



ROCK PRAIRIE MONTESSORI
MIDDLE SCHOOL

sowing seeds of inquiry, creativity, stewardship, and service

**Middle School Community
Handbook**

*The first duty of an education is to stir up life, but leave it free to develop.
- Maria Montessori*

Our Rock Prairie Montessori School Vision and Mission

Our Vision:

Our Rock Prairie community offers an authentic Montessori education, supporting children in reaching their full potential by fostering independence, responsibility, and confidence. Students develop a lifelong love of learning, rooted in respect for one's self, their school community, and the environment. Through caring relationships, peaceful leadership is instilled within our children as they become engaged global citizens.

Our Mission:

We create a peaceful, nurturing Montessori environment in partnership with families and our larger community, where children grow in lifelong purpose through curiosity and meaningful exploration

The Middle School Community

Our Montessori Middle School Community is designed to help adolescents answer the question, “Where do I fit in?” Along with Maria Montessori, we propose that the work of the adolescent is to find their purpose and place in society.

With this in mind and in alignment with Rock Prairie Montessori School’s Mission and Vision our Middle School has these objectives:

To foster each adolescent’s emerging abstract thinking skills and encourage intellectual risk-taking through rigorous, flexible, and inquiry-based learning within an integrated curriculum.

To inspire intellectual curiosity while giving opportunity and instruction that develop 21st Century core competencies such as collaboration, creativity, innovation, communication, resiliency, reflection, digital fluency, and critical thinking.

To prepare adolescents for the daily activities of adult life through authentic experiences in real-world problem solving and entrepreneurial activities.

To connect adolescents to diverse cultural and ecological environments through experiential learning within a global “classroom”.

To provide opportunities to develop confidence and mastery through meaningful work and exploration in a thoughtful and empowering environment.

To assist adolescents in developing healthy relationships with themselves and one another.

To support moral and ethical development by linking adolescents’ budding desire for fairness and individual freedom to a broader understanding of social justice and individual responsibility.

Core Values

Responsibility * Learning *Community * Leadership *Authenticity* Individuality *Peace

- Freedom requires responsibility.
- Learning demands hard work, curiosity, and creativity and is an inside job.
- Courtesy and respect form the cornerstone of a compassionate community.
- A good leader and a good follower are the same person.
- An authentic education happens through dialogue and with passion and prepares the student to articulate, innovate, and engage with the world.
- In order to celebrate an individual's path and strengths, the community must save space for individual progress.
- Peace is embedded in every goal and action.

Middle School Overview

To fulfill these objectives and in alignment with our core values our program structure includes the following:

- An academic year divided into six units of inquiry.
- An integrated curriculum that connects the students' various studies under a unifying theme or central concept.
- A practice of considering content through the lens of many disciplines.

To explore some of humanity's most enduring questions such as "How does the world work?" and "What is my place in it?", students engage in the following subjects:

The Humanities:

Social Studies: In Year A, our Middle School students delve into Big History using an interdisciplinary, chronological approach to investigate the history of the universe beginning with the Big Bang and ending in the modern era. This approach helps them see connections across time and space as well as their own place in the cosmos.

Year B is focused on American History, Geography, and Government as we take a thematic approach to our social studies. The students will use a timeline to consider issues across time and to clarify how varied issues are chronologically connected.

This approach to history is intended to instill in our students an appreciation for the past, a respect for social systems, and a sense of civic responsibility, with the ultimate goal of fostering their lifelong engagement in the society and world in which they live. Our social studies and language arts are tightly linked to support deeper inquiry and are created with an anti-bias, anti-racist lens.

English Language Arts: In order to instill a love of reading and to invite each student to develop confidence in self-expression, students are required to read and reflect on assigned and self-selected fiction and non-fiction across many genres.

Education in the skills of critical reading, seminar discussion, and the writing process allows students to use literature and writing as tools for exploring their own emerging beliefs and values and to become authors and lifelong readers.

Ongoing self-editing, peer review, and feedback from the Montessori guide will support the learners' development of writing skills including vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. Assigned reading selections will correlate with the units of inquiry.

Spanish Language Arts:

We are pleased to offer Spanish as a second language to our middle school students! Sra. (Señora) Díaz (Ms. Ellen) teaches our Spanish classes. We feel it is of vital importance to cultivate an understanding of the world around us and our place in it as we view it through the lens of a second language.

