision of school district with regard to the expulsion.

Students who are suspended or expelled under §37H are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion. If the student withdraws from the HVM and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school/district/ district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's educational service plan.

**D. Notice of Rights under G.L. c. 71§37H½**

This Notice of Student and Parent Rights applies to student misconduct that involves student criminal or felony delinquency charges, findings, or admissions.

**Expulsion Following Felony Adjudication or Admission**

Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such felony or felony delinquency, the Education Program Director of the school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if the Education Program Director determines that the student's continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general

welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his/her right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall receive written notice of the student's rights to a hearing with the principal before the expulsion takes effect, including date, time, and location. The student's parents or guardian will be present at the hearing. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing to receive education services at the time the student is expelled. The student shall receive written notification of his/her rights to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing by the Executive Director.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Executive Director. The student shall notify the Executive Director in writing of his/her request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Executive Director shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Executive Director shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Education Program Director or designee, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Executive Director shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. The Executive Director's decision shall be the final decision of HVM with regard to the expulsion.

Students who are suspended or expelled under §37H are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion. If the student withdraws from the HVM and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school/district/ district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's educational service plan.

### **Services during Removals and School-Wide Alternative Options**

If HVM expels a student, HVM is required to provide the student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school or school district shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service. These services may include, but not limited to tutoring, alternative placement, and Saturday school and/or online/distance learning.

## Appendix D

### Non-Discrimination Policy

#### **Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity, Equal Access to Education and Non-Discrimination Statement**

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School (HVMCPS) is committed to equal education opportunity for all students and equal employment opportunity for all employees and students. HVMCPS's policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunity extends to all employment and academic considerations and programs.

The Board of Trustees, administration, and faculty and staff recognize that to assure equal opportunity for all students and employees, HVMCPS must take affirmative action to provide sufficient role models among the school leaders, employees, and staff who reflect the various racial and cultural backgrounds of our students. The attainment of an all-inclusive, discrimination-free environment, within our school is the primary goal of the Affirmative Action Plan.

HVMCPS commits to equal employment opportunity and equal access to education without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, veteran, genetic information, or marital status. We commit to making all reasonable efforts to ensure an environment free of discrimination or harassment on account of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, sex, religion, age, sexual orientation, disability, veteran, genetic information, gender identity or marital status and encourage all members of our community to support and foster the acceptance and inclusion of all individuals.

The Board of Trustees further ensures that all personnel activities including recruitment, employment, training, compensation, benefits and all other terms and conditions of employment are administered according to equal opportunity principles and operate to eliminate practices that may result in inequities and/or discrimination.

This Policy applies equally to all HVMCPS students, employees, authorized volunteers, parents, and other members of the school community. This Policy applies to conduct at school, at school events, and away from school in all other instances when HVMCPS is represented.

## Appendix E

### District Curriculum Accommodation Plan

The following information is provided to comply with the Massachusetts General Laws C. 71, & 38Q1/2 mandating that school districts provide a *District Curriculum Accommodation Plan* designed to ensure that all efforts have been made to meet students' needs in regular education classrooms and to avoid unnecessary referrals to special education.

*The Mission of the Hill View Montessori Charter Public School is to provide a grade K – 8 public education that promotes academic excellence using the Montessori philosophy. In partnership with teachers and parents, children attain high levels of academic, personal and social achievement and so prepared, become constructive contributors to our community.*

Following the mission of the school, Hill View Montessori meets the requirements of a District Accommodation Plan through its Montessori pedagogy that focuses on the development of the “whole child”. The school’s Accountability Plan further guides the school’s efforts to accommodate regular education students’ academic development.

#### **Student Assessment in a Montessori Environment**

A cornerstone of Montessori education is keen observation of each child as he pursues his work. The faculty uses a series of internal assessments to address the individual progress, including daily observation, individual learning plans, portfolios, and progress reports.

The child plays a central role in assessment. As each child matures, he plays an increasingly integral role in setting his own goals, assessing his own work, and tracking his own progress with teacher oversight and guidance.

