



Family Handbook
2019-2020

WELCOME TO CHARLES ELLIS MONTESSORI ACADEMY

Dear Families

Welcome to Charles Ellis Montessori Academy. As we start the new school year we encourage you to partner with the school as we endeavor to fulfill Dr. Maria Montessori's vision to,

“Educate the Whole Child for a Whole World”.

Our goal through this handbook is to Advocate, Facilitate & Empower all members of the Charles Ellis Montessori Community to be active participants in the Montessori learning experience

It is a requirement that you read and discuss with your children the Charles Ellis Montessori Academy Family Handbook and the SCCPSS Student Code of Conduct. These texts contain operational guidelines, expectations, and policies to promote the academic success of our students and to build positive learning experiences in the school, and in the home.

We look forward to a successful and joyful school year.

Tanya Melville

Principal

Please note that this handbook is a working document as of 05-23-19 and will be updated on a regular basis as district/ school policies and procedures are amended or added.

SCCPSS VISION: From school to the world: All students prepared for productive futures.

SCCPSS MISSION: To ignite a passion for learning and teaching at high levels

Charles Ellis Montessori Academy

CORE VALUES:

- **Wonderment & the Joy of Childhood:** Montessori Education values a sense of wonder and the innate desire to learn about the World and how it works, through joyful exploration and discovery.
- **Respect, Diversity & Harmony:** Montessori Education values self-respect, respect of others and respect for our environment. This requires that we understand, celebrate and protect the diversity within our community and our environment. We resolve our conflicts through empathy and honest dialogue.
- **Stewardship:** Montessori Education encourages us to first be stewards of our own actions, and then to work with others as we care for our Montessori community and our World.
- **Self-Reliance & Academic Empowerment:** Montessori Education values self-responsibility and self-reliance for personal and academic growth. The individual is empowered to be a self-motivated, self-disciplined and independent learner. The ideas, interests and skills of each person positively contribute to our Montessori community and the World.
- **PEACE:** will prevail when we live by these core values.

MONTESSORI EDUCATION

Dr. Maria Montessori & a Brief History of the Montessori Education

Dr. Maria Montessori was born August 31st 1870 in Chiaravalle, Italy. She was a determined young woman who pursued her interests in math, science and medicine to become Italy's first female medical doctor in 1896. It was during her tenure as a doctor in Rome that she was first drawn to the educational needs of children. Working with children in poverty and those children who had been placed in asylums, she discovered that when they were given an environment that was rich in materials, the children were able to self-educate. Responding to the request of landlords in the slums of Rome, whose properties were being vandalized by unattended children, Dr. Montessori opened the first Casa dei Bambini (The Children's House) on January 1907. She continued her observations of how children learn naturally through engagement with a prepared environment, and she developed materials to meet their learning needs. She was a prolific writer and described her "method" meticulously. With the success of her new educational approach, Dr. Montessori was invited to speak throughout the world and consequently Montessori training centers were established to train teachers in the philosophy and pedagogy of Montessori Education.

Maria Montessori was witness to the devastating effects of two World Wars and her vision was that education was vital to establishing lasting peace. In 1947 she addressed UNESCO on the issue of "Education & Peace" and in 1949 received one of three nominations for the Nobel Peace Prize.

She continued to advocate for the world's children up until her death on May 6th 1952. Her legacy continues to this day in Montessori schools throughout the globe.

History of Charles Ellis Montessori Academy

The school was first opened as part of the Savannah Chatham School System in 1928. Many visitors fondly recall the early days of this neighborhood school. Charles Ellis School established itself as a Montessori magnet in 1988 becoming the first public Montessori school in the state of Georgia. In 1992 a grant was received to pilot one of the first Pre-K programs in Georgia. In 2001, the school expanded to include the Montessori Middle School program, thereby becoming the only public school in Savannah-Chatham County to consolidate the elementary and middle school programs; a model of the current K-8 schools that exist today. Charles Ellis Montessori Academy celebrated its Silver Jubilee as a public Montessori school in 2013.

The Guiding Principles of Montessori Education:

- The goal of a Montessori Education is to nurture self-motivated, self-disciplined and independent life-long learners.
- Montessori Education is a child-centered approach to teaching and learning facilitated through a developmentally appropriate environment and curriculum.
- Learning is an active process. Children learn by doing. They learn most easily through repeated exposure, consistent modeling by others, and repeated opportunities for practice.
- Children learn in different ways and at different rates. An effective Montessori school must remain highly flexible and be prepared to individualize and adapt education to the learner.
- Children will learn to understand and accept the consequences of their actions. Discipline based on logical consequences will allow children to learn to predict the response their actions will cause, and alter their behavior to produce the desired result. Clear parameters for behavior are focused on kindness, honesty, cooperation, and respect for all.
- Children will learn independence and self-knowledge by being involved in reflection, self-evaluation and setting goals.
- Children are encouraged to pursue their interests. Children are taught that they are a part of the world and the universe. They are taught that they belong to an international family and have civic responsibilities in their own country. They are a link in the biological world. The children study the cultures of others, the history of life, and care of their environment, so that they can find their place and make a positive contribution to the world.
- The home and school are extensions of each other. Parents and guardians are the first and most important teachers for the child. Montessori practices support a positive home environment.