Spanish 1a-

Students taking Spanish 1a are essentially taking the equivalent of the first semester of 9th grade Spanish spread out over the course of the full year. Rock Prairie will utilize the Descubre curriculum favored by many schools for its comprehensive content with exceptional platforms to enrich the learning experience. We will be following along the units of inquiry used in the Montessori MS curriculum to interweave the themes in our Spanish learning as well. These themes fit quite naturally within the scope and sequence of the Descubre content.

Students will be working to continue to build upon knowledge gained throughout their time at RPMS. Students who are new to the Spanish language will also find the curriculum accessible and exciting. Our goal is to comprehend, speak, read, and write the Spanish language with a high level of comfortability through practice and repetition employed throughout various formats and contexts.

Our primary resource in the Spanish 1a class will be the Descubre textbook. Embedded in the textbook are technology resources used to highlight grammar and vocabulary introduced in various ways. Music, listening exercises, and mini cultural videos (both fictional and non-fictional) have been created specifically for the curriculum and the developing second language learner.

Spanish 1b- Upon successful completion of the Spanish 1a course, students move on to take Spanish 1b, typically during the second year of middle school. Rock Prairie will utilize the Descubre curriculum favored by many schools for its comprehensive content with exceptional platforms to enrich the learning experience. We will be following along the units of inquiry used in the Montessori MS curriculum to interweave the themes in our Spanish learning as well. These themes fit quite naturally within the scope and sequence of the Descubre content.

Students will be working to continue to build upon knowledge gained throughout their exposure during the Spanish 1a course. Our goal is to comprehend, speak, read, and write the Spanish language with a high level of comfortability through practice and repetition employed throughout various formats and contexts, with the additional goal of flexible circumlocution whenever possible.

Our primary resource in the Spanish 1b class will be the Descubre textbook. Embedded in the textbook are technology resources used to highlight grammar and vocabulary

introduced in various ways. Music, listening exercises, and mini cultural videos (both fictional and non-fictional) have been created specifically for the curriculum and the developing second language learner.

Upon completion of the Spanish 1a and Spanish 1b course, students are exceptionally prepared to take Spanish 2 in their first year of high school. Some students may even find they will test into Spanish 3 as a first year high school student.

Field Studies:

Math: The sequence of courses in mathematics emphasizes the development of logical-mathematical and algorithmic capacities and the ability to apply problem -solving techniques to practical scenarios. Students learn to use scientific graphing and visualization during their transition from arithmetic to algebra to geometry. Opportunities exist for students to progress at an accelerated pace. Please see our curriculum map for details of the math curriculum.

Science: Science courses nurture adolescents' curiosity about the world around them and offer students tools to seek evidence to either validate or falsify the claims they encounter in life. Students use the terminology, tools, and techniques from various scientific disciplines through meaningful hands-on laboratory and field experiences. This leads them to appreciate the practice of science as a way of knowing and the scientific method as a tool for exploration, observation, analysis, verification, and understanding. Connections between science and history will be made as students explore the historical and human context of scientific discovery and its impact within each unit of inquiry.

Practical Life:

Dr. Montessori felt that schools should educate the whole child and that particularly during adolescence the acquisition of academic skills should occur alongside the development of the skills necessary for success in all aspects of adult life.

Montessori called these “practical life skills” and divided them into four areas. Here at Rock Prairie, we have developed a Middle School practical life curriculum for each area.

Personal Development: Throughout their Middle School experience, our students will explore topics that deepen their understanding of their development and their role in society both now and in the future. Topics will include Human Growth and

Development, Self -Regulation, Reflection, Finance, Mindfulness, Nutrition, and Physical Education.

During their 8th grade year, each student will have a chance to further investigate their particular passion through a job shadowing experience with a local business, professional, or artist.

Stewardship: The land-based portion of our curriculum will connect our humanities and science studies to both conservation practices and regenerative agricultural projects. These projects will be researched, developed, and implemented by the students themselves with the support of mentors from the school and the larger community.

In order to experience the importance of economic stability to a sustainable enterprise, students will create, launch, market, and manage entrepreneurial enterprises. In addition, these enterprises will meet adolescents' need to try on adult roles and be contributing members of their community.