#### **Level vs. Grade Assessment**

A key Montessori tenet underlying our approach to student assessment is that we follow and support the child, providing materials, settings, and lessons that, taken together, comprise the Montessori “prepared environment” that is appropriate for each successive development stage. It is well understood that children learn at different rates as they grow. While we cannot expect all children of a given age to be ready to learn the same curriculum at the same pace within a given year (especially if we give them latitude to fully explore their interests), we can set reasonable expectations for a cohort over a three-year cycle. Combined with the Montessori “prepared environment” and Montessori pedagogy, each classroom has a Lead Teacher and Instructional Assistant creating a low student-teacher ratio.

Maria Montessori defined the planes of development not in annual terms but in multi-year spans (0-6, 6-12, and 12-18), because she understood that the latter was a more accurate way of capturing the reality of human development. This is why there are multi-age classrooms in a Montessori school. Thus, we define our program in terms of *levels* (Kinderhaus, Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, and Middle School), rather than one-year *grades*. Likewise, we assess readiness to move up in the same increments. One of the key *internal* indicators of student achievement is our assessment of whether children have met learning objectives at the end of each level rather than at the end of each academic year. However, the school does track the progress within the level and reports it in a detailed progress report three times a year during parent teacher conferences.

## **Assessment**

### **Internal Measurement**

Assessment is a comprehensive system that relies heavily on existing Montessori practices of frequent observation and recording student data; student self-assessment; and a set of learning objectives that the Hill View Montessori faculty developed based on a correlated Montessori/Massachusetts Common Core. It consists of the following elements:

- Guidelines for teachers in observing student work (PD work with Sandra W. Andrews, Fall 2013)
- Tools for recording progress (teacher lesson record sheets)
- Tools for setting student goals (individual learning plans)
- Progress Monitoring (DRA, Dibels, SRI, school developed writing and mathematics measures)
- Portfolio development, both process and best-work
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade Celebration of Learning exhibitions before graduation
- Progress reports/Parent Conferences

The teachers use the collective evidence provided by observations, portfolios, and progress reports to determine whether a student has met or exceeded the learning objectives at the end of a developmental level. The teachers also collect ongoing progress monitoring assessments throughout the school year to ensure that each student is making progress. This data collection is very helpful when the Teacher Assistant Team (TAT) discusses a student of concern. The team looks at the progress monitoring as well as current work samples and teacher reports to help make the best intervention for a student.

### **Kindergarten Screening**

Hill View Montessori's screening team conducts developmental and health screenings on all incoming Kindergarten students, assessing readiness and identifying areas of concern. As the screening team works with the children, the school nurse gathers parent information to identify any health related barriers to learning.

### **Montessori Curriculum Matched to the Common Core**

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School coordinated the Montessori Curriculum to the Massachusetts Common Core. Montessori has lesson albums in each area – Language, Mathematics, History, Geography, Botany, Zoology, Geometry, Practical Life, Sensorial Development, and Grace and Courtesy.

The Middle School curriculum follows a secondary Montessori approach, while still utilizing the Common Core curriculum standards.

### **External Standardized Tests**

Hill View Montessori administers the MCAS as required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts striving to be “above state averages”.

### **Educational Audit**

The school conducts a biennial Montessori audit based upon the American Montessori Society Criteria for Accreditation, using an outside Montessori consultant. We are committed to practicing the Montessori methods in its purest form.

### **Professional Development**

Hill View Montessori teachers are required to be highly qualified and to undergo Montessori training for the age level and/or subject area where they teach. At Hill View Montessori, our instructional assistants are more than paraprofessionals as many have bachelor degrees and/or Montessori teacher assistant training.

Our professional development budget, comprised of local and grant funding, is used to continually improve best practices in teaching whether it is Montessori methods or traditional classroom methods. We devote one/half day each month to professional development and five days prior to the beginning of school and one day post calendar. Guest lecturers, Montessori specialists and faculty collaboration are incorporated into these sessions.

