Brickton
MONTESSORI
ACTIVE LEARNING
FOR CURIOUS MINDS

Parent Handbook

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Introduction

Welcome

The *Parent Handbook* is a supplement to other Brickton publications. It was developed by the Head of School in cooperation with the Board of Directors and is intended to help our parents and guardians better understand how the school works. When appropriate, we have either included the text from other publications or we refer you to other publications or governing documents for information, rather than repeating information here. We hope this answers many of your questions, but encourage you to contact your child's lead teacher(s) or the office if you ever have any questions about our policies, procedures, support services, etc. This handbook may be changed at any time and if a statement in this document conflicts with another Brickton governing document, the other governing document will control the resolution of that issue. We welcome your feedback about the contents of this document so that we can include pertinent information in future versions.

Mission

Brickton Montessori creates an authentic learning experience that honors the whole child's identity, fosters belonging, ignites curiosity, and develops confident, adaptable individuals with academic mastery, real-world skills, and a strong sense of responsibility.

Vision

Brickton Montessori builds on a legacy of educational excellence to foster supportive, hands-on learning environments that prioritize personal growth, perspective-taking, and self-advocacy—cultivating compassionate, successful alumni who make meaningful contributions to the world.

Montessori Approach

The Montessori philosophy of teaching was created by Maria Montessori (1870-1952), an Italian physician whose inquiries extended into philosophy, psychology

and educational theory. Montessori developed a radical new approach to educating children, challenging the "assembly line" learning approach of the time. She believed that children have a deep desire to learn, that there are optimal moments for acquisition of critical skills (such as language) and children flourish in an environment that is geared to their needs. Montessori's educational philosophy focused on addressing the needs of the whole child through challenging academic work as well as their social, emotional and physical needs, and preparing students to be responsible citizens ready to tackle real world challenges. Students learn in a multi-age classroom, allowing them opportunity for diverse social connections as well as challenging academic interactions. The educational goals of the Montessori approach are simple, to instill children with: a love of learning, the ability to make appropriate choices for learning through a balance of freedom and responsibility, and to respect oneself, others and the environment.

Though Dr. Montessori's pedagogy was created some 100 years ago, it addresses the 21st century skills students will need to be successful in jobs that have not yet been created. In this environment, the goal of education becomes teaching children how to learn versus memorizing content knowledge. We focus on helping students become self-directed critical thinkers, solving problems on their own or with peers through solid communication and collaboration with a focus on personal and social responsibility.

Philosophy

At Brickton Montessori School,

- we believe each student to be unique and endowed with great potential.
- we believe in nurturing the heart of the student and challenging the intellect.
- we believe in a Montessori curriculum designed to meet the needs of each student and to promote self-motivation.

- we believe that the integrity of the Montessori prepared environment must be preserved.
- we believe that the collaboration of the student, parent, and educator is the foundation of a community that leads to success.

Goals

- Develop in each student a positive attitude toward self, learning, and school.
- Foster the development of self-confidence as an independent learner.
- Foster the development of concentration, order, initiative and persistence.
- Nurture an abiding curiosity in each student.
- Develop in each student habits of initiative and persistence.
- Foster in each student inner security and a sense of order.
- Help each student develop sensory-motor skills.
- Sharpen in each student the ability to discriminate and judge.
- Help each student to develop socially and emotionally.
- Help each student develop creative intelligence and imagination.

Values

- Uniqueness of each child
- Respect
- Critical thinking
- Responsible decision-making
- Community involvement
- Partnership of parents, faculty and staff

History of the School

In 1986, Brickton Montessori School was founded by a group of committed parents and Montessori educators dedicated to providing children with an educational alternative that presents learning as a joyful, exciting process. The school first opened with four children in the basement of St. Anselm's in Park

Ridge and quickly moved to a section of Pennoyer School in Norridge, expanding to five classrooms offering programs for children from 2 to 12 years old. By the spring of 1989, Brickton had outgrown its space and moved to its current location. We added a Middle School program in 2002 and our Nido program in 2018.

Accreditations and Affiliations

Brickton Montessori School is fully accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS) and the American Montessori Society (AMS). Accreditation is a rigorous review process completed by a group of outside evaluators designed to ensure that not only are quality standards met, but that the school participates in an on-going self-improvement process.

Brickton Montessori School is fully recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education as a Non-Public School and by ExceleRate Illinois as a Gold Circle of Quality for our child care programs. We are members of both the Lake Michigan Association of Independent Schools (LMAIS) and the Association of Illinois Montessori Schools (AIMS). Brickton maintains licensure with the City of Chicago and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (Infant and Toddler Programs only).

Brickton Montessori School is not licensed by DCFS for our Children's House through Middle School program.

Under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code, Brickton Montessori School is a tax-exempt organization, and donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

School Structure & Operation

Board of Directors

The school is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors with the Head of School as a non-voting member of the Board. The primary responsibilities of the Board are as follows:

- Policy-making: Setting policies that form the structure for the school's daily operation and promote the general welfare of the school community.
- Finance: Determining the financial needs of the school, approving the budget and establishing tuition.
- Fundraising: Spearheading efforts to raise funds in a variety of ways (events, annual giving, grants, private donations, etc.) in order to close the gap between the cost of Brickton education and revenue from tuition.
- Head of School: Hiring and supporting the Head of School, conducting a search for a new Head of School as needed.
- Stability: Ensuring the future viability of the school.

Governing Documents

The governing documents of the school are comprised of the documents listed below which are subject to change without notice. For the most recent version, please check with the main office.

- Articles of Incorporation
- Bylaws
- Policy Manual
- Safety and Crisis Manual
- Personnel Manual
- Parent Contract
- Parent and Student Handbooks
- Curriculum Documents

Board of Director Meetings

Regular board meetings are open to the public with meeting dates posted on the family calendar available on the school's website. If desired, a parent may request to address the Board of Directors using the following guidelines:

1. The request must be submitted in writing to the President and must include the presentation or state the content of the presentation.
2. Written questions requiring a response from the Board of Directors must be submitted prior to the next regularly scheduled board meeting allowing for sufficient time (at least 7 days) for review by the board members.
3. The Board of Directors may request a written copy of the presentation in its entirety for inclusion in the minutes of the meeting.
4. The Board of Directors will then announce at the meeting when and how the response to the questions will be presented.

Head of School

The Head of School shall have complete responsibility for managing the school, including retaining faculty and other staff and taking responsibility for their performances; insuring care of and accurate reporting and accounting of the school's finances; providing for the safety and well-being of the school's inhabitants; executing all the school's policies and Board of Directors resolutions; and ensuring the school is following the law and the school's bylaws in its operations.

Curriculum and Instruction

Curriculum

The Montessori curriculum is arranged by discipline area in a sequential manner at each program level. These areas are generally divided into the following delineations: Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Mathematics and Cultural subjects. Practical Life activities work to develop gross motor, fine motor and hand-eye coordination in our youngest students. It is also the beginning of executive functioning skills where students learn to follow a series of sequential steps, plan and prioritize activities, and organize their thoughts and ideas. As students move through development stages, this area of curriculum can be seen as care of self and the environment, as well as personal goal setting to develop academic student skills. The Sensorial curriculum works to develop a

student's ability to discriminate their surroundings based on their senses. As students mature, these skills become the basis for understanding of logical thinking within other subject areas, including math and language. Additionally, it gives them vocabulary with which to understand the natural world around them and how they can work within it and manipulate it to meet their needs.