Community Service: If your children have been attending our Montessori school you may recognize the first two categories as care of self and care of the environment, and this one as care of one another. Just as young children develop a sense of self through their engagement in real work, adolescents come to know themselves, their strengths, and their challenges through engagement in collaborative work that contributes to their community.

Our adolescent community will investigate the needs for support within our school community and in the larger community of Janesville and Rock County. Each year students will choose individual and collaborative service projects in support of those communities.

Activities of Daily Life: Quite often in our modern culture teenagers use technology and screens for social interaction, academic learning, and play. Sometimes the work of the adults in their lives may seem invisible or abstract as we also use technology to accomplish daily tasks. This portion of our curriculum will give adolescents more opportunities to explore work that requires the use of the hand and develop skills that will enrich their adult lives. Skills may include sewing, knitting, weaving, spinning, woodworking, cooking, creative writing, photography, painting, collage, drawing, ukulele, etc.

Routines and Events

This section includes general information about what to expect in terms of our daily, monthly, and yearly routines and events.

Communication

We feel that communication is a vital element of our program. In order to fully support each student and family, we need to communicate regularly and openly. At Rock Prairie Montessori School we do this in a variety of ways.

Before your student begins, we provide you with numerous documents. Some of these are designed to help us learn a little more about you and your student, and for you to learn a little more about us. Included within the paperwork packet is contact information so we can reach you quickly and easily when we need to communicate. It is important to keep this contact information up to date. Any changes should be given to the school office.

During the day teachers will be busy engaging with students and often are unable to speak on the phone. Email is a wonderful way to communicate and we will respond as soon as we are able.

Each educational level at RPMS communicates to families, developmentally appropriate information for that level. We communicate in a variety of ways including a monthly note, a student newsletter, and through Google Classroom.

Frequent communication gives us the opportunity to work together to create the most positive and nurturing learning environment possible for each student and family.

Report Cards and Progress Reports: In Middle School students may be receiving grades for the first time. Our grades are based on participation, completion, and competency with particular topics or skills and will be correlated with each unit of inquiry. At the end of each inquiry, your student will receive scores for the inquiry which are averaged into a semester grade.

Conferences: Conferences will be scheduled twice a year to give each student an opportunity to share his or her progress. Therefore, the expectation is that each student will attend the conference with his or her parents. If there are academic or behavioral concerns, parents will be asked to conference with teachers at other times than the fall and spring conferences.

What To Bring Daily:

- **Backpack** - Your student will need a backpack.
- **Lunch** - Students will need to bring a healthy, lunch daily. Your student will have access to a microwave and may bring food that needs to be heated. Several “healthy lunch option” websites are available online. We provide milk and water so no drink is needed.
- **Snack** - At Rock Prairie Montessori School we encourage and model healthy eating to promote good health. Middle School students may bring snacks to school and will have the opportunity to pause for an individual snack during appropriate points in the school day. Please notify the Middle School teachers and the office if your child has or develops a food allergy.
- **Hot Beverages**- We have tea bags (both caffeinated and caffeine-free) and hot chocolate available for students to drink in Middle School. Be sure that you and your middle schooler are clear about what is appropriate for them at school.
- **Outdoor Clothing**: Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing for outdoor activities that match the expected weather. We suggest that each student keep outdoor clothes at school such as “muck” boots and a coat or overshirt that they can get dirty when working with animals or engaged in other outdoor activities.
- **Bug repellent and Sunscreen**: Please provide any sunscreen or bug repellent you want your student to apply when working outdoors.
- **Indoor Shoes**: We suggest indoor footwear so that your student can remove snow boots, or work shoes and wear comfortable, clean shoes or slippers with a tread inside.

Field Trips and Outings:

Field trips are an integral part of the Middle School experience. Please be aware of the following:

- All field trips are educational and appropriate for Middle School students.
- Our school year begins with a three-day overnight leadership trip to build community, and strengthen individual leadership skills.
- Seventh and Eighth grade students will take at least one extended trip (five to seven days) during the school year. These excursions away from school will be tied to curricular projects. Since these field trips are curricular in nature, students are expected to attend. Consequently, if you choose for your student not to attend, you will need to make other arrangements for them for that school day(s).
- Daylong or brief overnight trips will also be scheduled throughout the year. Information such as dates, locations, and necessary items will be supplied in advance.