Hill View Montessori has a relationship with Northern Essex Community College. We serve as a site for Early Education interns and nursing interns which fosters cross-training between our school culture and others.

### **Curriculum Support Services**

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School has dedicated staff members to support the classroom teachers in instruction for students who need more than the usual attention available during the course of a day as noted by internal observation and assessments and/or external assessments such as MCAS:

- The social worker/school counselor coordinates services for students on 504 plans
- Three intervention specialists, all highly qualified in their areas, teach reading and math skills to our students identified as Title I
- Title I supports afterschool reading and math tutoring sessions for MCAS preparation
- A science enrichment program is available for Lower and Upper Elementary
- An ELL program supports students who qualify for intervention strategies
- Three certified special education teachers and 1.5 Special Education Teaching Assistants supporting student goals on IEP's
- Services, such as OT, PT, and Speech, are available as documented in student IEP's

Classroom teachers integrate typical accommodations and interventions into everyday Montessori practice, such as:

1. General accommodations
  - a. Repeated directions; small group lessons; individual assistance; daily agenda; transition prompts; redirecting; extended test/work time
  - b. Preferential seating
  - c. Frequent "check ins"
  - d. Clarification of directions
2. Organizational accommodations and interventions
  - a. Math and writing graphic organizers, such as four-square
  - b. Individual binders by student
  - c. Individual binders by subject
  - d. Places for finished and unfinished work
  - e. Organizational planners for upper level students
  - f. Planner check ins

- g. Cubby/locker organization lessons
  - h. “Chunking” assignments
  - i. Previewing materials
  - j. Parental contact for long term assignments
3. Technology
- a. Typing accommodations for certain writing assignments
  - b. Visual aids, such as computer/projects/whiteboards
  - c. Smart Board integration for Middle School Math

In the event that a teacher has found that these reasonable accommodations or interventions implemented in the classroom setting have not addressed a particular child’s learning challenges, then there is a process for a Teacher Assistant Team (TAT) meeting. A series of actions are conducted by a team of professionals to find interventions that will help the child in his or her learning. The team observes the child in the classroom; identifies and documents strengths and the individual learning style; determines appropriate additional strategies; helps the teacher to implement them; and evaluates its success.

If the strategy is producing the desired effect after collecting data for 6-8 weeks, then the team only meets at the request of the teacher. If the intervention is not successful after collecting data for 6-8 weeks, then alternate strategies are sought, and/or the student may be referred for a Special Education evaluation to include academic, cognitive and developmental, speech, OT, PT, health, and/or behavioral assessments. An IEP or 504 Plan may be developed to provide modifications or accommodations.

Hill View Montessori has a full-time social worker/counselor who works with teachers, administration, parents and students to help students with on-going behavioral/social emotional challenges. The School Psychologist is available in the event there is a need for more in-depth support and/or comprehensive testing.

### **English Language Learners**

To address the needs of Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students, Hill View Montessori has a protocol for identifying English Language Learners (ELL’s) starting with an inquiry on the application for enrollment. In the event the school is informed by the family that the language spoken in the house is not English, then the school administers a Home Language Survey and conducts a screening of the students English language skills with the ACCESS test part of WIDA to assess for proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Depending on the screening information, the student would then participate in the WIDA in the winter of the academic year to determine proficiency level and progress. If it is determined that a student is a LEP learner, then the student is provided a Sheltered English Immersion program of instruction and English language instruction. This student will be coded as LEP in the SIMS data and receive special test accommodations according to the degree of proficiency of English language use. Teachers who have LEP students will be provided with professional development opportunities for Sheltered English Immersion for subject matter and English language instruction.

### **Systematic Curriculum Development**

Each year the school chooses a curriculum area, based on assessment date, as a focus for professional development. Montessori lessons are discussed and are differentiated for the multi-age classroom. The faculty meets in curriculum collaboration study groups to continue this work.