Mathematics, Language and Cultural lessons are designed to give students a deep level of understanding within each concept area. Students work repeatedly on multi- modal exercises that integrate visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles to create a strong sense of mastery. This approach is seen as best practice within the larger educational community supported by research-based studies confirming how students learn best through this multi-modal approach. Foundational understanding is first reached concretely using hands-on Montessori materials, allowing students to visualize the steps of a process. Students then move to abstract understanding using paper and pencil only to solve problems. While students may work with a particular concept longer, it has been found that they are often better equipped to delve into more advanced concepts, such as algebra and geometry earlier due to their concrete understanding. Our Cultural lessons include geography, history and scientific activities. We teach using a top-down approach to understand scientific and historical concepts.

At the early childhood levels, we bring nature and cultural stories into the classroom in practical, deliberate ways, giving the students hands-on experience with concepts such as gravity, magnetism, botany or holidays of various cultures. In the Elementary and Middle School programs, we present the big picture concepts first, such as the story of the universe and the universal needs of humans, and capture the students' imagination and curiosity to discover more details within that subject area.

Brickton also supports the development of the fine arts, physical education and secondary language acquisition. Artistic expression is encouraged in all of our

students. The Early Childhood programs offer opportunities to explore a variety of methods and materials for creating arts and crafts. At the Elementary level, art classes are a weekly part of the students' schedule.

Weekly music classes are based on the Orff-Schulwerk and Suzuki program through the Chime music organization, which include movement activities as well as working with barred instruments, percussion, and recorders for kindergarten and Elementary students. The Elementary programs have lessons twice per week, and the focus of music changes to world music and incorporates music appreciation. Our physical education program provides students weekly organized sport participation and team building experiences, in addition to gross motor opportunities during playground times.

Spanish instruction begins at the Children's House level. Instructional frequency increases as students move through the programs, with our Middle School students receiving lessons three times per week. Spanish instruction focuses on vocabulary, cultural understanding,verb conjugation and conversational experience.

As Dr. Montessori saw educating the whole child as a necessity to producing productive members of society, we focus a great deal of attention on the development of personal and interpersonal skills within our students. At the early childhood level, students increase their independence and responsibility in practical ways by learning to care for themselves and the environment. They dress and clean themselves, as well as learn the cycle of work from gathering needed materials for an activity to putting work away upon completion. Our expectations for independence and responsibility increase as the student grows. Our Elementary students begin to develop their own work plans and evaluate their own efforts as a student and community member. By the time they reach adolescence in Middle School, our students run their parent- teacher conferences, do regular goal setting and plan and execute all field trips. Students are encouraged to understand their place in and contribution to a variety of communities as well. To assist in this development, we teach and use

conflict resolution skills beginning with our youngest children, with developmentally appropriate reinforcement at each program level. Elementary and Middle School classrooms create their own classroom ground rules and computer contracts at the start of each new academic year.

Additionally, students have designated times within community meetings to bring up classroom concerns or suggestions for improvement. The Brickton faculty has developed Cognitive, Emotional and Social Responsibility Charts that articulate developmental expectations for each program.

Assessment

In a Montessori environment, assessments are gained both formally and informally. Observation is a component of student assessment at all program levels as lead teachers regularly observe, taking notes on the patterns of behavior and level of academic progress of their students. Observation informs the lead teacher when an individual student is ready to move onto more advanced academic concepts and what in the environment might need to be changed in order to foster a stronger learning environment. As the children begin to produce more examples of written products, typically in the kindergarten year, the classroom lead teachers begin a portfolio of the child's work. This portfolio follows the student throughout their years in elementary, with a new folder being added for each grade level. These portfolios serve as documentation of a student's progress during parent teacher conferences. Elementary students begin to complete self- assessment forms regularly in order to reflect and document their efforts as a student and community member. These assessments are an opportunity for discussion between the student and lead teacher to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as a responsible student. Formalized assessments begin at the Elementary level for all students for language and mathematics areas. In the Upper Elementary, students take mastery tests for language and math concepts requiring a score of 75% before moving on to more challenging material. For cultural subjects, assessments are determined by level of understanding within group projects,

individual research, and peer teaching. Middle School students take written tests in all subject areas at the end of a cycle of work (every five weeks). Additionally, they develop presentations of cultural subjects to share with their classmates, which are assessed using an agreed upon rubric.

For our early childhood programs (0 - 6 years old), we introduce a development screener using the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). These surveys are completed throughout the year by both trained faculty and parents. Results of the screenings are shared with families through our Coordinator of Diverse Learning.

Our third through eighth grade students utilize the NWEA MAP standardized achievement tests twice per year. These tests measure what a student knows at a given point in time in the areas of mathematics, language arts, and science. They do not address the realm of personal and social development, learning styles and habits of individual students, nor are they designed to measure the quality of the educational experience in the classroom. So, there will always be some variation between the specific content measured on a test and the actual content covered in class.

The content we cover is consistent with that covered in a traditional setting though with a multi-age classroom covering a three-year cycle of knowledge (two-year cycle for the Middle School program). Standardized test results are used as one more tool to understand student academic progress and to see trends in development for individual students and grade level groups. Lead teachers use the results of this testing to help inform instruction and to identify areas that can be enhanced in the student's individual curriculum plan.

We cover test taking strategies as part of our regular curriculum, such as reading directions carefully, previewing questions to reading comprehension passages first, and using elimination strategies for multiple choice questions. Our goal however is not to teach to a standardized test, but to prepare your child to be an engaged learner intrinsically motivated to formulate questions and analyze

information about the world. The Terra Nova tests also provide students the opportunity to practice developing skills to succeed on standardized tests in high school and beyond.

In addition, elementary lead teachers may use electronic programs, such as Lexia or EasyCBM, to track individual student progress when there is a deficit in concept understanding. We use these programs to assess gains and create modifications and accommodations within a student's academic plan.

The school maintains a referral list of providers for parents seeking assessment or support services for cognitive, social and emotional issues faced by their child(ren). Please contact your child's lead teacher regarding your concerns, and they will help direct you to appropriate providers on the school's referral list.

Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held three times per year, providing a formal opportunity for parent and lead teacher conversations about student development and academic progress. The Nido, Young Toddler and Middle School students follow an altered schedule, which is described at the end of this section. In September, the focus of the conference is student adjustment to the expectations of the program level and classroom and does not have a written report. In the Upper Elementary program, this is also the time for goal setting with the student. The conferences in November/December and March/April are accompanied by a written report. Upper Elementary students participate in these conferences, completing a self-evaluation and reviewing material from their portfolio with parents. In June, a year end written report is sent to parents and conference times are available upon request.

The Nido & Young Toddler program holds conferences within 3-4 weeks of enrollment and again 6-8 weeks prior to their transition to the next classroom.

The Middle School program is segmented into five-week thematic cycles with major assessments taking place during the fifth week. Assignments throughout the cycle build toward a combination of project-based assessments and testing. All tests and quizzes require 80% mastery before students continue with new material. Regular individual and group feedback is provided through work check-ins, classroom reflection questions, and regular conversations with the teachers.