- A second type of trip called “outings” will occur. These are short trips for a few students that are more spontaneous in nature. For example, students researching a particular subject may travel to the library for additional resources. For these types of local trips, you may only receive a one or two-day notice and will need a quick turnaround on those permission slips.
- Transportation plans will be shared in advance of field trips and outings.
- While on a field trip, if an injury occurs, RPMS will use the nearest available hospital for emergency medical care.

Celebrations and Friday’s Lunch

Birthdays are celebrated at lunch in the Middle School Community. Your student may send in treats to share with the class, we ask that treats be healthy.

On Fridays, students take turns preparing a portion of lunch to share with one another. Some students choose to prepare their food at home and others cook something for that day while at school. Students choose from many possibilities including baked goods, chili in a crockpot, or something as simple as clementines or sliced fruit. Students are still encouraged to bring their lunch each Friday unless otherwise notified.

Middle School Expectations

Attendance Expectations:

Illness: If your student has a fever, please keep them home until they are fever-free for 24 hours. Students with symptoms of a contagious disease should also be kept home. These symptoms include undiagnosed rashes, excessive mucus, fluid secretion from eyes or ears, and unusually red, itchy eyes. Please notify the school if your student develops a contagious disease. If you have any questions about bringing your student to school, please consult with your physician.

Please notify the staff upon your arrival if you are concerned about the possibility that your student is ill. If your child becomes ill during the school day, we will contact you immediately and ask that you pick him/her up right away. The school will always let you know if your student has been exposed to a contagious disease.

Attendance and Promptness: School begins promptly at **8:10 am**. Students are expected to arrive on time before classes start to maximize opportunities for learning. Tardiness and irregular attendance create a disruption to the class and limit your child's opportunities to develop social and academic skills. Missing even a half-hour of school a day deprives a student of several days of work a month. Students who have missed excessive amounts of school may not be eligible to move to the next level. ***As a private school, we are required by law to provide a sufficient number of annual hours of classroom time as set forth by the laws of the State of Wisconsin. Middle School students are not to be absent in excess of ten days per school year.***

Expectations for Attire:

A student's appearance is primarily a parental responsibility, which should reflect concern for the health and safety of the student and others, and to school property. When students are on school property or attending a school sanctioned event, they are required to adhere to the school's dress code policy.

Apparel worn at school should be opaque and cover the chest, stomach, genitalia, buttocks, and upper thigh of the student.

School administration will prohibit:

- Apparel that has very thin straps, is strapless or does not cover the chest, stomach, and abdomen unless the midsection is covered by another undergarment.
- Apparel that is very short and does not cover the buttocks or upper thigh sufficiently.
- Apparel that includes offensive language or pictures.
- Apparel that promotes, advertises, or depicts illegal activity, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or clothing that mimics the logos of such items.
- Any article of clothing that presents a hazard to the health and safety of the student or to the school, including by way of communicating threats of harm or depictions of harmful conduct to self or others.
- Clothing or shoes with spikes, hobnails, cleats, or chains.
- Shoes or boots that mark the floors or have wheels.
- Shoes or clothing that cause excessive wear to school property.
- Any clothing resembling pajamas.

Students who violate this policy will be given an opportunity to correct the situation by changing, turning a shirt inside out, covering up, or being sent home to change. Students refusing to follow this policy may face suspension from school. The suspension could be in-school and/or out-of-school. Students who repeatedly violate this policy will be required to attend a parent conference with administrator(s) attending and may face suspension and/or expulsion from school.

Expressive Dress and Protected Speech

Prior to taking action to enforce dress code requirements, the administration will determine whether the items constitute protected student speech. Expressive dress may not be protected speech if it involves obscenity or language depictions intended to incite violence or foment hatred of others. Dress that is speech may still be prohibited if it is likely to cause a substantial disruption to the educational environment. This may include dress that includes the use of vulgarity, discriminatory language including racial or ethnic slurs, negative stereotypes, violence, or other communication when the clear intent is to invoke strong reactions in observers so as to impair the ability of teachers and/or students to engage in educational pursuit.

In the event of an apparent dress code violation:

- Only the school administrators will be the arbiters of the dress code policy.
- Teachers will not engage students about the dress code.
- Teachers will bring any questions regarding a student's dress to the attention of the school administrators.