The Montessori Prepared Environment

The Montessori Prepared Environment is based on the principles of ORDER, BEAUTY and PRECISION, both in the external environment and within the internal environment of each human being. The classrooms are highly organized learning environments that engage children in purposeful interactions with the Montessori materials and the community of learners. Simplicity and beauty in the environment provide children with a sense of peace and connection to their learning. An uncluttered classroom punctuated with objects of beauty and interest, provide points of inspiration and stimulate curiosity.

Montessori Material - The Montessori Materials sometimes referred to as the “Didactic Apparatus” are tools that lead the child to the discovery of concepts and skills, and aid the child in constructing their understanding of the universe and how it works. The Montessori Materials provide a precise framework for progressions into higher levels of learning and act as a jumping-off point for student-based research, experimentation and innovation.

Classroom Procedures/Routines - provide a structure for the daily work of the child. The young child has an innate sense and need for order. Consistency of routine allows the students to engage in the work cycle without disruption and interact in socially positive ways. Routines connected to self-care, care of the environment and care of others, provide opportunities to build virtues of responsibility and compassion. As students grow, this sense of order nurtures time-management skills, self-reliance, and citizenship. Families are encouraged to organize the home environment to reflect similar principles so that the child is an active and contributing member of the daily life of the home.

Our Montessori Traditions:

Celebration of Life

Montessori curriculum is a study of human contributions to our world. Birthdays are special celebrations of growth and The Celebration of Life is a Montessori tradition that acknowledges the uniqueness of each child. We encourage parents to be a part of this tradition. As the child carries the globe around the sun, photographs, stories and pictures of the child at each year of life are used in the narration. **Please DO NOT send cupcakes or other high sugar treats we encourage you to work with your child at home to prepare a healthy snack such as Friendship Salad to celebrate the event.** Some families also donate a book to the classroom in honor of the child.

International Montessori Week & Peace Pole Celebration

Many children around the world and in many different circumstances benefit from a Montessori education. On the last week of February Montessori schools celebrate the history and vision of Dr. Maria Montessori. Festivities take on a cultural theme and culminate in the Peace Pole Celebration. The Peace Pole can be found on our back playground and is a symbol of our commitment to Peace throughout the world.

The Montessori Peace Rose

The Peace Rose, a practice for problem solving, allows children to recognize and express their own feelings and to respect the feelings of others. When a conflict arises between two or more friends or an incident has upset a class member, students are encouraged to talk through the situation independent of the adult. The Peace Rose gives the children an opportunity to practice problem solving skills in the school environment but under controlled conditions. Ask your child to give you a lesson and plant a peace rose at home.

Charles Ellis Presents

Charles Ellis Presents is a yearly musical production created by the Upper Elementary students. Students are responsible for writing the script, creating the props, designing the set, and sewing the costumes. Participation in the production provides students with creative writing practice, opportunities for artistic expression, and promotion of interpersonal skills. In recent years, the musicals have been based on the Montessori Great Lessons.

Montessori & Developmental Stages

Dr. Montessori was a pioneer in the study of child development. Montessori education recognizes the essential stages & elements of child development and the sensitive periods for learning certain skills and concepts. While state & district requirements are set, Charles Ellis Montessori Academy strives towards authenticity in meeting the needs of these key developmental periods.

3-6yrs The Children's House

6-9yrs Lower Elementary

9-12yrs Upper Elementary

12-15yrs Erdkinder

For more information on Montessori Education, families are required to attend parent conferences and to participate in; Parent Education Workshops, Presentations and Classroom Observations.

The following and many other resources are also available on-line or in our Media Center.

Montessori Organizations/Governing Bodies

www.montessori-ami.org

www.amshq.org

Recommended Texts by Maria Montessori

The Absorbent Mind

The Discovery of the Child

The Montessori Method

The Secret of Childhood

From Childhood to Adolescence

To Educate the Human Potential

Other Related Texts:

Montessori: The Science behind the Genius by Angeline Stoll Lillard

Montessori – A Modern Approach by Paula Polk Lillard

A Parent's Guide to the Montessori Classroom by Parent Child Press

The Normalized Child by Kathleen H. Futrell

Children of the Universe: Cosmic Education in the Montessori Elementary Classroom, by Michael & D'Neil Duffy

Self-Discipline & Montessori Grace & Courtesy Lessons:

The Montessori Grace & Courtesy lessons are integral to building a productive and compassionate learning environment that upholds the school's core values and teaches life skills that contribute to a peaceful world. Guided by "The Self-Awakened Child" curriculum and other resources, the students explore positive character traits;

Acceptance	Courage	Honesty	Peace	Self-Discipline
Assertiveness	Creativity	Kindness	Respect	Trust
Compassion	Forgiveness	Loyalty	Responsibility	Unity

Reflection on and practice of these traits are a school-wide focus and are supported through connected texts and discussions. Students are encouraged to act with purpose and to be considerate of others.

Charles Ellis Montessori Academy strives to provide each student with the maximum opportunity to acquire an education. No student has the right to interfere with this opportunity. A self-disciplined student will:

- Be motivated to participate & learn
- Listen to his/her teachers and follow directions.
- Always speak courteously.
- Respect himself/herself and others.
- Be prepared for instruction and make appropriate choices that challenge his/her abilities
- Ask politely for assistance from peers and teachers when needed.
- Manage frustrations and conflicts in ways that promote positive collaboration and peace.
- Care for self, care for the environment and care for others.
- Act at all times with kindness.