Homework

In the early elementary years, one primary purpose of homework is to establish good work routines like committing to a regular homework time and finding a location conducive to academic endeavors. In the Lower Elementary program, homework should take about 30 minutes with students practicing math facts for 10 minutes and reading for 20 minutes. In the Upper Elementary Program, homework expectations increase to 20 minutes of math and 30 minutes of reading. Homework provides additional opportunities to practice with current concepts in order to achieve mastery. Reading may include comprehension assignments, such as Scholastic News magazines or literature circles/book clubs, as well as choices for pleasure reading. At this level, students often work with lead teachers to determine individualized math concepts to practice at home, followed by the retrieval of take-home sheets or online practice pages for supplemental support. At the Middle School level, homework can average an hour or two a night, depending on how students choose to plan out assignments. Homework expectations are reviewed with both students and parents at the beginning of the year Back to School meetings.

Teaching Staff

Lead Teachers

As an accredited Montessori school, our lead teachers are Montessori trained and certified for the level they teach. The primary responsibilities of a lead teacher are:

- Establish and maintain a classroom environment responsive to the academic, social, and emotional needs of the students.
- Observe and plan for each student, presenting developmentally appropriate materials, one-on one, and in small and large groups.
- Maintain communication with parents and hold individual conferences with parents, and students as appropriate.
- Supervise the training of interns and assistants.
- Establish a collaborative relationship with members of the Brickton community: parents, administration, and staff.
- Commit to professional development with regards to Montessori philosophy and best practices.

Specialist Teachers

- Develop and implement a curriculum in their specialty area to align with Montessori philosophy.
- Observe and plan for each group of students, presenting developmentally appropriate activities and materials that are responsive to the academic, social and emotional needs of the students.
- Prepare progress reports for each student as indicated.
- Establish a collaborative relationship with members of the Brickton community: parents, administration, and staff.
- Commit to professional development with regards to Montessori philosophy and best practices in their specialty.

Assistants/Interns

Assistants/Interns are trained by lead teachers. Responsibilities reflect their experience and are at the discretion of their supervising lead teacher.

- Assist with the preparation and maintenance of the classroom environment.
- Assist students with work as directed.
- Ensure the safety and welfare of the students at all times.

- Assist with the execution of all required safety drills, such as fire and tornado.
- Supervise the students as directed in all aspects of the program to include recess, gym, lunch, nap time, and field trips plus special classroom events.
- Assist with housekeeping duties as directed.
- Direct all parent inquiries to the supervising lead teacher or administration as appropriate.
- Establish a collaborative relationship with members of the Brickton community: parents, administration, and staff.

Programs

Our core academic program is complemented by optional programs for before school, after school, and care on non-school days.

Core Program

The core program is available to all students. Montessori lead teachers are with the students in a prepared environment between 8:00 am and 3:00 pm, with the exception of children that are napping. All students who are 5 years of age or older by September 1st must enroll at least in the Core Program.

Middle School - 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Study Hall 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Elementary - 8:15 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (arrival 8:00-8:15)
Children's House – 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (arrival 8:15-8:30)
Nido/Young Toddler/Toddler – 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (arrival 8:15-8:30)

Full Day Program

This program is available to all students. For the Nido, Young Toddler, and Toddler programs, Full Day begins at 7:30 am until the school day begins and after school takes place between 3:00 pm and 5:30 pm. For all other students, Full Day begins as early as 7:00 am until school begins and afterschool takes place from 3:00 pm until 6:00 pm. Care is provided by classroom assistants and afterschool staff, led by an Afterschool Coordinator. All Full Day students are

automatically entitled to attend school on all days designated as Club Days free of additional charge (see description below).

Club Days

This program is available as non-instruction days when lead teachers are not present. Records Days are when they prepare conference reports and Conference Days are when lead teachers meet with families. Additionally, lead teachers are not present for the week of spring break. All Full Day Program students are already enrolled for Club Days, while Core and Half Day students may attend with advance notice and payment of $75 per day for Nido,Young Toddlers and Toddlers. For Children's House and Elementary the fee is $75 per day. These programs incorporate Montessori philosophy by providing the students with a warm, caring atmosphere where they may choose Montessori materials as well as other more traditional materials using the same principles of order, care, and respect that exist during the academic day. Club days are staffed by classroom assistants and afterschool staff.

Half-Day Program

The half-day program is available to Early Childhood students who are not 5 years old by September 1. Arrival time for the Half-Day program is between 8:15 am and 8:30 am. Students enrolled in the Half-Day Nido, Young Toddler and Toddler Programs eat a hot lunch at 11:15 am and are dismissed at 12:00 pm. Children enrolled in the Half-Day Children's House Program are dismissed after lunch at 12:30 pm. The lunch program for Children's House students includes bringing their own lunch to enjoy with their classroom community.

Nido: 8:30 am – 12:00 pm (lunch provided by school if eating table food; breast milk or formula provided by family)
Young Toddler/Toddler: 8:30 am - 12:00 pm (lunch provided by school)
Children's House: 8:30 am - 12:30 pm (lunch provided by family)

Partial Week Option

Programs of 3 Full, Half, or Core, consecutive days are approved at the discretion of the Head of School for Infants, Toddlers and 3-year-old Children's House students only - all other Children's House programs are 5 days a week.

Early Drop Off (AM Care)

This program allows for drop-off from 7:30 am for Infant/Toddler and 7:00 am for all other students and runs until the start of the student program core day begins. This program can be used daily or as an occasional option through Emergency Care (see description below).

Emergency Care

Emergency Care is available to all students and is arranged by completing emergency care forms in the office. The fees for Emergency Care are:

Early Drop Off Ages 3+ (7:00 am – 8:15 am) Ages: (0-3) (7:30 am - 8:15 am)	$20.00 per day
Afternoon Attendance (0-3) (12:00 pm – 3:00 pm) Children's House (12:30 am-3:00 pm)	$35.00 per day
After School Attendance (between 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.)	$35.00 per day
For Early Childhood students attending for a partial week, additional days may also be purchased	$50 (half day), $75 (school day), $100 (full day) *per day for Nido, Young Toddler, Toddlers* $40 (half day), $60 (school day), $75 (full day) *for Children's House*

Extracurricular Activities

Brickton offers after-school extracurricular activities, such as chess, running club, Mad Science, Sticky Fingers (cooking), Cross Country, acapella, and art club. There are three sessions of these activities per school year. Parents should direct

inquiries regarding these programs to the After-School Coordinator through the main office.

School Operations

Attendance

To gain the maximum benefit from a Montessori education, a student should attend school on a regular basis. For school-aged children, school policy requires daily attendance. However, for the well-being of the child and his or her classmates, a child who shows any signs of illness or unusual fatigue should be kept home.

If your child is going to be absent from school, please call the school by 9:00 am on each day of the absence and give the child's name, class, reason for absence, and expected duration. You may also submit an absence through the SchoolCues database platform. Notification of absence not due to illness should be submitted through SchoolCues or via email to your child's lead teacher.

Arrivals/Dismissals

Please refrain from using your cell phone (and turn your cell phone off or to vibrate)when you are dropping off or picking up your child.

A.M. Care

Students enrolled in A.M. Care may arrive as early as 7:30 am for Nido/Young Toddler/Toddler and 7:00 am for all other students. Please use the west door between 7:00 am and 8:00 am (Nido/Young Toddler students will use the east door). The main door will be open from 8:00 am until 6:00 pm.

Breakfast

The school only provides breakfast for Nido, Young Toddler, and Toddlers arriving before 8:15 am; however, all children may pack a low sugar, nut free nutritious breakfast to be eaten at school before 8:00.

