

# Gateway Montessori School

## Parent Handbook



Welcome to Gateway Montessori School!

This handbook has been prepared as a reference guide into our program policies and procedures, as well as information regarding our values and philosophies. It is our intention that all incoming and returning families remain informed, therefore we hope that this Parent Handbook serves as a reliable resource covering a multitude of topics. Please be careful to read through each section as each area of focus contains valuable information.

We are thrilled you've joined our Gateway Montessori School community and look forward to a bright future with your children and family.

Sincerely,  
Gateway Montessori School

# Gateway Montessori School

## School & Staff Directory 2021-2022

### **Gateway Montessori School**

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Longmont, CO 80501

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### **Rosa Shore, Bluebell Assistant**

## About Our School and Mission:

**Gateway Montessori School is dedicated to serving the families in the community by providing a high quality Montessori education to children and families. We foster the growth of the whole child. Each child is respected as an individual and is encouraged to develop at each child's own pace. We believe that each child is unique and special in their personalities and individual development styles. We nurture the love of learning by laying the foundations for a healthy, creative life.**

Gateway Montessori School was founded in 1982 by Karen Grant and Dr. Michael C. Grant through their love for children and their desire to spread Montessori philosophy to our families and community. Nearly four decades later, Gateway Montessori School still operates with this same honest intention of spreading Montessori education to best serve the bright, healthy futures of our children.

Gateway Montessori School is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt corporation that relies on student tuition and contributions for income. Our school is administered by a board of directors and is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services. We are a member of the American Montessori Society. Gateway Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, age, gender, national or ethnic origin, religion, ancestry, sexual orientation, or disability in any aspect of its operations, programs, policies, or procedures.

Our board of directors consists mainly of past parents, alumni, and like-minded individuals who desire to bring Montessori education into the greater community. Please ask the office for more information as to how you can serve as a board member.

### **Board of Directors:**

Mary Benedict, President  
Bill VanDusen, Vice-President  
Emily Hudson, Treasurer  
Jen Davis, Secretary

Marcy McGurgan  
Luke Hedger  
Matt Seeley  
Rachel Reese

## Our Montessori Program & Philosophy

Montessori education values the child as a whole person with a variety of developmental needs. We believe that childhood should be supported with the resources to nurture the development of their potential adult selves. We aid the child in creating the best possible *adult self* by structuring a special, child-directed environment that meets the needs of each individual and their interests while also supporting their position within the larger peer group. Montessori is neither a rigid system, nor is it overly passive. Our program is highly structured to allow the child to experience a great deal of personal freedom within well-defined boundaries and ample opportunities to assume responsibility of self and their environment. A Montessori experience for your child is not simply preparation for school—it is an education designed to be preparation for the many aspects of life.

We encourage you to plan for your child to attend our Montessori program for a minimum of **three full years** in order to best benefit from our curricula. A three-year commitment also provides superior continuity of care for your child, as your child will remain within the care and support of the same teachers throughout their time at Gateway, allowing them to form a strong emotional bond with our educated and compassionate staff in a consistent environment.

In order to accommodate Spanish and Mandarin speaking families, several of our staff members may serve as translators and interpreters at any time. We want the enrollment process, scheduled meetings, document reviews, and parent conferences to be accommodating and warm as possible. Our website has this translation option as well. Please feel free to request this resource whenever necessary.

### **Our Classrooms:**

At Gateway Montessori School we offer a Toddler, Preschool, and Kindergarten program. To fit the needs of the families in our community, we are offering two blended Preschool and Kindergarten classrooms, the Lilacs and Bluebells. Our Lilac classroom caters to those families who prefer a pickup time at either 11:30 AM or after lunch at 1:00 PM. Our Bluebell classroom

caters to those families who prefer to pickup between 4-5:30 PM. Both classrooms operate at a 1 to 10 teacher to child ratio. Our Daisies Toddler classroom caters to those families of toddlers who prefer to pick up between 3-5:30 PM. Our Daffodils Toddler classroom caters to those families of toddlers who prefer to pick up at 1:00 PM. Both our Daisies and Daffodils classrooms operate at a 1 to 5 teacher to child ratio.