Student Discipline & Conduct Policies & Procedures:

When children misbehave the teacher is encouraged to reflect on whether the child is discouraged in any way:

- Is the child discouraged academically i.e. is the work/lesson too difficult, not challenging or is there an obstacle to learning?
- Is the child discouraged socially i.e. is the child struggling to integrate into the social group, does the child need instruction on certain social skills?
- Is the child discouraged emotionally i.e. is there some underlying emotional issue in the classroom or at home that is hindering their learning and/or positive social interactions?
- Is the child physically discouraged i.e. is he/she ill or in discomfort?

It is the School Administration's responsibility and authority to maintain standards of discipline. Charles Ellis Montessori Academy adheres to the policies outlined in:

The Student Code of Conduct

If a student conducts himself/herself in such a manner that is disrespectful, dangerous, damaging or disruptive to the learning environment and consequently jeopardizes the best interests of the school, then that student will be subject to disciplinary action. When a problem occurs the staff members will assess and document the situation as part of the **5-Step Discipline Log**. Dependent on the situation, the parties involved, and the level of the violation, some or all of the following steps are taken

- Conference with a student
- Mediation between conflicting parties
- Conference with a parent
- Counselor referral
- Removal from the classroom environment for a designated period.
- Written Disciplinary Referral to Administration
- Placement in Response to Intervention (RtI) level 2 for Behavior.
- Other appropriate disciplinary actions as per SCCCPSS Policies and Procedures highlighted in **The Student Code of Conduct**

Repeated offenses and chronic patterns of misconduct will result in the student being placed on **Choice School Program Probation**. This involves the student being placed on a conduct contract and involves ongoing documentation and assessment of progress toward expectations of appropriate behavior. Failure to meet the terms of the Conduct Contract will be presented to the designated Executive Director for determination of the student's dismissal from the Choice School Program.

Co-Curricular Activities

Art

Art is an essential component in the development of the whole child. The art program at Charles Ellis Montessori Academy is designed to build confidence in self-expression while integrating with the Montessori curriculum. Students work with a variety of art materials in the classroom/studio environment, and are guided through the curriculum with skill building sequential art exercises in addition to art history and visual thinking strategies.

Music

All of the students in Pre-K through 8th grade are given the opportunity to be involved in the music program. The students work on listening, singing, moving, and instrumental skills using a variety of materials and genres of music. The students also learn notation of rhythms and pitches. The 4th- 8th grade are given opportunities to be involved in chorus; the days and times depend on the grade level.

Band

Band at Charles Ellis Montessori Academy is available to students in 5th - 8th grade. Many students have had previous formal music training while others have had none, but don't worry, you will learn everything you need to know to be successful. A one year minimum commitment is required and with the band director's help, parents are responsible for securing a suitable instrument and music book to use for practice in band class and at home. After meeting these requirements, you will be well on your way to joining the ranks of current and former successful band students who have been recognized at the city, county, district and state levels. Band classes meet during the school day between two to three times per week. The bands perform between two and five concerts per year, depending on the grade level. Band students travel to play in other venues outside of the school and often take field trips to hear concerts, visit a studio, or possibly an instrument manufacturer.

Spanish

Charles Ellis Montessori offers Spanish as a second language on two levels. Students in the 7th and 8th grades who are eligible, may take a two year program where they can earn a High School Carnegie unit of foreign language to help them in their goal of attending college. Elementary students beginning in Pre-K through the 6th grade are introduced to Spanish culture and basic language skills. The Spanish program is designed to heighten interest in other cultures.

CTAE

Middle School Students participate in the Career, Technical, Agricultural, Education Pathways program. The program provides instruction in technology, business, and family & consumer science.

Recess & Physical Education

Recess is an essential part of each student's school day. Monitored by staff, recess happens mostly on the playground or, when raining, in the classroom. While recess is a time for unstructured play it is also an opportunity for students to learn cultural games that are connected to current classroom studies. Recess cannot be denied to students in Grades Prek-5 as a punishment for behavioral issues. All students are expected to participate in recess activities unless restrictions are in place per a doctor's note. Physical Education (PE) at Charles Ellis Montessori Academy is a wonderful time for us to come together and move our bodies to enhance our learning. PE leads to active, fit, and healthy lifestyles outside of school. Studies show that Active body = Active mind; getting the students moving stimulates their brains. So, increased fitness = improved academics. PE teaches students how to be active in many sports and activities. Students can then take their new skills and confidence and use them outside of school.

Field day is a high energy end to our wonderful year together. Held at Daffin Park, the day is filled with many different activities designed and lead by our 8th grade students. Remember that Field Day t-shirts will be for sale to keep the PE program growing and our students moving!

Athletics: All middle school students Grades 6-8, will have the opportunity to participate in several team sports; Soccer, Volleyball, Cross Country, Swimming, Basketball, etc. The coaches are teachers, parents or certified/experienced coaches that have been cleared by the Board of Education. The purpose of the middle school athletics program is to increase the sense of community that is being developed in the classroom setting and to develop athletic skills that allow students to participate and compete. Winning is not the ultimate goal, but you will see that our Montessori approach to teamwork can produce championship teams. All student athletes must turn in a completed participation packet to Coach Lesley before they may participate in try-outs for any sport.