Arrival Procedures for Nido, Young Toddlers, Toddlers, and Children's House Students

Before 8:00 a.m.: Full Day Program and AM Care

- Drop your child off at the assigned classroom for the Before-School program.
- Hand any written messages to the adult receiving your child at the door. They will ensure that it reaches the child's teachers.

After 8:00 a.m.: Half Day and Core Program and all other arrivals

- Drop your child at the main office door, or walk them to their classroom.
- The lead teacher or an assistant will assist your child with outdoor clothing and items brought from home, such as lunch and additional bags, if necessary.

Arrival Procedures for Elementary and Middle School Students

Elementary and Middle School students may enter the building unaccompanied. Students should hang up their bags, put lunch boxes away, and hang up outerwear before reporting to the appropriate room.

Before 8:00 am: All Elementary students should enter through the main door and proceed to the Before-Care room.

After 8:00 am: Elementary and Middle School students should enter through the main entrance. After 8:15 Elementary students are considered tardy. Middle School students are considered tardy after 8:05 am.

Dismissals

The school will not release any student to anyone except a parent, guardian, or those persons listed on the emergency contact page of SchoolCues without authorization of the parent. If a person not listed on the emergency contact

sheet will be picking up your child, please send a note or call the school office: 773-714-0646.

PLEASE NOTE: If you know ahead of time that you will be late picking up your student, please call to notify us. We can prepare your child more effectively for your delay if we know why you are delayed and when you can be expected. See "Emergency Care" and"Late Fees" for any associated fees for additional care.

Late Pick Up

When children are picked up late, parents will be charged a late pick up fee. The charge for the first 15 minutes is $10 and between 16 and 60 minutes is $15. Time greater than 60 minutes becomes emergency care, which is $35.

Field Trips

Nido/Young Toddler/Toddler: Children will not be leaving the school premises.

Children's House Program: Parents will be notified, in advance, of all details, including fees, on a permission slip that will be sent via email communication. Only children with written email permission will be allowed to participate in a field trip.

Lower and Upper Elementary Program: All notification and consent will be given via email. Students in the Upper Elementary Program (9-12 classroom) participate in a 5-day overnight trip to Nature's Classroom in WI. Upper Elementary students take public transportation through the CTA as much as is possible for field trips.

Middle School Program Students in the Middle School Program take a number of extended trips during the school year. These trips typically include Nature's Classroom in WI, an agrarian trip to Iowa, and Washington, D.C. These trips

enhance the curriculum of this program and last 5 days each. Additionally, the Middle School program regularly is off-site with partner Montessori Middle School students in the city. These trips are conducted with use of the CTA.

Occasionally, parents are asked to volunteer as a chaperone or driver for a field trip in the kindergarten and elementary program. All drivers are required to submit a current copy of their driver's license and current auto insurance to the school. Parents must also assure the school that the car is mechanically sound, with working lights and signals and may only carry the number of students that can be secured in seat belts in the vehicle. Please see information on Volunteer Opportunities later in this section.

Snack

School provided snacks are peanut free and tree-nut free, planned according to the guidelines set down by the American Dietetic Association.

(0-3) Programs follow the guideline recommended by the Department of Children and Family Services.

Early Childhood - All children in this program are provided with a morning snack by the school. If they are enrolled in the core program an afternoon snack is also supplied by the school.

Elementary and Middle School – Students in the elementary and middle school program have the option to bring their own nut free snack each day. Healthy, low sugar snacks are encouraged.

After School – All children enrolled in the After School Program receive an after-school snack supplied by the school.

Lunch

All Nido, Young Toddler, and Toddler children participate in the hot lunch/milk program mandated by the Department of Children and Family Services and the City of Chicago. The cost of this lunch program is included in the annual tuition. Children's House, Elementary and Middle School students bring their lunch and may purchase milk service.

For Children's House students, food that has not been eaten will be sent home.

Pizza and Hot Dog Lunch

Every month during the school year students in all programs, Children's House through Middle School, may purchase a pizza and/or hot dog lunch, held on separate Fridays twice during each month. Information regarding the pizza and hot dog lunches will be sent to parents before school (with the end of summer welcome letter) for a September start. The order form will also be posted on the Brickton family website. Parents are expected to place orders for their child for the entire school year. (0-3) parents should not place an order as (0-3)lunch is a separately catered program and is included in the annual tuition.

Napping – Infant, Toddler,Young Toddler, and Children's House

Infants nap in cribs or cots with the school providing the linens for the Infant program.

Children in the Young Toddler, Toddler and Children's House Program nap on individual cots, which are stored nearby the nap rooms. For the Toddler and Children's House Program, children who nap need to bring a cot mat - the office has some for purchase.

Make sure your child's name is on all items, e.g. clothing and nap items.

Toddler and Children's House nap bedding is sent home every other Friday. Please send bedding back the following Monday. If health protocols dictate,

nap items are sent home every Friday. If your child is sent home ill, or in the event of a nap time accident, nap items need to be taken home and washed. Please try to return them the following day or as soon as possible as we do not have spare nap bedding at school.

Clothing

Your child should have appropriate clothing at school for both indoor and outdoor activity. Nido, Young Toddlers, and Toddlers should have at least two complete changes of clothes. All students in Children's House should have at least one complete change of clothes left here at school (more if they are prone to accidents), and it is encouraged for all students. This includes underwear, gloves, hats, and socks. **All items should be clearly labeled with your child's name or initials.**

Parents will be reminded about bringing extra clothes (due to accidents or child's growth) or rotating them, particularly at times of seasonal changes to ensure their child has enough appropriate clothing. For students not yet adept at managing all clothing styles, we recommend:

- Coats - front opening style buttons and zippers that are easily accessible
- Mittens - attached to the coat
- Snowsuit or snow pants
- Boots - large enough to get on and off easily
- Outdoor sweaters or cardigans
- Slacks with elastic waistbands for younger children
- Shoes (gym shoes) easy to get on and off; velcro for younger children not yet ready to learn how to tie shoelaces. All shoes must be rubber-soled to prevent damage to floors.

Outside Play

A student who comes to school should be well enough to go outside. A child who is too ill to go outside is too ill to be in school. Because physical exercise is

an important part of the school program, please keep your ill child home until he/she can fully participate.

Classroom teachers will make daily decisions about inclement weather, and the students ability to safely play outside. For reference, please note no 0-3 year old students will be outside if the wind chill is below 20°F. Children's House students will not go outside if the wind chill is below 10°F, and elementary and middle school students will stay in when the wind chill is below 0°F. Teachers may take additional precautions regarding outside play for other mitigating circumstances as well, such as strong winds or excessive wetness on the ground.

Supply Lists

For each program, supply lists are distributed before the beginning of the year in your welcome email and can be found on the secure family portion of the website under the School Year Kit.

Observations

Parents are invited and encouraged to observe in the classroom. Classrooms are open for observation from mid-October through early May. Please call the office to schedule an appointment. Both parents are strongly encouraged to observe in their child's classroom prior to the second Parent-Teacher Conference.

Volunteer Opportunities

The Board encourages the use of community volunteers to: (1) increase students' educational attainment, (2) provide enrichment experiences for students, (3) increase the effective utilization of staff time and skills, (4) give more individual attention to students, and (5) promote greater community involvement.