Gateway Montessori School welcomes children aged 1-6 years, from all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. Children with disabilities or developmental delays, including children with social, emotional, and behavioral needs, are admitted on a case-by-case basis and in alignment with the training and ability of our staff, classroom resources and accessibility, and in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act.

**Discipline:**

In our Montessori program, discipline means aiding a child in developing self-control, character, orderliness, and efficiency. Lessons in self-discipline, or Grace and Courtesy, are lessons that mirror the style and presentation of classroom works, and are intended to generate mindfulness and thoughtful communication and action in environmental, social, or internal situations. We hold respect for the child and use language that encourages the child and never shames them. We will intervene if a situation becomes unsafe or needs obvious assistance, but we value the child's feelings and expressions and encourage the children to try to solve their issues first. This develops a relationship of respect in our classroom environment for people, our animals, and our materials. By our teachers modeling respect and care for one another and our environment, our students develop these practices, too.

Should lessons, modeling, and positive reminders fail, we may ask a child to take space until the child feels calm enough to rejoin an activity constructively. This differs from a "time out" as the child has a choice to rejoin the flow of the classroom when they feel they are ready. Removal of a child is an opportunity for the child to regain control, desire, or willingness to rejoin an activity or group. If a child shows "out-of-control" behavior, we will carefully document the behavior and work together as a staff and with parents to create a plan of intervention to achieve any potential relief. Should this process prove unsuccessful, further evaluation and accommodations may be necessary and we will provide you with contact information to any necessary specialists.

**Children with Special Needs:**

Enrolled children with special needs will be subject to collaboration with community service providers, families, school district personnel, etc. in order to design learning activities that aid in meeting the outcome and goals of Individualized Family Serve Plans, Individual Education Programs, and/or School Readiness Plans to best support your child in our program.

## Instructions for Enrollment

We encourage parents to schedule an observation so that they can experience the beauty of our school. We understand that choosing the best fitting school can be intimidating and often competitive. At Gateway Montessori School we strive to aid parents' decision-making process by hosting an informational meeting with our Director after the classroom observation to respond to any questions and comments. This is also the first opportunity for relationship building, as we believe relationships with parents are equally important to our relationships with their children. Our goal is that parents leave our school feeling as informed, welcome, and optimistic as possible. We nurture the love of learning and believe in our program whole-heartedly.

Should parents agree that Gateway Montessori School is the right fit for their child and family needs, an online application can be requested by email to our director at [reyn@gmslongmont.com](mailto:reyn@gmslongmont.com). From here parents will be able to submit emergency and authorization information, and our projected materials fee. Gateway Montessori School is required by state regulations to retain certain documents in a child's file. Before your child's first day of school, be sure to have submitted a physician's form, immunizations form, waiver agreements, and your tuition agreement. These documents will be provided to you. Your child will not be able to begin until these documents are on file.

We know there are many options for infant and child-care and thank you for choosing Gateway Montessori School!

## How to Prepare for the First Day

The anticipation of the first day, whether it is a child's first year or final year, can reflect many emotions. We strive to make this transition feel as supported and comfortable as possible for parents and children. We understand that the separation can be difficult and want to encourage parents to begin a dialogue with their children about the nearing start of school, how their routines will change, and how the child will be supported. Prepare your child for separation by reassuring they will be picked up after school and offer supportive affection. Children who become visibly upset are likely to settle after the parent is out of view and those who are having difficulty separating will be phased in gradually. Parents who are having difficulty separating are encouraged to observe in our observation rooms. We will strive to meet the needs of parents and children during transition, but find it a helpful reminder that this transition period can take time and effort.

The first day of school for new students starting in the Fall consists of a meeting with the student, parent, and teacher. This provides an opportunity to ask any initial questions, introduce ourselves, and become affiliated with our environment. Day two, new students in the Lilac room come to view the classroom for an hour. On this day teachers will introduce the classroom and begin to connect with the new children. By day three, classroom hours resume their regular schedules and the children are introduced to returning students, the classroom begins to function as a whole community. For children in the Bluebell room we start day two with regular hours and all students unless arrangements are made for individual students to come for shortened hours.