Expectations for Behavior:**Positive Guidance:**

Middle School guides/teachers follow these principles of Positive Guidance:

- Embraces kindness and firmness at the same time. (Respectful and encouraging)
- Helps adolescents feel a sense of belonging and significance. (Connection)
- Remains effective long-term. (Punishment works short term, but has negative long-term results.)
- Teaches valuable social and life skills for good character. (Respect, concern for others, problem-solving, accountability, contribution, cooperation)
- Invites adolescents to discover how capable they are and to use their personal power in constructive ways.

Adolescents are entering the third plane of development where independence, personal accountability, and the ability to work with others is being practiced. Students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for their community and their environment. Respect does not allow for aggressive/abusive language, or disruptive/destructive behavior either toward another or toward oneself. If a lack of respect occurs, the following may occur:

1. The student will be asked to step aside and speak to an adult.
2. The teacher will report concerning instances or patterns of behavior to parents.
3. The student and teacher will discuss the choice made and its ramifications.
4. When behavior is deemed inappropriate by the teacher (based on the Middle School Class Amendments and the teacher's judgment), the student will be expected to complete a [Behavioral Reflection](#).
5. When a student's behavior has been disruptive or impactful for others, they will be asked to fill out and enact a [Relational Repair](#).
6. A student's opportunities to engage in independent or group activities both on and off campus may be limited when they do not meet daily behavioral expectations.
7. If chronic or dangerous behavioral problems occur, the head of school and the teacher will meet with the family to consider further actions.

Expectations and Responsibilities Regarding Work:

The Rock Prairie Montessori Secondary Program is designed to provide engaging and authentic educational opportunities in a unique environment for study and learning. In addition to fostering community and social skills, at the heart of all we do is the goal of encouraging higher level and critical thinking skills. Within this context, each student is expected to take responsibility for his/her own learning by:

- Completing work on time and following through with study guide completion.
- Completing assigned work to the best of their ability.
- Working respectfully with other students. During group work, students are expected to be active, cooperative, and productive members.
- Avoiding distractions to self or others and working efficiently during the school day.
- Communicating any issues or concerns with teachers for support.
- Committing the necessary time for homework each evening in addition to nightly reading requirements. It is the goal of each teacher to minimize the demands placed on students and families
- Following directions thoroughly.
- Treating time, property, and people, as well as the Montessori culture and community, with respect.

Organization Helping students to develop organizational skills is an important part of our program and one to which teachers give students much support. RPMS students are expected to fine-tune their strategies for efficiently organizing time, space, and work. Each student is responsible for their textbooks, binders, projects, journals, assignments, research, and anything else that they are using in their learning experience, including school supplies. **They are responsible for keeping and consulting a daily planner and coming to school each day prepared.** Parents are key to their student's success by checking in with them during their home study time and encouraging them to find an organizational system that works. Each student will be required to select either a digital or physical planner option.

Study Guides: To aid in organization students are provided with a Study Guide for each inquiry in Science, English, and Social Studies. Each study guide describes the inquiry and lists all of the assignments with suggested start dates and required due dates. Students are expected to use the study guides to manage their work and to create their daily plans for completing it.

Google Classroom: Study Guides and individual assignments are posted on Google Classroom by subject or project. Google Classroom has many features that help students and parents view assignments, due dates, past due work, submitted work, teacher comments, and grades. Here is a link to a parent tutorial on [Google Classroom for Parents](#). Students are responsible for completing assignments and responding to communication they receive through Google Classroom. Students may receive additional communication via email and are expected to check their email each morning and afternoon.

Weekly Work Expectations and Remedies: Throughout a course of inquiry students have numerous assignments with due dates occurring each week. There is ample time to complete work during the day. When students engage, put forth effort and still fall behind, we will work together to make adjustments and determine appropriate expectations.

When a student uses their time unwisely and/or does not take responsibility for their learning, they will be required to invest more time at school. Each Thursday, students who do not engage appropriately will be required to remedy this by remaining at school for an additional work period from 3:15 PM - 4:30 PM. Our expectation is that most students will take responsibility for their work and will never or rarely experience this consequence. Students will be required to stay for the **Thursday Remedial Class** when they have not demonstrated an appropriate work ethic and:

1. They have three or more assignments past due.
2. Their incomplete work interferes with the progress of their group.
3. Their submitted work requires resubmission and teacher support.
4. They are not meeting intermediate expectations for long term projects.
5. Absences have impacted their ability to keep up with work.