Volunteers may be used, consistent with school needs, for the following purposes:

1. Non-teaching duties not requiring instructional judgment or evaluation of students;
2. Assisting with academic programs under a certificated teacher's immediate supervision.
3. Serving as a guest lecturer or resource person under a certificated teacher's direction and with the administration's approval; or
4. Serving as supervisors, chaperones, or sponsors for non-academic school activities and/or school-sponsored extracurricular activities.

The Head of School shall establish procedures for securing and screening volunteers.

Records

Brickton Montessori School will maintain confidential records on each child. Permanent student records include student progress reports, standardized achievement scores, diagnostic assessment scores, medical reports, vision and hearing screening reports, and the student's birth certificate.

The health records and birth certificate will be made available to the Department of Health and accrediting bodies for review. Any or all of the information may be released to parents, persons or institutions authorized by a parental authority per a written and signed *Request for Release of Confidential Records* form. Copies of student records requested by the parent to be sent directly to other institutions or health or educational professionals will be copied and sent free of charge.

Records of students transferring will be sent within 10 school days of the request, provided that the family is in good financial standing with the school. **Brickton reserves the right to withhold student records for non-payment of tuition. Written student recommendations and form completion service will not be provided to families with outstanding balances or who are in breach of contract.**

Community Conduct

Ground Rules

Ground rules based on principles of respect for others and the environment are discussed with the students at the beginning of the year, and periodically as needed. The ground rules are introduced to the classrooms by the lead teacher and are consistent throughout the school day as well as the before school and afterschool programs. Ground rules help establish a peaceful, organized working group by defining behavior limits. Good, well-implemented ground rules will aid your child as he/she develops inner discipline and self-control. The two school-wide ground rules are:

1. Treat each person with respect.
2. Treat the environment with respect.

In the Nido, Young Toddler, Toddler, and Children's House programs, these ground rules are posted verbatim in the classroom. The Children's House lead teacher explains these rules to the students at the beginning of the year where they discuss what they mean in practical terms. The ground rules are discussed as often as necessary with the students individually and as a group throughout the year. Ground rules are stated positively, emphasizing what we want the children to do, and are modeled to elicit desired behaviors.

In the Elementary programs the students create and sign classroom ground rules based on these two core tenets. The classroom specific ground rules are used to facilitate independent conflict resolution discussions between the students. In the Lower Elementary program, the year begins with an activity that sensorially demonstrates the role of the individual within the classroom community. Students roll a ball of yarn across the meeting circle to one another, grabbing a piece of it before passing it on. Once each student has part of the yarn in their hand, a teacher begins to tug and asks students who felt the pull. The teacher goes on to explain that each student's behavior positively or negatively impacts the community. Students and teachers then go on to discuss privileges and

responsibilities, and how the two are intertwined. From these discussions, students create the ground rules that will be the backbone of conflict resolution throughout the year which is signed by all students. Lead teachers will also refer to these initial discussions when speaking with individual students about strategies for improving self-control and independence. The Lower Elementary program also identifies a student mentor position to facilitate conversations between students when they are unable to resolve a conflict on their own.

In the Upper Elementary program, the conversation begins by stating the two schoolwide ground rules and moves on to discussions of examples of following and not following those rules. The students then craft their own classroom specific ground rule which is signed by all students and posted in the classroom. At the Middle School level, students take complete ownership of crafting their ground rules and are the primary enforcers of them.

In addition to ground rules, the lead teachers and designated students facilitate group meetings regularly, allowing students opportunities to discuss classroom social issues or concerns. In the Elementary programs, the students utilize an agenda notebook where they record items to be discussed throughout the week, such as an unclean bathroom, missing community items, or social issues. In Middle School, it moves to a more student driven "counsel" and employs the use of a "talking stick" to ensure that all parties are heard.

Discipline

Discipline is most effective when it is directly related to the offending or inappropriate behavior using logical consequence and positive discipline methods so that the child has the opportunity to see the results of his/her actions and can explore acceptable alternatives. In this way, a child can learn and grow from mistakes. The goal is to help the child understand how behaviors can adversely impact the sense of well-being and safety in the community and to involve the child in the process of restoring a positive relationship with the group through restorative justice. Responsibility extends to working with others to

determine how to make the situation all right again. Discipline will be immediate and supervised by the adult in charge.

Parents of any child who repeatedly disobeys the ground rules will be contacted. If, after reasonable attempts to address disobedience of ground rules, the child continues to disobey them, the child may be excluded from the program.

Parent Concerns

If parents have any questions or problems about their student or classroom activities, they should express these concerns to the lead teacher. The lead teacher will respond as soon as possible. (See also PROBLEM RESOLUTION)

Problem Resolution

In the event that you have a question or concern about your child or your child's program, please contact your child's lead teacher. It is usually best to write your concern down in a note or email to share with your child's teacher. If deemed necessary, the parent and lead teacher will map out a course of action and time schedule in order to obtain a meaningful resolution. If the problem continues, then the head of school will meet with the parent and teachers to further refine the action plan and time schedule.

If after reasonable attempts, the parent is still dissatisfied, the parent may submit a written statement to the Board. The Board will consider such statements in a closed meeting and advise the parent of its disposition of the statement.

The State of Illinois requires that law enforcement officials and the Illinois State Police be notified of firearm incidents at the school. The school must also report instances of drug violations to local law enforcement officials as required by the School Reporting of Drug Violations Act 105 ILCS 127/1 ET SEQ.

Parent Communication

Parent communication may come from a variety of sources: via email, classroom blogs, the weekly electronic newsletter The Brickton Bulletin, and resource information resident on our website at www.brickton.org. Please be sure to check the Brickton website and your email on a regular basis. Classroom blogs, the school calendar, and other useful documents may be accessed via the secure family section of our website.

Messages for lead teachers may be written and handed into the office or receiving adults. In addition, parents may email lead teachers. Messages for the principal or any administrative staff should be dropped directly in the office or emailed. All calls will be returned as soon as possible. Calls are not put through to staff members during the time they are responsible for the children unless it is of an urgent nature. You may leave a message with office staff to have a call returned as soon as possible.

Parents are asked not to call to speak with students during the time they are at school except in the case of an emergency.

We kindly request that cell phones be turned off upon entering school premises.

Student Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Cellphones, computers, smart watches, and other electronic devices, with the exception of calculators, are not to be used in the school building without express permission of the lead teachers. Cell phones and smart watches with calling capability brought into the building are to be deposited in the designated classroom container upon entry and remain there until departure.

Valuable Items

While we recognize that students want to bring personal items to use at school, we recommend that valuable items be kept at home to reduce the incidence of breakage, loss, or theft. Personal items brought to school are the responsibility

of the student, and Brickton Montessori School bears no responsibility for breakage, loss or theft of student items. Student devices are allowed based on classroom specific rules. Only our Middle School program requires students to bring their own electronic devices (laptops or Chromebooks) for school use.

Computer and Internet Usage Agreements

Prior to third grade, the students do not access computers without direct supervision; this is when they begin to utilize computers on their own for keyboarding lessons. Upon entering the Upper Elementary program, the class works together to develop community computer rules, including internet safety, which all students sign and are then posted in the classroom. In Middle School we continue to emphasize "safe" and efficient internet searching techniques and the students sign a detailed, standardized computer usage and internet safety agreement applicable to both home and school. If students violate the computer and internet safety usage agreement appropriate consequences will result.