For returning students, the first day of school is our regular hours schedule. Whether the child is part day or full day, their first day schedule will reflect the normal schedule of the following days to come.

Be sure to send your child with two complete changes of clothing and a pair of hard-soled indoor shoes or slippers labeled with their names. These items will be stored in their individual cubby to be accessed in the event of an accident or wet spill. Note: As the seasons change, please be sure that your child's extra clothing is seasonally appropriate.

**It is mandatory that all children come dressed for the elements, as we will be going outside daily, weather permitting.**



Gateway will provide sheets and blankets sized to fit our cots for children who nap. If your child naps, they may bring one item of comfort—a very small blanket, a small stuffed animal, or small pillow to be taken out only during the nap period and will be placed directly back in their cubbies or backpack upon waking.

For all children, please refrain from bringing any items of distraction that could be tempting to access during the school hours. These items include toys, stuffed animals, money, etc. Jewelry is permitted as long as it remains on the child's body and doesn't become distracting. All too often these items become lost, broken, or create a safety concern in the classroom.

## School Hours & Attendance Policies

It is important your child have regular attendance and consistent arrival and departure times. In our program, we uphold practices of accountability. Please commit to the contracted days and hours agreed upon to assure your child receive the benefits of regulation and consistency our program and curricula teaches. Should a child be absent, or a parent late to drop off or pick up, please call or email to inform our teachers and staff of any accommodating changes. Attendance for any additional days or hours beyond what is contracted will be charged at the current daily rate.

### **Hours of Operation:**

#### **Part Day Preschool & Kindergarten**

<b>Arrival</b>	<b>8:30-8:40 AM</b>
<b>Pickup 1</b>	<b>11:30 AM</b>
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>11:15-12:00 PM</b>
<b>Outside</b>	<b>12:00-1:00</b>
<b>Pickup 2</b>	<b>1:00 PM</b>

#### **Full Day Preschool & Kindergarten**

<b>Arrival</b>	<b>7:30-8:30 AM</b>
<b>Outside</b>	<b>11:00 AM-12:00 PM</b>
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>12:00-12:45</b>

**Rest/Nap 12:45-1:30**  
**Pickup 4:00-5:30 PM**

Any person picking up a child must be authorized to do so. In the event of any person picking up a child that is not listed on our emergency contact list, our staff must be notified in writing. Send an email or written note with the person's name and relationship to the child. We will use this information to check the individual's form of identification before releasing the child.

For any other information necessary to be shared at either drop off or pick up, we encourage you to send an email discussing the matter in full. We may not have time to discuss pertinent information in these moments, but value close parent contact. Please take the time to write an email explaining any event, situation, or change that you feel important to inform us of. Whether your child is sick or responding to a major event, we want to know. This information helps us better understand the child's reactions, moods, and behaviors. The staff will extend the same courtesy to you by informing you of any incident or striking observations that occurred throughout the day.

## Student Health & Wellness

### **If or When to Stay Home:**

During the first several months of school, it is not unusual that a child appears to have an increase in colds and flu outbreaks due to high exposure through their peer group. As the child builds up immunity, they will catch fewer illnesses, however it is important to be watchful for the symptoms that indicate the child should remain home. Symptoms include the following:

- New discharge from the nose, or sneezing (other than allergy)
- Red or inflamed throat
- Unexplained rash
- Elevated temperature (over 100 degrees)
- Unusual irritability, lack of appetite, or extreme sleepiness/lethargy
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Not acting normally—emotional, lethargic, or “not themselves”

Should a child arrive at school displaying any of these symptoms and/or appear to worsen throughout their time, we will notify parents to come pick up

their child. A child must be fever free for at least **24 hours** in order to return to school. Please note, if a child is well enough to return to school, a child is well enough to participate in all activities and play outside.

Please note that Gateway Montessori School will admit children who are not fully immunized and have signed the annual immunization exemption form requirement. By keeping your child's immunization forms updated, we can assure that they will be protected in the event of possible exposure at school.