Teachers will make their decision each Wednesday by noon, and will notify your family via email before the end of the day on Wednesday. Once the decision is made, the student will be required to stay for the Thursday session even if they complete the indicated assignments before the Thursday after school session. We believe this clearly defined consequence will discourage poor work habits and reduce the build up of late work over

the course of the inquiry period.

If a student is required to stay for the Thursday work cycle, they may also be required to continue working on those assignments during the Friday afternoon field trips or activities. This decision will be made by the teacher and will depend on the student's attitude and engagement. Friday activities include art lessons, library trips and special field trips.

End of Inquiry Expectations and Remedies: At the end of each inquiry, students who did not take responsibility for their learning are required to spend an additional day at school. This is both a consequence for inappropriate use of class time and a final chance to pass the inquiry. Students who have an incomplete or a total score below 80% (Proficient) in any study area must attend the **End of Inquiry Remedial Class**. * If your student is required to attend you will be notified the day before. However, you can look at Google Classroom at any time to determine how a student is doing with their work.

The dates for the Saturday End of Inquiry Remedial Class will be posted in the Middle School Calendar and noted in the First Friday Notes sent to families each month.

Like you, we would prefer to focus our Saturday time on our families. If your student or family has Saturday morning activities you do not want to miss, please remind your student to be mindful of their learning responsibilities.

*If a student has past due work from Inquiry Four prior to the School Field Trip week, the teacher will set a unique End of Inquiry Remedial Class. **Homework** While it is our goal to provide adequate time during the day for students to accomplish much of their work, homework is sometimes necessary to enable a student to progress at an expected rate and complete necessary work. Homework also provides reinforcement of information covered during the day as well as an opportunity to expand understanding through synthesis and analysis. It also prepares them for later high school and college experiences. Not all classes meet every day of the week, and many assignments are long-term projects or research. Therefore, students must learn time management skills

and budget how they will coordinate work at school and at home. Parents can support their students by encouraging him/her to post due dates on a calendar. If your student consistently has homework outside of their reading and math routines, please contact a teacher to discuss possible work habits.

Technology/Internet Expectations

Personal Electronics Expectations/Technology Policy: Smart watches/devices and phones if brought into the classroom must be placed in the provided location on the Teacher's counter and remain there during the school day. If a student needs to communicate with home, notify the teacher and they will help facilitate the communication.

When Middle School students go on extended field trips, electronics will only be allowed where agreements and ground rules have been predetermined by the whole middle school community. Violation of those ground rules may result in the loss of electronics for the remainder of the trip or outing.

Chromebook Agreement:

Every middle school student will be issued a Chromebook with a charger. The Chromebook will remain at school for use in classes for instruction and are an essential part of the curriculum for research and study. The Chromebooks will be issued at a rental charge of \$100 per year (billed via TADS); after the second year of use, ownership of the Chromebook will be transferred to the student. This contract must be returned BEFORE a Chromebook may be issued to a student.

Student Responsibility

Care of the Chromebook

- The student is responsible for proper care of the Chromebook. Follow these guidelines to help ensure the Chromebook remains in good working order:
- Chromebook should be used by the assigned student only.
- Clean the screen with a soft cloth only.
- Carry the Chromebook cradled in the arm or with both hands to avoid accidental dropping.

- Keep away from food and drink.
- Do not remove any stickers from the device.
- Do not stack anything on the Chromebook; the screens are very sensitive and can be damaged.

Intentional Damage

Intentionally damaging technology equipment (vandalism) may result in cancellation of privileges and/or other discipline up to and including expulsion. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user or organization, reckless behavior in and around computing equipment, hacking, and physical damage to any network component or as otherwise defined by law. Rock Prairie Montessori School reserves the right to recover its expenditures associated with a vandalism incident up to the actual cost of repair or replacement.

Returning the Chromebook

At the end of the student's first middle school year, the Chromebook will be collected for the summer and returned for the student's second year in the fall. If the student is leaving at the end of that first year, the family will be presented with a buyout option.

Principal and School Responsibility

When a student leaves during the school year, the assigned equipment is gathered by the school and checked for damage. At the end of each school year, the school designee will check every device for damage. If needed, responsibility for any damage is determined in coordination with the Head of School or designee and billed to the family accordingly.