Directory

A school directory can be found on School Cues with a list of students' names, parents' names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of those who consent. This directory is issued solely for the convenience of Brickton Montessori School members in arranging school and social affairs. Information is not to be distributed to non-members, nor is it to be used for any solicitation or commercial purpose of any kind.

School Website

Please visit our website at www.brickton.org. You can access our secure community page from this site with the required login and password. If you do not have access to the login information, please contact the office or your child's lead teacher.

Classroom Parties

The Young Toddler, Toddler, Children's House, and Elementary communities plan special in-school parties for Halloween and Valentine's Day. Information about the party will be distributed by the lead teacher a few weeks prior to the event. Specific programs may host other celebrations, such as a Thanksgiving feast.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthday celebrations during the school day are optional. Guidelines for celebrations are shaped appropriately to meet the needs of the children at each program level. A common theme of a timeline is used for many programs. In the Early Childhood programs, the lead teacher will prepare a life story of the child using photographs and memories. In Lower Elementary, this process is carried out by the students as an assignment for the Person of the Week, moving away from connection to the student's actual date of birth.

Please do not bring goody bags for distribution to the children. Your child has friends in other classrooms that may not have received a goody bag and cannot understand why he or she was "forgotten."

To avoid hurt feelings, please mail all birthday invitations directly to the student's home or send via email. Please consult the student directory on SchoolCues for email and street addresses. We kindly request that birthday parties not originate at school (i.e. children should not be picked up directly from school) to avoid other children feeling left out.

Birthday Offerings

In celebration of one's birthday, we encourage an item (such as a book, plant, material, etc.) to be presented to the classroom as a gift as an alternative to treats. Please reach out to your child's lead teacher if you would like to share something with the classroom for your child's birthday.

Anti-discrimination, Anti-harassment and Bullying

Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity for Students

It is the policy of Brickton Montessori School to create a learning environment which fosters equal educational and extracurricular opportunities to all enrolled students without regard to color, race, nationality, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, gender identity, status of being homeless, order of protection status, actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy. If a parent believes that his or her student is being subject to discrimination in violation of this policy, he or she is encouraged to contact the student's lead teacher pursuant to Brickton's Problem Resolution policy in this Handbook. Brickton also encourages students to report concerns about discrimination to school staff.

Sexual Harassment

Brickton Montessori strives to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment. It is a violation of school policy for any staff, Brickton parent, or student to harass another staff member or student through misconduct or communications of a sexual nature. Allegations of sexual harassment will be communicated using the Problem Resolution procedure (located within the CommunityConduct section of this document).

Substantiated charges may result in termination of a staff member, expulsion of a student as well as any appropriate legal repercussions. Harassment of any kind (ethnic, religious, racial, etc.) will not be tolerated at Brickton.

Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment (Policy 4.5)

At Brickton Montessori School, we take a proactive stance on bullying, intimidation and harassment. As a community, we work to create a learning environment where students are prepared to clearly articulate their concerns, speak honestly, appreciate individual differences and feel empowered to advocate for themselves and others. As a Montessori school, education for

peace is an integral part of our curriculum, with our ground rules of respect for the individual and the environment, as the central guide to appropriate conduct for students. Through peace education, we work with students at each level to see the cause and effect of their behavior in ways that are developmentally appropriate.

The school ground rules, posted in each classroom as a reference for the students, are introduced to the classrooms by the teachers and are consistent throughout the day. Expectations for behavior vary based on the development of the students at each program level. Based on Montessori pedagogy, our policy is to assist children in developing self-discipline and skills to control their behavior, incorporating conflict resolution skills to address disagreements in a peaceful manner. In the Toddler and Children's House programs the teachers may, as needed, remind the children of the written rules. In the Elementary and Middle School programs, the students create and sign the ground rules, using them to facilitate independent conflict resolution discussions. Adults step in when a student asks for assistance, or if the adult feels that the situation warrants support or intervention from an adult.

This policy prohibits bullying, intimidation and/or harassment of students on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, mental status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, military status, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic. Bullying is contrary to Illinois state law as well as the policy of Brickton Montessori. This is not intended to infringe upon the right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religious views protected under the First Amendment of the US Constitution.

<u>Bullying Defined</u>

"Bullying", including "cyberbullying," is defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or

electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to:

1. Place the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Cause a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfere with the student's or students' academic performance; and/or
4. Substantially interfere with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation: pushing, hitting, threatening, stalking, name-calling, or other physical or verbal conduct of an aggressive, belittling or browbeating nature; sexual harassment; sexual violence; public humiliation; threatened or actual destruction of property; using derogatory slurs; wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice against individuals based on one or more of the distinguishing characteristics listed in the third paragraph of this policy; or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

"Cyber-bullying" relates to bullying using technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo electronic system, or photo optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. "Cyber-bullying" includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section. "Cyber-bullying" also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an

electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section.

Responding to Bullying and Harassment

Our Problem Resolution policy in the Parent Handbook allows for respectful action to resolving problems, including an outline of a course of action for both parents and personnel. Students and parents are encouraged to report claims or incidents which they reasonably believe could constitute bullying, intimidation, or harassment of a student to their lead teacher and/or the Head of School (phone: 773-714- 0646; email: erica.lane@brickton.org). Staff are also encouraged to report claims or incidents which they reasonably believe could constitute bullying, intimidation, or harassment of a student to the Head of School. Anonymous reporting can be sent to the school via USPS (8622 W. Catalpa Ave, Chicago, IL, 60656) or left at the main office in a sealed envelope addressed to the Brickton Head of School at any time. All reports shall be promptly and thoroughly investigated and completed within 10 school days after the date of the reporting. All reports shall be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to fully investigate the complaint. There shall be no retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying; if this occurs, the perpetrator will face consequences to their actions. Any person found falsely accusing another individual of bullying shall face consequences appropriate to the situation and will participate in conflict resolution practices to rectify the accusation.

Any student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to a range of consequences and remedial action, including but not limited to, oral and/or written reprimands, loss of special privileges, up to and/or including expulsion from school. When appropriate to the situation, the recommendation of social/emotional work, including therapy, social skills groups, or an alternate temporary educational setting, may be made. Community restorative justice meetings are regularly a part of the return to the classroom community. Parents

of all students involved in the incident(s) will promptly be informed of the outcome of the investigation and the resulting outcomes. Any school employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION

If you have a question or concern about your child or your child's program, please contact your child's lead teacher. It is usually best to write your concern down in a note or email to share with your child's lead teacher. If deemed necessary, the parent and lead teacher will map out a course of action and time frame to obtain a meaningful resolution. If the problem continues, then the Head of School will meet with the parent and lead teacher to further refine the action plan and time schedule.

If after reasonable attempts, the parent is still dissatisfied, the parent may submit a written statement to the Board. The Board will consider such statements in a closed meeting and advise the parent of its disposition of the statement. This policy is regularly reviewed by the administration based on recent data and the needs of the student body.

The Board of Directors reviews all school policies at regular intervals for alignment to the school mission.

Enrollment & Commitment

Admission

The purpose of the admission process is to match children and families to further our mission and vision. Admission involves:

- Identifying families for whom our school matches their values, goals and philosophy for the development and education of their children;

- Understanding that admitting a child is also admitting parents, siblings, and extended family into the school community;
- Providing information and opportunities for families to learn about our school and community in order to make an informed choice; and
- Receiving information from families to make an informed choice.