### **Snack, Food Preparation, & Lunch:**

Each morning and afternoon during our three-hour work cycle, children have the opportunity to serve themselves snack. We have a designated snack table where up to four children can enjoy snack together at a time. Gateway Montessori School wants every child to be able to safely consume any food item that is presented for snack. Should your child have allergies, we will refrain from serving unsafe food items in addition to the option to send your child with a special snack to enjoy at snack time and during birthday celebrations. We follow the food guidelines shown on [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov) assuring that we will serve at least one fruit or vegetable and at least one other food group item along with 1% organic milk and water.

In addition to snack, food preparation works will be offered in the morning and may include fruit/bread/cheese cutting, jam spreading, and/or vegetable cutting.

Lunches will be stored together in the lunch cubby. We do not supply lunch at Gateway Montessori School and strongly encourage healthy eating and active lifestyles, therefore we encourage parents to pack lunches including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and protein. Please become familiar with [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov) nutrition guidelines to be sure what you're packing is best for the health and wellness of your developing child. For additional support, see our youtube channel for informational videos on cooking with your child, and how to build a positive relationship with healthy eating and active lifestyles.

### **Movement & Exercise:**

Children are free to move around the classroom during all work cycles. We have specified shelves with works requiring movement that children are free to choose at any time during the work cycle. Throughout the day we will provide at least 60 minutes of free play activity time and at least 60 minutes of adult lead movement.

For kindergarten students during the school year and for all students during the summer sessions, we will take the children on field trips and nature walks. Parents will be notified well in advance and will have the opportunity to sign a permission slip in the event of each planned trip. At times, we may need parents to volunteer, providing extra vigilance and a chance to engage with the children in nature. In the event of a trip requiring driven transportation, a parent must be licensed and fully insured and each child will ride in a car seat provided by parents. Driving parents will be prepared with a cellphone and all emergency contacts.

### **Health Day Screenings:**

**\*Please keep in mind that this might change due to regulations regarding pandemic health and safety\***

Each October, Gateway Montessori School hosts a Health Day. On this day we will provide a variety of free health screenings and wellness information, hand washing lessons, and class pictures. The health screenings and lessons are provided by volunteers and/or others who contribute their time at a discounted fee. Services provided are hearing, vision, dental, and speech screenings. Each child participant will be provided with screening results that will indicate if a follow up appointment is recommended and will include follow up referral resources. Referral resources are also available at anytime upon request from the school office.

### **Medications at School:**

When possible, we prefer any needed medicine be distributed before or after school. If a medication will need to be given during the time your child is at school, we will need the medication in its original container as prescribed by the physician with distribution instructions clearly printed on the label, as well as signed instructions from the physician and our school nurse. In cases where medication is kept on hand for emergencies, the medication will be kept in a container on the top shelf in the kitchen and administered by a staff member trained in medication administration per the Nurse Practice Act. We are not permitted to apply ointment to wounds. In the event a wound needs more than water and bandage, we will contact the child's emergency contact.

### **Chronic Illness & Allergies:**

If your child suffers from a chronic illness or food allergies, a written order is required from the child's physician explaining the condition as well as steps to administer medications from their original containers. Upon receiving written verification we will issue the information to our school nurse who will contact

you to review the information. The nurse will then create a Health Plan that will be signed by the parents, Head of School, and the nurse.

### **Preschool Toileting:**

It is mandatory that all students admitted to Gateway Montessori School preschool be toilet trained. We understand that accidents happen and are prepared to handle these moments, however, **the child must have a firm grasp on using the toilet and possess the abilities of dressing and undressing.** We will provide assistance when needed, but are only able to assist a child in dressing while the child is standing up. We have two child-sized bathrooms in each room that the children have access to for toileting and washing their hands after each entry.

### **Breastfeeding Policy:**

Gateway Montessori School is a proud breastfeeding friendly employer. We provide an atmosphere that welcomes and supports breastfeeding families and welcome mothers to breastfeed wherever they are comfortable, while we also provide a private, designated space for mothers to breastfeed their children in our Meditation/Breastfeeding room.