Media Center

The Media Center is open from 7:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. on school days. Students may use the media center during regular hours if they have a pass from their teacher. Parents and guardians are also encouraged to check out books to share with their children at home. Each borrower is responsible for the media materials checked out to him/her. Books are checked out for one week and may be renewed if needed. Computer and Internet access are also available. We encourage all families to support the joy of reading by participating in our annual PTA Read-a-thon and the Fall & Spring Book Fairs.

Activities and Clubs

Each year, CEMA offers a variety of activities and clubs for student participation. Examples include BETA Club, Honors Chorus, Band, Lego Club, Chess Team, Solar Club, Model United Nations, Middle School P.A.C.E., D.E.E.P., Young Ladies Club, 100 Black Men of Savannah. Clubs and activities offered each year will depend on student interest and advisor availability. Information regarding clubs and activities will be posted on the website and distributed through regular school emails and robocalls throughout the year. Members of the CEMA community interested in forming a new activity or club should fill out the Co-Curricular Programming Proposal form found on the school website.

<http://internet.savannah.chatham.k12.ga.us/schools/Ellis/2014%20%202015/CEMA%20co-curricular%20programming%20proposal.pdf> and return it to your child's teacher.

Field Trips

Students are offered the opportunity to participate in a variety of educational field trips off campus throughout the year. Families will receive information on each field trip prior to the date as well as a parent permission form which must be signed in order for the child to participate. In some cases, field trips may require a monetary fee. Families concerned about field trip costs should talk to their teachers privately.

Operations

School Hours

Lessons begin at 7:50 a.m. SHARP and the school day ends at 2:50 p.m.

STUDENTS ARRIVING AFTER 7:50 A.M. MUST BE SIGNED IN BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN.

The dismissal procedure is as follows:

- 2:45 p.m.: Bus riders
- 2:50 pm.: Walkers & Car riders
- 2:50 p.m.: Pryme Tyme Dismissal
- 3:00 p.m.: END OF DISMISSAL

NO STUDENT IS PERMITTED TO BE DISMISSED AFTER 2:00 P.M.

Arrival & Dismissal

Children should arrive for school between 7:30 a.m. and 7:45 a.m.

For safety, no children will be permitted to enter the front foyer or classrooms before 7:25 AM. Classes begin at 7:50 a.m. SHARP.

Parents are asked not to make a habit of going to the classroom with their children in the morning, as this interrupts the teachers from greeting the children and beginning the daily routine.

The School Day ends at 2:50 p.m. Parents are also asked to limit classroom visits in the afternoon when teachers are preparing students for dismissal.

Walkers are dismissed through the west side gate on Magillicuddy Ave. Walkers are asked to be courteous to our neighbors. Please stay on the sidewalks, and obey the crossing guards.

Walkers 4th -8th Grade who are not accompanied by a parent must have written permission on file.

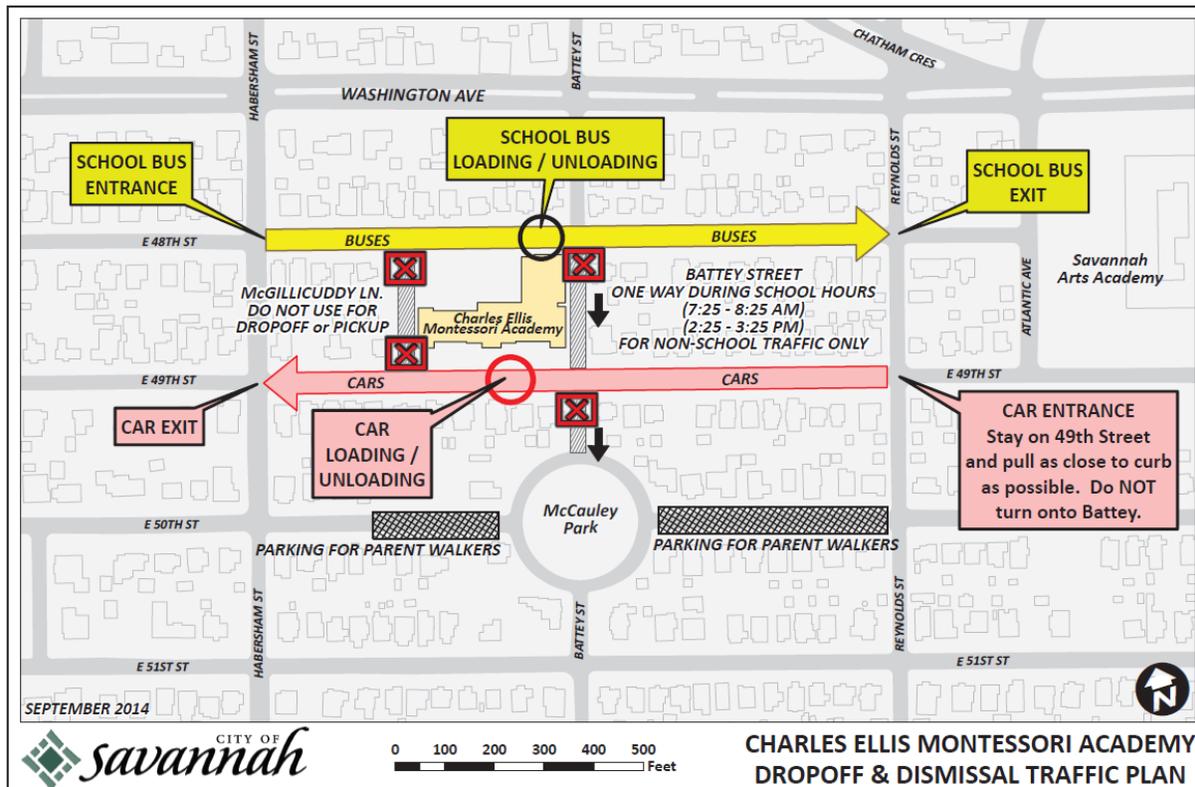
Rainy Day Dismissal- Parents congregate in foyer & are given permission go to child's classroom.