It is the policy of Brickton Montessori School to create a learning environment which fosters equal educational and extracurricular opportunities to all enrolled students. No child or family shall be denied admission on the basis of race, sex, religious affiliation or belief, national origin, political belief, color, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, age of parent, disability (actual or perceived), history of past disability, military discharge status, housing status or source of income.

Children with cognitive, emotional, or physical challenges will be considered for admission on an individual basis with specific medical and educational information required as part of the process. Admission will depend on the ability of the child to benefit from the program, whether the faculty is qualified to support the child's learning, and whether the required accommodations are so burdensome to the school that the education of others will be adversely affected. Children and their families will be accepted on a probationary basis, and the school reserves the right to dismiss the student based on the enrollment contract signed by the family, including but not limited to the student's lack of response to the school program, the student's behavior posing a threat to self or others, or the inability by the student/parent to observe the policies, rules, and regulations of the school.

Confidentiality

Brickton respects the confidential nature of a student's personal, educational and medical information. This information will not be released without written parental consent.

The privacy of a student known to have a chronic infectious disease will be respected in accordance with federal and state privacy laws.

Enrollment Cycle

Applications for Early Childhood (0-6 years) students are accepted year-round and students are placed on a space-available basis throughout the year. Elementary and Middle School applications are accepted beginning mid-November for the following school year. Mid-year transfers are not recommended unless you are moving from out of the area, though they will be considered on an individual basis.

Admission decisions are based on available space and whether the school and family agree that Brickton is an appropriate and beneficial placement for the student.

Re-enrollment for the following academic year for current students begins in early-February by submitting a re-enrollment form selecting the program for your child, accompanied by a re-enrollment fee of $165. Contracts follow shortly thereafter and the signed contract and a 10% non-refundable deposit secures your child's enrollment for the following year.

For students transitioning to the next program level (Children's House to Middle School), there is an informational "Transition Night" held for parents in January to discuss program curriculum, schedule and student development at that level. Students preparing to transition to the next program level will spend a day visiting the program, with parents made aware of the visit date in advance. Parents are required to complete a classroom observation prior to their child transitioning.

Tuition

Tuition and fees are set annually by the board. Students are enrolled through a contractual Tuition and Fees Agreement submitted with a non-refundable 10%

deposit and enrollment fee or re-enrollment fee. Parents are liable for tuition payments for the entire academic year. *There are no refunds for vacations or illness.*

Families may need to switch programs, from Core to requesting Early Drop-Off or the Full Day program part way through the year and those changes may be made based on availability.

Summer camp is available on a week-by-week basis or for the full summer program.

Enrollment fees and re-enrollment fees are non-refundable.

Fundraising

As an independent school, Brickton depends on the generosity of our parents and friends to fill the gap between tuition and the real cost of educating each child. There are two primary fundraisers for the year, the Annual Fund and the Big Leap.

The Annual Fund is a campaign for monetary donations with the goal of 100% participation from all families and employees with donations of any size appreciated. The Big Leap is our annual evening, adult-only event that raises money to support the school through silent and live auctions, raffles, etc. while providing parents and other supporters of Brickton a chance to socialize and build community. Other small fundraisers sometimes include Meal of the Month, a 5K Run/Walk, and student run initiatives like the annual Scholastic Book Fair, hot dog and pizza lunches and the manna gift card program.

Financial Aid

Financial aid is offered on a limited basis for qualified five-day students in the Children's House through Middle School programs. Applications are reviewed by

a Financial Aid Committee. Deadlines for applications will be announced in a timely fashion for the enrollment process.

Tax Credit for Child Care

You may be eligible for a tax credit for child care. If both parents are working and are filing a joint return, or if a single parent pays for child care, they meet the basic requirement for this credit. You will need to inform your tax preparer that your child attends Brickton Montessori School. You will also need to supply our address and tax payment number (or FEIN) which is 36-3443480. Upon request, Brickton emails a letter to you, stating the total tuition and care payment received for the year. You will receive this email by January 31st.

Misc. Fees and Discounts

Sibling Discount

For families enrolling more than one child at a time, there is a 10% tuition reduction for one tuition (see Admissions office for tuition reduction for three or more students), which applies to tuition only and does not include fees.

Activity Fees

Elementary students are assessed an activity fee which covers the cost of most of their field trips and other outings. Middle School students are assessed an activity fee which covers pre-planned trips such as Nature's Classroom Institute and many Immersion Week experiences. For larger trips such as Washington DC, fees are assessed based on the trips planned for that year and variable fees such as airfare, hotel and admissions to events. Children's House field trip fees are assessed on a trip-by-trip basis.

Field Trip Fees

Details for these fees are described under the program section of this document.

Emergency Care Fees

Details for these fees are described under the program section of this document.

Late Pick-up Fees

Details for these fees are described under the program section of this document.

Late Payment and NSF checks

Tuition payments are due on the 20th of the month as listed on the Payment Schedule received with contracts and monthly invoices. Monthly payments may be made by cash, check, money order, automatic debit, VISA, MC, Discover or debit card. You may also pay your invoice directly online by using the "pay now" feature highlighted on your invoice. Tuition payments made by credit card (Master Card, Visa, or Discover) are subject to a 3% processing charge which we pass on from the credit card processors.

Credit card payments are accepted in the Business Office. Normal business office hours are Monday – Friday 9:30 am – 4:00 pm.

If a check is returned "Non-Sufficient Funds or Uncollected Funds," the family will be assessed a penalty fee of $30.00. **In the event of two or more checks returned NSF, future payments must be made by cashier's check or money order.**

Any child whose account is not current by the 10th of each month may be excluded from the program. In addition, Brickton reserves the right to withhold student records for non-payment of tuition. Written student recommendations and form completion service may not be provided to families with outstanding balances, who are in breach of contract.

School Facility

Emergency Closings and Snow Day Policy

Brickton will close due to extreme weather conditions, and area or building emergencies. Generally, if the schools in the surrounding area, such as Park Ridge and Norridge, close, we will close.

Information about emergency closings for Brickton can be found on the front page of www.brickton.org and on our social media pages. Staff will attempt to contact you at your home number if it is determined school will be closed before the beginning of the school day.

Emergency school closings beyond two days per year will be added to the school calendar, at the discretion of the Head of School in consultation with the President of the Board.

Lost and Found

There is a Lost and Found in each classroom which primarily houses clothing, such as hats, mittens, and sweaters. Please ask the classroom teachers if your child is missing clothing articles. About three times a year, we will dispose of the unclaimed items. Students are advised not to bring any items of value to school as we cannot be responsible for personal items.

School Map

A map of the school is provided as an appendix.

Health & Safety

Peanut and Tree Nut Free School

Brickton Montessori School is a peanut and tree nut free school and does not serve any products that contain peanuts/peanut oil and tree nuts. Students and

their families may not bring any food which contains peanuts, tree nuts or nut products on the school premises.

Allergies

All students with severe allergies or medical considerations will be required to have a physician's note on file and wear a medic alert bracelet. The note from the physician must be updated annually and contain a list of the student's allergies, signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction, and the procedures, to include medication and dosage, in the event of an allergic reaction. A supply of up-to-date prescribed medications appropriately labeled must be made available to be kept at school.

Parents of students requiring EPIPENS will be required to supply an epi-pen, housed in a fanny pack that remains in a consistent location in the classroom. Parents are responsible for checking to see if the epi-pen is within the expiration date on a regular basis, replacing expired ones as needed. If indicated, this same procedure will be followed for inhalers. At the discretion of the lead teacher, Upper Elementary and Middle School students may carry their own inhaler and/or epi-pen.