## **Classroom Safety & Procedures**

### **Fire & Shelter Drills:**

Beginning in October, we will conduct fire drills on a regular basis. So as to not upset or stress the children, the drill begins with a discussion and verbal preparation of the drill and how to prepare in case of a fire. We also are sure to comfort the children by explaining that we have never had an actual fire, but their is important to prepare for one. Next we practice ringing a bell and walking to the exit door. Finally, in the sounding of the Fire Alarm, the children know to line up to exit the building.

Shelter drills are conducted once per semester. In the event of a tornado or other outside danger, children will be seated in the bathrooms in the classrooms. Should the building suffer damage, children and teachers will walk across Warren Avenue to Longmont High School to await pick up.

We will notify parents of any safety situation that arises, including instances of construction or electrical outages via email.

### **Hyper-Vigilance:**

To be sure each child is accounted for at all times, parents and authorized persons are required by law to sign in and out their students upon pick up and drop off. We will take classroom headcounts periodically throughout the day. Children do not leave the classroom without supervision by an adult. We count each child upon leaving and reentering the classroom. This number will be posted on the white board at all times to be viewed by all staff.

**Missing Child:**

We are very careful to adequately supervise children in the classroom, on the playground, and on occasional field trips and nature walks. The likelihood of losing a child is slim, but to assure this never happens, we take attendance on a regular basis, count heads when outside, and monitor the classroom and patio doors when in use.

We stress repeatedly to the children that they must have an adult with them always when leaving or entering the classroom or playground. In the unlikely event that we were unable to account for a child, we would (1) search the educational wing, (2) seek assistance from other adults in the building to conduct a search of the grounds in its entirety, (3) notify a parent or emergency contact, and (4) seek help from the police.

**Abandoned Child:**

If you are running late for any reason, please inform the office of the expected delay and your anticipated arrival time. If a child is left at school one hour beyond their designated pickup time, they are by law considered Abandoned. At this point we will contact the police who will contact the Department of Human Services to come for the child. During this hour we will make every effort to contact you or those authorized to pick up the child. No child will be left behind and we assure that all children be picked up before teachers and staff members leave.

**Suspected Child Abuse:**

Parents and teachers are required by law to report any case of suspected abuse to the Department of Human Services. If you believe that a child has been abused, seek immediate assistance from your county Department of Social Services. In Longmont, CO, you may reach them by calling 303-678-8000 or the Child Abuse Hotline 844-CO4-kids (844-264-5437).

**Accidents & Injuries:**

All children must have a signed Emergency Information and Authorization form on file before they can begin school. Occasionally a minor accident or injury occurs during their time here. Usually this is no more than a scrape or bump requiring a Band-Aid, ice pack, or comfort. In any case we will issue an Incident Report and discuss the situation with you. In the event of a more serious injury, we will contact parties listed on the Emergency Information form. In the unlikely event of an emergency requiring immediate medical attention, we would call 911 and have the child transported to the facility of your choice. Parents will be immediately contacted and given a report of the child's condition and location.

### **Extreme Weather:**

In the event of extreme or wet weather, teachers use discretion in deciding whether to remain indoors or venture to the playground and do so on a day-by-day basis.

During the warmer months of the year, the classroom will be cooled by air conditioners. Drinking water is always available in the classroom and on the playground. The opportunity for heat and sun relief is offered on the playground by sunshades and umbrellas. Should the weather ever be too extreme to enjoy outdoor playtime, an hour of active play will be supplemented indoors.

During the frigid months of the year, the classroom is warmed by central heat. Should a child forget gloves, socks, or a hat we do keep a limited number of extras that they may borrow, **but we do strongly enforce the responsibility of parents to send children with appropriate clothing for outdoor play.** Should the weather ever be too extreme to enjoy outdoor playtime, an hour of active play will be supplemented indoors.

### **Colorado Division of Child Care:**

Gateway Montessori School is routinely visited by the Department of Human Services for supervisory observation and license renewals. Should parents have questions or complaints, please contact the Division of Child Care located at 1575 Sherman Street, First Floor, Denver, CO 80203 or call 1-800-799-5876.