Car riders will be picked up at the front of the school building on 49th Street. Parents/Guardians are asked to stay in their car and students will be escorted to them. Please do not leave your vehicle when in the carpool line, as this compromises the safety and efficiency of the dismissal process. Rainy Day Dismissal – Use the same procedure.

Bus riders will be dismissed from the classrooms to buses on 48th Street. Students will not be dismissed through the front of the building. Bus schedules and bus stops are available in the school office and at www.sccpss.com. Related questions should be directed to the Student Information Specialist and/or Assistant Principal.

Pryme Tyme: YMCA Pryme Tyme Programs are held at Charles Ellis Montessori Academy for families who need before and after school childcare. Pryme Tyme hours are from 7:00 a.m. until the start of school and afternoon service is from 2:50 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. Contact the Program Site Director Mrs. Anita Coleman at 912-663-3952 or the YMCA at 912-351-3622 for more information on registration and fees.

Charles Ellis Montessori Academy Traffic Flow Chart



For the safety of our children and the community, all families are required to adhere to the traffic chart above. Traffic is monitored by SCCPSS Campus Police and by Savannah Metro Police. We ask that you follow the rules of Care, Caution and Courtesy at all times. A crossing Guard is assigned to the crosswalk at the corner of 49th & Battey Ave. Please model for our students the correct rules for crossing the street at this junction. All students should be supervised by parents at all times.

Attendance

Regular full-day school attendance is critical to the academic success of students. Parents are asked to follow the State & SCCPSS policies for attendance. It is expected that students will be punctual and prepared for a full day of learning. Administration views tardiness and early dismissals as a disruption to the learning environment and will act according to SCCPSS policy and procedure.

Absences:

The official record of attendance is kept in PowerSchool and is entered daily via PowerTeacher. The classroom teacher is responsible for keeping this record without error. If an error does occur it must be reported to the Student Information Specialist immediately.

A written excuse is required for every student absence. Homeroom Teachers are responsible for acquiring these written excuses in a timely manner and will forward them to the Student Information Specialist immediately for data entry. The Homeroom Teacher will contact the family of any student who has been absent for 2 days without notice, to ascertain the status and/or health of the student. The teacher will keep Administration and the School Counselor apprised of any extended absence/illness so that support can be given to the family as needed.

The Attendance Committee consisting of Administration, the Student Information Specialist, School Counselors and School Social Worker meet weekly to discuss student absences, tardiness and early dismissals. The Attendance Committee reviews relevant data, may determine that a meeting with the family is warranted and can, through the Social Worker and School Administration, request legal action for truancy. The School follows the SCCPSS policies and procedures for Student Attendance. At the conclusion of the school year, families of students with excessive absences are required to attend an attendance conference and may request an attendance waiver. At that time all aspects of the student's attendance and school performance will be considered to determine promotion or retention to the next grade level. Chronic absenteeism & tardiness will place a student on Choice Program Probation.

Tardiness, Early Dismissals & Change of Transportation

The front office will issue a tardy slip when a student arrives after the start of instruction 7:50 AM. Administration determines the time to begin issuing tardy slips in accordance with traffic flow issues. Unless otherwise notified, walking and carpool students are considered late after 7:55 AM. Of course emergencies arise and these are addressed on an individual basis. Students arriving on a late bus will not be considered tardy. All carpool students who arrive tardy must be escorted by the parent to the front foyer to log in their tardy time and receive a slip. No student should be dropped off at the front steps after the 7:50 AM bell time.

No student is permitted to be dismissed after 2:00 PM.

Any early dismissals must come from the front office staff. The front office staff will call the child down from the classroom and the parent is not permitted to go to the classroom. All students must be signed out in the front office. Office personnel must check the registration form to make certain the person picking the child up is authorized to do so.

Students who are in the nurse's office will be dismissed via the Nurse and Front Office Staff.

Parents are required to submit an excuse for all early dismissals and tardy arrivals. The front office staff will handle contacting the parent for this documentation.

Transportation Changes must be received by 12:00 NOON on the day of the change:

Change in transportation must be channeled through the Teacher via a note sent on the day of a change in transportation **and** to the front office via email patricia.solomon-brown2@sccpss.com patrice.prince@sccpss.com and/or personal phone contact 912-395-5470. **This must be done prior to NOON.** Teachers will check emails prior to 2:00 PM for changes of transportation. It is imperative that the information is given to the **teacher & the front office** in a timely manner preferably via email @ morning arrival. We discourage transportation changes made after 2:00 PM as late changes jeopardize the safe transportation of the students.

Late Dismissals (after close of school day 3:10 pm.)

Late Bus Departures are the responsibility of teachers who are scheduled for late bus duty. The designated teachers must supervise these students until the bus arrives. The Front Office staff and Administration will assist with each situation as available.