### **Faculty Mentoring and Collaboration**

Faculty work together to support one another. During weekly collaborations, teachers plan, solve problems, and discuss observations and data collections to enhance their teaching, to provide continuity, and to support student learning. During professional development sessions, faculty and staff present workshops on best practices (Interactive Notebooks, Five Great Lessons) and identified needs within the building (classroom management, writing rubrics, Grace and Courtesy, community building, etc.).

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School supports best practice by utilizing our experienced teachers to support our new hires. One of our Montessori teachers coordinates and implements an Orientation and Mentor Program for all new hires. She also meets with Instructional Assistants monthly providing professional development and support. Two Teaching and Learning specialists mentor within the classrooms, collect student data, and meet weekly with faculty. When needed, the school retains an external consultant for mentoring Montessori pedagogy.

### **Level and Cross Level Faculty Meetings**

The administration holds faculty meetings twice monthly. These meetings help to develop a cohesive group of professionals who collaborate to meet the school's objectives for academic achievement. The administration seeks the guidance and leadership of the faculty in its decision-making to promote the development of the professional community.

### **After School Tutoring and Coaching of Students**

If a teacher or parents decides that a student needs tutoring or coaching, then they are free to make arrangements with a faculty member for that purpose. Many of the teachers make themselves available for this work during the school year and over vacations. Title I funding supports an after school MCAS tutoring program in reading and math each spring.

### **Student Capstone Program**

Middle School Students are required to present a "Celebration of Learning" just prior to graduation. This is a capstone project tasking students to develop a multi-media presentation on the question, "What kind of learner am I?" It is supported by the student's portfolio. The presentation included a juried exhibition along with a public presentation for family, peers, teachers and invited guests. Students receive support from their teachers throughout the process.

### **Faculty Advisor Groups**

Each Middle School student has a faculty advisor to guide him or her in meeting the requirements of their ILP, Individual Learning Plan. The *Habits of Mind* curriculum is used during Advisory to strengthen Executive Functioning skills. Advisory is also a community-building time between teachers and advisees.

## **Student and Program Supports Overview**

### **Kindergarten**

- Pre-kindergarten DIAL Assessment
- Pre-kindergarten Speech and Language Screening
- Pre-kindergarten Health Review
- DIBELS phonological assessment
- DRA-2 – Developmental Reading Assessment
- Instructional Assistants
- TAT – Teacher Assistance Team
  - Academic, social/emotional, & related services such as OT, Speech, PT, ELL)
- 18:2 ratio/class size
- Social Worker
  - Individual, student groups, parent support

### **Lower Elementary (Grades 1 – 3)**

- DIBELS phonological assessment
- DRA-2 – Developmental Reading Assessment
- Fountas & Pinnell Reading Inventory
- Title I Reading Interventionist
- Title I Math Interventionists (2)
- Title I before and after school Math Club
- MCAS/PARCC before and after school tutoring
- Instructional Assistants
- 25:2 ratio/class size
- Differentiated Instruction
- TAT – Teacher Assistance Team
  - Academic, social/emotional, & related services such as OT, Speech, PT, ELL)
- Social Worker
  - Individual, student groups, parent support

### **Upper Elementary (Grades 4 – 6)**

- DRA-2 – Developmental Reading Assessment
- Fountas & Pinnell Reading Inventory
- Title I Reading Interventionist
- Title I Math Interventionist
- Title I before and after school Math Club
- MCAS/PARCC before and after school tutoring
- Instructional Assistants
- 25:2 ratio/class size
- Differentiated Instruction
- TAT – Teacher Assistance Team
  - Academic, social/emotional, & related services such as OT, Speech, PT, ELL)
- Social Worker
  - Individual, student groups, parent support
- Peer Mentors Program

### **Middle School**

- Advisory Program
- Peer Leader-Community Meetings
- Montessori Project Groups
- Title I Math Club
- Khan Academy
- MCAS/PARCC before and after school tutoring
- ELL academic support
- TAT intervention
- Academic special needs services
- Social Worker
  - Individual, student groups, parent support