## Classroom Details & Special Events

### **Share:**

**\*Please keep in mind that this might change due to regulations regarding pandemic health and safety\***

Tuesday and Thursday mornings have an allotted time for sharing items brought from home. The children may bring an item from nature or a special book that they can showcase to the other children. This provides the opportunity for your child to develop confidence in speaking in front of a group as well as the receptive listening of peers.

### **Take-Home Day:**

Thursdays at Gateway are also designated as “Take-Home Day.” On this day children are permitted to bring home special works and accomplishments. We encourage you to sit down with your child and review their areas of interest and interact with the skills they are learning. We provide a special cloth bag serving as their “Take-Home Bag” and will issue one free bag per school year. In the event of a lost bag, a new one will be provided at a \$10 replacement fee.

### **Birthday Celebrations:**

**\*Please keep in mind that this might change due to regulations regarding pandemic health and safety\***

At Gateway Montessori School, we use the anniversary of a child’s birth to introduce the rather abstract concept of the passage of time in a way that is both personal and concrete. We use special celebration props to demonstrate the child’s “traveling around the sun” as a visual aid to represent the passing of a year.

If you would like, and we strongly encourage, to join the class in celebration of your child’s birthday or half birthday for those born in summer, a birthday checklist will be provided to you and preparations can be coordinated with your classroom teachers. To prepare for the celebration, we ask that you create a photo collection of your child at previous ages so your child can share their life story with the class, presented on a poster. You may also bring a special, commercially prepared snack to share with the class. Please refrain from bringing beverages, as water will be provided.

### **Holidays:**

**\*Please keep in mind that this might change due to regulations regarding pandemic health and safety\***



Since our students have a variety of religious and family-value backgrounds, holidays are discussed from a cultural and historical point of view only. We de-emphasize the consumer aspects associated with the holidays by placing attention to the purpose rather than product of the celebration. We will offer more information about upcoming holidays and celebrations in our newsletters.

We strongly encourage families to share special celebrations or traditions with the class in an attempt to build the bond between home and school life. If this is of interest, please coordinate the celebration with your classroom teachers.

**Newsletters:**

Every other week a newsletter will be emailed to parents containing information on upcoming dates and events, news from the classrooms, birthday announcements, and other items of interest. It is important to read our newsletters to remain informed and engaged with your child and their school environment. The newsletters provide a detailed look inside the school calendar as the year progresses.

**Screen Time**

Television and access to computers or tablets are not involved in our Montessori curricula. Children have no exposure to screens during the school day. However, during parent-only evenings and events, we will show a G rated film for the children during childcare.

## Parent & School Partnership

As a part of an authentic Montessori experience, Gateway Montessori School partners with parents to provide the best possible early education for their children. We strongly encourage parents to participate in all the activities, events, and conferences sponsored by Gateway to uphold the principles of Montessori education and foster collaboration between school and home.

Gateway Montessori School has developed a continuous quality improvement plan that is updated annually that includes our smart goals with target dates, timelines, and outcomes. This plan is informed and adapted by the results of an annual survey of the parents, staff, and stakeholders, however we do welcome feedback and input at any time. The quality improvement plan is always available for review in the office.

We recognize that, while parents are anxious to participate, they are not always aware of ways to do so. We recognize the importance of parent involvement and would like to share a few ways in which parents can participate. Also, please feel free to suggest topics or events of special interest to you as parent education topics. We recognize that most of us lead very busy lives, so we try to make all of these events worth your time and effort. We hope that you will view these events with positive anticipation:

- Attend scheduled conferences
- Attend parent information nights
- Attend Parent/Child night
- Attend picnics
- Make, repair, maintain materials
- Drive for field trips
- Volunteer for Health Day
- Participate, organize, attend fundraisers
- Find/write grant proposals
- Buy and use gift cards for groceries and gas
- Volunteer/physical labor

### **Conferences:**

**\*Please keep in mind that this might change due to regulations regarding pandemic health and safety\***

Two regularly scheduled conferences between teachers and parents are arranged yearly in the fall and again in spring. These scheduled meetings provide the opportunity to engage deeper with teachers and their observations and recordings of your child's emotional and intellectual development. We will share any concerns, tried interventions, and situational outcomes, as well as a discussion of your child's strengths and attributes. It is also a time to discuss further any observations or issues you're experiencing at home and we can work together to develop a course of action. If we are concerned based on our knowledge of child development, we may choose to recommend a referral to another expert and contact information for specialists will be provided.