Network Etiquette: All users must abide by the rules of network etiquette, which include the following:

- Be polite. Use appropriate language. No swearing, vulgarities, or suggestive, obscene, belligerent, or threatening language.

- Avoid language and uses that may be offensive to other users. Don't use access to make, distribute, or redistribute jokes, stories, or other material that is based upon slurs or stereotypes relating to race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or sexual orientation.
- If applicable, don't assume that a sender of an email is giving their permission for you to forward or redistribute the message to third parties or to give their email address to third parties. This should only be done with permission.
- If applicable, be considerate when sending attachments with email (where this is permitted). Be sure that the file is not too large to be accommodated by the recipient's system and is in a format that the recipient can open.

Internet Safety

General Warning: Individual Responsibility of Parents and Users:

- A. All users and their parents/guardians are advised that access to the electronic network may include the potential for access to materials inappropriate for school-aged pupils. Every user must take responsibility for his or her use of the computer network and Internet and stay away from these sites. Parents of minors are the best guide to materials to shun. If a student finds that other users are visiting offensive or harmful sites, he or she should report such use to the person designated by the School.
- B. Personal Safety. Be safe. In using the computer network and Internet, you may not:
 - a. Reveal personal information such as your home address or telephone number.
 - b. Use your real name or any other information that might allow a person to locate you without first obtaining the permission of a supervising teacher.
 - c. Arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you "meet" on the computer
 - d. However, regardless of your age, you should never agree to meet a person you have only communicated with on the Internet in a secluded place or in a private setting.
- C. "Hacking" and Other Illegal Activities: It is a violation of the Policy to use Rock Prairie Montessori School's computer network or the Internet to gain unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems, or to attempt to gain such unauthorized access.

- D. Any use that violates state or Federal law relating to copyright, trade secrets, the distribution of obscene or pornographic materials, or which violates any other applicable law or municipal ordinance, is strictly prohibited.
- E. Confidentiality of Student Information. Personally identifiable information concerning students may not be disclosed or used in any way on the Internet without the permission of a parent or guardian or, if the student is 18 or over, the permission of the student himself/herself. Users should never give out private or confidential information about themselves or others on the Internet, particularly credit card numbers and Social Security numbers. A supervising teacher or administrator may authorize the release of directory information for internal administrative purposes or approved educational projects and activities.
- F. Active Restriction Measures. Rock Prairie Montessori School utilizes filtering software or other techniques to prevent students from accessing visual depictions that are (1) obscene, (2) child pornography, or (3) harmful to minors. Rock Prairie Montessori School will also monitor the online activities, through direct observation and/or technological means, to ensure that students are not accessing such depictions or any other material that is inappropriate for minors.

Privacy:

Network and Internet access is provided as a tool for your education. Rock Prairie Montessori School reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store at any time without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of Rock Prairie Montessori School and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

Failure to Meet Expectations:

The user's use of the computer network and the Internet is a privilege, not a right. A user who violates this Policy shall, at a minimum, have his or her access to the computer network and Internet terminated, which Rock Prairie Montessori School may refuse to reinstate for the remainder of the student's enrollment at Rock Prairie Montessori School. A user violates this Policy:

1. By his or her own action or by failing to report any violations by other users that come to the attention of the user.
2. If he or she permits another to use his or her account or password to access the computer network and Internet, including any user whose access has been denied or terminated.

3. Rock Prairie Montessori School may also take other disciplinary action in such circumstances.

Tobacco, Alcohol, and Illegal Substances Expectations

Rock Prairie Montessori School recognizes that the use of tobacco products is a health, safety, and environmental hazard for students, employees, visitors, and school facilities.

No student, staff member, or school visitor is permitted to use any tobacco products, alcohol, or illegal substances at any time, during school hours **in the following locations or under these circumstances:**

- In any building, facility, or vehicle owned, leased, rented or chartered by Rock Prairie Montessori School;
- On any school grounds and property – including athletic fields and parking lots –;
or
- At any school-sponsored or school-related event on-campus or off-campus.
- Further, no student shall be permitted to possess a tobacco product, alcohol or illegal substance while in any school building; while on school grounds or property; or at any school-sponsored or school-related event, or at any other time that students are under the authority of school personnel.