The Homeroom Teacher is responsible for all walking and carpool student dismissals. The Homeroom Teacher must contact the parent to ascertain the status of pick-up if the student still remains at the end of carpool 3:00 PM. Administration will help as necessary and as available.

Teachers have meetings and lesson preparation directly after school, therefore please be courteous and avoid late pick-ups. Please arrange with Pryme Tyme if you find that you consistently cannot make the 2:50 pm dismissal time.

Nutrition

Breakfast and lunch are served at Charles Ellis. Breakfast begins at 7:25 AM and ends at 7:45 AM. Students should report to breakfast before going to the classroom. The lunch rotation is by grade level, therefore please check with your classroom teacher for scheduled time.

Fees are as follows:

Breakfast is FREE for all students

K-8 Lunch: \$3.00

Medical

Please contact School Nurse, Christine O'Boyle, regarding your child's medical needs.

Medications: For the safety of your child and other students, all medications (prescription and over-the-counter) must be brought to school by parents or legal guardians. A medication form must be completed and signed in order for the medication to be given. Parents should request that prescriptions be split into two bottles at the time it is filled by the pharmacy.

Students will NOT be permitted to carry medicine back and forth from home to school.

Charles Ellis Montessori Academy School Uniform

Tops – White or Navy. Bottoms – Khaki, Navy or Navy Plaid.

Please familiarize your student with these requirements. All clothing worn within the building must meet the school's uniform requirements. Charles Ellis Montessori Academy respects all religious attire.

Bottoms: Solid navy, khaki or, navy plaid - shorts, skirts, skorts, jumpers, Capri pants, or pants/slacks – 5 pocket style (no pockets on lower legs), (no knit pants, leggings, jogging or cargo pants). Uniforms must be worn belted at the natural waist and made of standard uniform material (cotton and/or twill). No denim jeans, skirts, etc... Shorts, skorts and jumpers must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee.

Tops: Solid white, or navy polo-style shirts, collared blouses or turtlenecks. (Tops may have the school insignia). Solid navy or white cardigans, vests, jackets or sweat shirts may be worn over uniform shirts. All shirts must be tucked in.

NO HOODED SWEAT TOPS

ALL JACKETS UNZIPPED

Shoes & Socks etc:

NO shoes with flashing lights or noises that disrupt the instructional environment.

All shoes must be enclosed and fastened/tied properly. Ensure shoes are appropriate for playground activities and safety of movement in the classroom.

Solid white, navy or grey socks or tights. During colder months leggings in the required colors may be worn under skirts.

Head Coverings: **No hats, caps or sunglasses may be worn in the building.**

Jewelry: Please be aware that the school cannot ensure the security of valuable items brought from home. Jewelry should not distract from the learning environment and must not convey inappropriate messages. Those students who have piercings must wear studs or hoops of an appropriate size to avoid injury and to mitigate distraction.

Outer-wear: Coats and jackets must be stored in the assigned cubby. It is highly encouraged that students anticipate the climate and prepare appropriately. All students will go outside for recess and for other instructional activities.

Dress-Down Days & Spirit Wear:

On Fridays, Spirit wear tops may be worn with regulation bottoms. The PTA offers a selection of spirit wear for purchase.

Throughout the year there are scheduled Dress-Down Days when students may wear items of their choice under the parameters set forth in the SCCPSS Student Code of Conduct. Dress-Down Days offer opportunities to raise funds for charities and special programs.

On designated days, academic, arts & athletic teams may wear their assigned attire.

A Uniform Closet is maintained at the school and items are available if a child has a personal accident. Also, any student who is not in appropriate uniform will receive a warning and will be sent to the Uniform Closet to acquire appropriate items for the day.

Repeated & Chronic violation of uniform policy will result in disciplinary action.

Discipline Plan for Out of Uniform Violations:

Step 1: Administrative letter provided for teachers to send home. Provide student with uniform to be returned at the end of the day.

Step 2: Same as Step 1. Teacher is to make reminder phone call to the parent.

Step 3: Conference with the parent, administrator /teacher to address the problem and develop a solution.

Step 4: The Student Code of Conduct specifies violations of dress code as a Level 1 offense, and as such, may be reflected in the conduct grade for repeated violations (three or more times per marking period).

Communication with Staff & Classrooms:

Effective Communication is critical to a successful family-school relationship.

Website: The CEMA calendar is updated each Monday with important information and announcements. Families should check the website regularly to be informed of all school happenings. <http://internet.savannah.chatham.k12.ga.us/schools/Ellis/default.aspx>

Bobcat Blasts: School-wide information is distributed to families each week through the Bobcat Blasts, our regular emails and robocalls disseminated each Sunday evening throughout the school year. This information is also posted to the website under the tab “Bobcat Blasts.” Families who are not receiving the Bobcat Blasts should contact the Information Specialist at 912-395-5470 to have their contact information updated.

In addition to the weekly Bobcat Blasts; emails, robocalls and the district’s PEACH JAR digital portal, are also used to communicate special announcements or critical information, as needed.

PTA Communications: The PTA communicates with families about school happenings, PTA-sponsored events and opportunities for participation through its own website, <https://www.ellismontessoripta.org/>.

Communication with Staff and Classrooms: Families are encouraged to communicate with teachers, administration and staff. Please follow the established lines of communication listed below:

- Classroom and Student related issues - The first communication shall be between the Parent and Teacher. If further discussion is needed a conference with Administration shall be scheduled.
- Adult, Teacher and/or School Policy Issues – The first communication shall be between the Parent and Teacher and/or Administration.