Classes are closed at these times in order for teachers to devote time to parents and utilize classroom space for these meetings. Please be aware that tuition is not charged for the days classes are closed. In addition to regularly scheduled conferences, parents are encouraged to email teachers if ever questions and concerns arise. Parents may also visit to observe their child in their learning environment, unscheduled, at any time through our one-way mirrored windows.

### **Fundraising:**

Gateway Montessori School has engaged in a variety of activities to raise money to cover the costs of daily operative fees and the upkeep of our classroom environments. Operating and maintaining a high quality Montessori program is costly. We strive to keep tuition at an affordable cost. This would not be possible without generous parent support and fundraising from our dedicated Gateway families and friends.

### **Community Engagement:**

Throughout the school year, Gateway Montessori School provides many opportunities to engage with the greater Gateway community. These events are ways for families to get to know each other, as well as a way to become better acquainted with teachers and staff. Here are a few gatherings to be sure to attend:

#### **Back-to-School Picnic (Families)**

**\*Please keep in mind that this might change due to regulations regarding pandemic health and safety\***

We host a family picnic and back-to-school night before school starts. This allows families new to the school to meet other parents, children and staff, share a meal together and possibly arrange car-pools, etc. Returning families

make new acquaintances, renew existing ones, catch up with teachers and welcome everyone back to school.

### **Community Nights Out (Family and Friends)**

**\*Please keep in mind that this might change due to regulations regarding pandemic health and safety\***

Gatherings at various restaurants or boutiques in the area that offer to donate a portion of the night's proceeds to Gateway Montessori School. On these nights our extended community can share fun, food and build relationship with one another.

### **Parent Education Evening (Adults)**

**\*Please keep in mind that this might change due to regulations regarding pandemic health and safety\***

In October and/or February we schedule a meeting for parents that is specific to Montessori philosophy or another pertinent topic. We utilize our staff as well as outside resources for gaining particular insight into an appropriate topic. Please feel free to invite interested friends. Typically we provide childcare at a nominal cost and require a reservation for the care.

### **Kindergarten Information Meeting (Parents and Families)**

**\*Please keep in mind that this might change due to regulations regarding pandemic health and safety\***

In November before the re-enrollment information is given out in December we will hold an informational meeting about what happens in our Kindergarten class. This is open to any adult who wants to know more about the 3rd year here.

### **Parent/Child Night (Currently Enrolled Students, Parents, or Adult Guests)**

**\*Please keep in mind that this might change due to regulations regarding pandemic health and safety\***

In March we schedule an evening for students to bring parents and loved ones to school to share classroom experiences. This evening serves as a wonderful opportunity for children to demonstrate their favorite works and activities and for parents to engage with their child's classroom environment.

### **End Of Year Bash (Families)**

**\*Please keep in mind that this might change due to regulations regarding pandemic health and safety\***

On the evening of the last day of school we gather at a location to be announced. This gives us a time together as a large group to share fun and food before our varied summer activities get underway. We also send the “graduating” kindergartners off into the wide world with a special ceremony.

### **Summer Get-Togethers (Family and Friends)**

**\*Please keep in mind that this might change due to regulations regarding pandemic health and safety\***

Over the summer, Gateway hosts community get-togethers where families can gather together at a nearby park to picnic, play, or swim. This is a time to get to know other current families better or get reacquainted with past friends.

Thank you for completing this informational Parent Handbook. Again, if questions, comments, or concerns ever arise, we welcome you to contact us at any time.

We look forward to sharing a bright future with your children and family.

**Welcome to Gateway Montessori School!**