### **Professional Development/Resources for K – 8 Staff**

- Montessori Teaching & Learning Coordinator
- Mentor Program for new teachers
- Assistant teacher Mentoring Program
- Data Team
  - Representation of Administrators and teaching staff of all grade levels
- Accountability Team
- School-wide Professional Development
- School level collaborative meetings
- MCPSA Positive Behavior Team
- Training in topics and issues of special education
- Contractual course work reimbursement
- Assessment analysis teams per curriculum level
  - PARCC/MCAS/StanTron

### **Encouragement of Parental Involvement**

- CP - Community Partnership
  - Parent group serving the school community
- Education Director and Principal Coffee
- Kindergarten Parent Training Sessions
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Montessori Parent Informational Night
- HVM Website
- SEPAC – Special Education Parent Advisory Committee
- Wednesday Notes Newsletter
- Academic Newsletter
- HVM open enrollment

## Health Services

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School employs a full time Registered Nurse. The major role of the RN is to support students with acute and chronic health conditions so that they may fully participate in the curriculum. The RN identifies students who may benefit from the development of a 504 plan based on a physical disability. When students are identified, the RN coordinates team meetings and creates accommodation plans that ensure students' with identified health disabilities have full access to the curriculum.

Upon registration, every family meets with the RN for a review of the students' health history, immunization status, early childhood developmental concerns, and any health concerns that may impact learning. This comprehensive screening includes a review of the students' birth history, general concerns about overall and social emotional development, previous early education experiences, and any history of the need for early intervention services. The RN works with all educational teams and administrators to ensure students have full access to the curriculum and to identify interventions or accommodations that may mitigate the need for a future Special Education referral or need for services.

In addition, the RN coordinates and performs annual health assessments and developmental screenings for students including vision, hearing, height, weight, BMI, and postural screenings per Massachusetts Department of Education and Department of Health regulations. The following chart outlines which screenings are performed at the specific grade levels:

| Screening Performed                        | Grade(s) Screened  |
|--|--|
| Vision (Near, Far, Acuity, and Stereopsis) | KG through 5 <sup>th</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> grades          |
| Hearing                                    | KG through 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> grades          |
| Postural (Scoliosis)                       | 5 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> grades                 |
| Height, Weight, and Body Mass Index (BMI)  | 1 <sup>st</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , and 7 <sup>th</sup> grades |

Outside referrals for more comprehensive assessments or testing are made by the RN when a student is identified as having a vision, hearing or other developmental concern. These screenings are critical to be able to identify barriers that may impact learning in the classroom. Interventions, such as a student acquiring glasses, may be all that is needed in order for a student to fully access the curriculum, mitigating the need for a Special Education referral. Screenings are done annually and upon teacher or parent request. Vision and hearing screenings are often done prior to a Special Education or as part of an initial Special Education assessment. When requested by Special Education, a more comprehensive Health Assessment is done by the RN that includes a review of current immunization status, current health status, any past medical history, or other barriers that may impact learning. When appropriate an even more comprehensive Home Assessment can be done by the RN or in collaboration with the school Social Worker to identify other health or environmental barriers to learning that may need to be addressed. Often, a referral for outside services will give families tools needed to assist the students' ability to access the curriculum without the need for a Special Education referral.

**Student & Family Handbook  
Sign-Off Form**

2018-2019

Please acknowledge that you have had an opportunity to review the Hill View Montessori Charter Public School Student and Family Handbook which includes important information. Included in the handbook is information pertaining to attendance, field trips, school closings, school policies, computer use, code of conduct, bullying prevention and intervention, disclosure of student information, grievance procedures, dress code, etc.

The handbook can be found on the school website at

<http://hillviewmontessori.org/index.php/families/general-information>

Alternatively, if you need a paper copy of the handbook, please contact the front office and one will be provided.

As required by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Hill View Montessori Charter Public School is requesting documentation of its dissemination of this handbook.

Please sign below to acknowledge your awareness of and opportunity to review the 2016-2017 Student and Family Handbook.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

**By the signature below, I am acknowledging my opportunity to review the Hill View Montessori Charter Public School Student and Family Handbook.**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name (please print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Students attending HVM:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_