If at any point the parent is not certain of the person to contact, please ask the Administrative Secretary Ms. Patricia Solomon-Brown.

Communication to check on the progress of your child, to express a concern or to offer suggestions and support, should follow the guidelines below:

- Parents should request a face to face or phone conference with the teacher to discuss questions and concerns. This can be done through email, a note sent with the child or by contacting the school office. Parent conferences will be scheduled around the daily instructional priorities. Teachers may not be able to respond immediately, so please allow an appropriate window of time.
- To ensure safe & efficient transitioning for students, parents and teachers will refrain from discussions concerning the child or other issues during drop-off and/or pick-up times.
- To maintain the instructional Montessori work cycle, please do not interrupt the learning environment. Any messages for the teacher can be given to the front office and will be delivered in a timely manner.
- If there are concerns with policy and procedure please contact the front office and a conference will be scheduled with the administration.

- All communication shall be directed in a manner that is respectful and upholds the core values of the school.
- All students who need to contact a parent during the instructional day must get permission from the teacher.
- Parents may not contact students via personal cell phones during the instructional day. All communications to a student will be directed through the teacher and/or the front office. Students will not be called from instruction to answer phone calls. When a return call is necessary the classroom teacher will be contacted and arrangements will be made for contact during recess/lunch.
- The Front Office will be the first point of contact for all emergencies.

Grievance Procedures

Students or parents who wish to express a grievance should first consult with their child’s teacher. If the issue is not resolved with the teacher, the following persons should be the next points of contact: school counselor, assistant principal and/or principal. At Charles Ellis Montessori Academy we strive to address any concerns from parents as quickly and effectively as possible. We encourage parents and guardians to remain in close contact with the teachers and the school staff.

Parent Participation

Charles Ellis Montessori Academy needs your, time, talents and expertise to make this a wonderful and joyful place to learn. Parental participation in the school community is vital to the academic success of all students. Each classroom community invites parents to partner with the teacher to meet the needs of the children. Parents are encouraged to regularly visit the teacher section of the website under the tab for your child’s Grade Level, to find resources for parents and opportunities for involvement.

A wide range of opportunities for parents to actively contribute to the learning environment can be found through membership in the PTA, and its committees. Parents are encouraged to attend PTA meetings and to serve on specific projects. The Charles Ellis Montessori Academy School Council meets regularly to address the specific needs of the school and to support the administration in developing and implementing a School Improvement Plan. The Montessori Education Society of Savannah, (MESS) directly partners with our school to provide opportunities to support Montessori Education in the local community. MESS has yearly opportunities to participate in the promotion of the Montessori mission. When participating and contributing in the school and out in the community, all members of Charles Ellis Montessori Academy are expected to follow the expectations of our Grace and Courtesy Lessons, so that we continue to model the Montessori core values of the school.

Charles Ellis Montessori Academy PTA www.ellismontessoripta.org

PTA is the largest advocacy group for children in the world. The Ellis Montessori PTA is focused on the partnership between families and teachers to create a community that supports each child's academic success. PTA Co-Presidents: Hollie McCormick & Melanie Finnegan.

Charles Ellis Montessori Academy School Council

<http://internet.savannah.chatham.k12.ga.us/schools/Ellis/>

School councils were created by the state of Georgia to bring communities and schools closer together in a spirit of cooperation to; solve difficult education problems, improve academic achievement, provide support for teachers and administrators, and help the school board develop and nurture participation. Bringing parents and the community together with teachers and administrators helps create a better understanding of, and mutual respect for each other's concerns, as we share ideas for school improvement and student achievement.

We elect a portion of the school council every May.

Our school council for the 2019 - 20 year is: Mr. Trent Kissinger, Ms. Wonda Goodwin, Ms. Lynn Franklin, Melody Burks, Suzy Karpf, Sam Allman, Gloria Rigsbee, Daniela Bringman, Brendan Ferrara, Amanda Fanelli, Sarah Smith and Tanya Melville.

Montessori Education Society of Savannah (MESS) <http://www.savannahmess.org/>

The Montessori Education Society of Savannah (MESS) is dedicated to the promotion and advancement of Montessori Education in Savannah, Georgia and the surrounding areas.

Visits & Observations

Safety of our students and staff is our top priority. All visitors and parents must report to the front office and present appropriate identification and/or parent permission before being permitted to visit a classroom. All Parents must report to the school office before proceeding to a classroom for a scheduled observation, conference or visit. Limitations may be placed on visitors who are not parents. To avoid frustration and conflicts, the school asks that prior arrangements for visits to your child's classroom be scheduled through your child's teacher. All other visits should be scheduled through the school's Administrative Secretary and with permission of Administration. All classrooms visits are at the discretion of the Administration. All visitors are asked to conduct themselves in a positive and respectful manner and not to interrupt instruction.

Volunteers

Safety of our students and staff is our top priority therefore we ask that all volunteers complete the Operation Beacon application found at the link below:

<https://spwww.sccps.com/aa/sp/beacon/Pages/default.aspx>

Delivery of Student Items/Lunches:

It is important to instill in students a sense of responsibility and preparation. We encourage you to establish nightly preparation routines to avoid the morning rush and to ensure that the student comes to school with all necessary items, learning materials and lunches.

To avoid interruption of instruction, delivery of items to a student will be conducted by front office staff.

Lunch Dates: You are welcome to schedule a lunch date with your student. Please provide the teacher with the date and time prior to visiting so that he/she can ensure there are no conflicts with instruction or other classroom events. If grandparents or other family members/friends wish to schedule a lunch date, the school must have advanced written permission from the parent.

Classroom Observations: Parents are encouraged to observe in their child's classroom to gain a better understanding of Montessori Educational Practices. To manage the overall number of additional adults in the classroom at any given time, we encourage you to contact the teacher to schedule a time to observe. At the beginning of the school year, we do ask for a six week adjustment time before observing newly enrolled students. Etiquette and guidelines should be reviewed before the initial observation.

CALENDARS:

All school calendars can be accessed through the school website & Ellis PTA websites:

School & PTA Events are posted on a regular basis.

SCCPSS Calendar:

https://spwww.sccps.com/Documents/Calendars/19-20_SCCPS_CALENDAR.pdf

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT STAFF DIRECTORY

Tanya Melville	Principal
Patrice Prince	Assistant Principal
Rebecca Burkett	School Counselor
Ivey Poinsette	School Counselor
Patricia Solomon-Brown	Administrative Secretary
TBD	Information Specialist
Patra Rickman	Specialty Program Coordinator
Christine O'Boyle	Nurse
Lisa O'Donnell	Media Specialist
Lesley Corley	Athletic Director
Barbara Wright-Chambers	Cafeteria Manager
William Sidney	Head Custodian

Charles Ellis Montessori Academy

PARENT– STUDENT–STAFF COMPACT

This agreement sets out goals, expectations and responsibilities of Parents, Students and School Staff as Partners in Student Achievement.

AS PARENT/GUARDIAN I AGREE TO:

Uphold the Core Values of Charles Ellis Montessori Academy and the Mission:

“To Educate the Whole Child for a Whole World”

- Model respect and support for my child and school staff.
- Have my child attend school regularly, and in accordance with school hours.
- Attend all parent–teacher conferences.
- Attend Family Nights and Parent Education Workshops to further an understanding of Montessori Education and the school.
- Work to develop positive behaviors in my child.
- Support completion of school assignments and teacher expectations.
- Monitor my child’s academic progress and utilize the Parent Access System as appropriate.
- Develop a home environment that encourages my child to learn and grow.
- Talk and reflect with my child about his/her school activities each day.
- Encourage reading by modeling and making reading materials available.
- Attend and support, Classroom events, PTA meetings and school-wide functions.

AS STUDENT, I AGREE TO:

Uphold the Core Values of Charles Ellis Montessori Academy and the Mission

“To Educate the Whole Child for a Whole World”

- Learn respect for self, others (adults and classmates), and property.
- Regularly put forth my best effort in school activities and behavior.
- Work in harmony with classmates and respect their right to learn without disruption.
- Accept the idea that “I can learn and achieve” through my effort and with the support of teachers, parents, and others interested in my growth and development.
- Look to my teacher for guidance and support.
- Make my school a good place to be, by doing what adults ask of me.

AS CEMA STAFF MEMBER, I AGREE TO:

Uphold the Core Values of Charles Ellis Montessori Academy and the Mission
“To Educate the Whole Child for a Whole World”

- Contribute to and support the positive development and growth of all students
- Model respect and support for myself, parents, students and their family.
- Work consistently to create a positive atmosphere for student development and learning.
- Embrace the concept that each student can learn, achieve and develop when supported consistently and positively by adults.
- To be prepared to best meet the learning needs and developmental needs of all students.
- Seek and explore ways to involve parents and support open communication with Parents.
- Follow Montessori best practices and to increase parent awareness of Montessori education as it relates to student achievement.
- Ensure that school rules and student behavior guidelines are enforced fairly and consistently.
- Attend and support PTA meetings and other school functions.
- To communicate in a positive manner the mission of the school and its core values in the community.

AS ADMINISTRATOR, I AGREE TO:

Uphold the Core Values of Charles Ellis Montessori Academy and the Mission
“To Educate the Whole Child for a Whole World”

- Support the tenets of this compact.
- Model respect and support for School Staff as individuals and as educators of children.
- Model respect and support for Parents, Students, and their families.
- Strive consistently to understand the needs of Parents, Students, and School Staff in order to foster a positive environment for working, learning, and growth.
- Work to foster an environment that supports open communication between Parents, Students, Teachers, and other School Staff.
- To seek partnerships with the local and global communities that support the mission and core values of Charles Ellis Montessori Academy
- To Advocate, Facilitate and Empower, the school community to be contributing members of the success of the school and all its children.

NCLB-Parents Right to Know

In compliance with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind statute, parents may request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s). The following information may be requested.

- Whether the teacher has met the Georgia Professional Standards Commission requirements for certification for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived;
- The college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications;

To request information concerning the qualifications of your child's teacher(s), please contact the principal. An annual signed copy of the above Parent-Student-Staff Compact & Receipt of NCLB Parents' Right to Know Statement is maintained in the Student's Portfolio.

CHARLES ELLIS SCHOOL SONG

Charles Ellis School is the best school.

No other school can compare.

Our hearts are filled with its praises

And memories so fair.

Here boys and girls work together

In our America free.

We pledge our loyal devotion

Charles Ellis School to Thee