Please note: if an epi-pen is administered to a child, the Chicago Fire Department Paramedics will automatically be called. Students with epi-pens must wear medical ID bracelets at all times on school grounds or during school sponsored trips.

As a substitute for classroom snacks, the parents of children with food allergies will be asked to keep one or two treats at school.

Emergency Illness or Injury at School

A Student Emergency sheet containing emergency contact information is on file for each student in the event of a serious accident or illness during the school day. Parents are asked to contact the office and update SchoolCues with any

change of information such as address, home or business telephone number, or person designated to be contacted in case of emergency**. Parents must arrange for timely pick-up of ill or injured children.**

If a child becomes ill at school: (1) s/he will be isolated from the rest of the children until the parent or designated person arrives for pick up; (2) emergency notification will be made by phone. Bedding used in the office while your child waits for you will be sent home for laundering and prompt return. Children who arrive at school sick, e.g., with a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or contagious illness, will be sent home immediately for the safety of the other students and staff.

Children who register a fever of 101 degrees or higher must be free from fever for 24 hours without medication before returning to school.

An illness/injury report will be filled out if a child sustains a notable injury with a copy given to the parent. In the event a child incurs a head/serious injury or bee sting, the parents will be notified immediately. If the injury or illness appears to be of a serious nature, school personnel will first contact the Chicago Fire Department Paramedics, and then attempt to contact the parents/guardians. If medical service is sought and provided, the parents or legal guardians are responsible for payment. A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital if it is determined by paramedics that the child needs to be transported in an ambulance. Parents are expected to meet the child at the hospital.

Insurance

Brickton Montessori School holds a general liability insurance policy with Nautilus Insurance Company.Parents and guardians who wish to review the policy are welcome to visit the main office during regular school hours.

Medication

If your child will need to receive a dose of prescribed medication, you must complete a *Medication Consent Form* which can be obtained in the main office. Please leave the *Medication Consent Form* and medication with the Early Drop-off staff (before 8:00 a.m.) or the main office (after 8:00 a.m.). A *Medication Consent Form* must be filled out and signed before any medication may be administered.

Medication must be brought in the original container with the official dosage information affixed. Many medications are now long lasting and may be administered in the morning and then again in the evening. Please ask your doctor if this type of schedule is an option for your child.

Parents of children on medication for chronic illnesses or conditions, which need to be administered during school hours, must provide the following information annually.

- A letter, signed by the prescribing physician, which states that the medication indicated may be given for a recurring problem, emergency situation or chronic condition.
- A complete set of instructions that includes the child's name; the name of the medication; the dose of the medication; how often the medication may be given; the conditions to use (including signs and symptoms) and any precautions to follow.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring that all prescriptions and medications for a diagnosed chronic illness are current.

All medications are stored in a locked container and may only be retrieved by a staff member.

Illinois Asthma Episode Emergency Response Protocol

These protocols are in place to aid a student experiencing asthma exacerbation as evidenced by wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath, chest

tightness, and/or breathing difficulty. Any staff member who may be likely to assist a student with asthma will review this protocol and practice with a "trainer" for the student's quick-relief medication. Training will be provided by a First Aid medical professional each year and by reviewing the package insert of the student's asthma medication. Additionally, procedures (steps 1 - 8) will be posted in the main office, common areas, and each classroom of the school.

Medical Marijuana Usage Procedure

In compliance with the Illinois State Board of Education, here are the following guidelines for the use of authorized medical marijuana usage at Brickton Montessori School.

Who may administer the product:

- Brickton Montessori school shall authorize *a parent or guardian* (or any other individual registered with the Department of Public Health as a designated caregiver of a student who is a registered qualifying patient) to administer a medical cannabis infused product to a student on the premises of Brickton Montessori School if both the student (as a registered qualifying patient) and the parent or guardian or other individual (as a registered designated caregiver) have been issued registry identification cards under the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act.

OR

- Brickton Montessori school must allow *a school administrator or faculty member* to administer a medical cannabis infused product to a student who is a registered qualifying patient (i) while on school premises, (ii) while at a school-sponsored activity, or (iii) before or after normal school activities, including while the student is in before-school or after-school care on school-operated property.

OR

- Brickton Montessori school may authorize *the self-administration* of a medical cannabis infused product by a student who is a registered qualifying patient if the self-administration takes place under the direct supervision of a school administrator or faculty member.

What needs to be on file:

- Before allowing the administration or self-administration of a medical cannabis infused product, the parent or guardian of a student must provide written authorization for its use, along with a copy of the registry identification card of the student (as a registered qualifying patient) and the parent or guardian (as a registered designated caregiver). The written authorization must specify the times at which or the special circumstances under which the medical cannabis infused product must be administered. The written authorization and a copy of the registry identification cards must be kept on file in the main office of the school.
- The authorization for a student to self-administer medical cannabis infused products is effective for the school year in which it is granted and must be renewed each subsequent school year.

Where must the product be kept:

- Medical cannabis infused products that are to be administered must be stored in a locked container at all times in a manner consistent with storage of other student medication at the school and may be accessible only by the school administrator/faculty member.

How does administration need to be managed:

- A parent or guardian or other individual may not administer a medical cannabis infused product in a manner that, in the opinion of the school, would create a disruption to the school's educational environment or would cause exposure of the product to other students.
- A school may not discipline a student who is administered a medical cannabis infused product by a parent, guardian or other individual, or who self-administers a medical cannabis infused product under the supervision of a school administrator/faculty member, and may not deny the student's eligibility to attend school solely because the student requires the administration of the product.
- Brickton Montessori school may not authorize the use of a medical cannabis infused product if the school would lose federal funding as a result of the authorization.

Medical Forms

Every child attending school must have a completed medical form on file. This form is issued by the State of Illinois and contains 3 parts: a medical history section (to be signed by a parent), a proof of immunization section, and a

physical examination section (the latter 2 sections signed by a physician) within six months prior to enrollment. In compliance with Illinois State Law, new health forms are required for:

- all new students
- Toddlers entering Children's House
- Students entering Kindergarten (medical, dental, and vision)
- Students entering 2nd grade (dental)
- Students entering 6th grade (medical and dental)

A physical exam must be completed within 6 months prior to admission or, if transferring from another school, dated within the last 12 months and must be submitted prior to the first day of attendance.

All children between the ages of 6 months and 6 years of age are required to provide proof of lead screening, unless excused by the physician.

A TB skin test must be administered before a child's initial start date at Brickton and before a student enters the sixth grade, unless excused by the child's physician.

Children entering Children's House 3rd Year (kindergarten) must provide proof of a Dental examination and Vision examination. Children entering Elementary 2nd Year (second grade) and Elementary 6th Year (sixth grade) must also submit dental examination forms.

Immunization Requirements

The Illinois Department of Public Health requires each child to be immunized as listed below:

- **Measles** (as diagnosed by the physician) or live measles, vaccine given after 15 months of age and again before the child reaches the age of 5.
- **Diphtheria Pertussis Tetanus (DTaP)** given at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 15-18 months, kindergarten.

- **Oral Polio** given at 2 months, 4 months, between 6-18 months and booster after 4 years.
- **Rubella vaccine (German Measles)** given between 12-15 months with booster between 4-6 years. All children are to be immunized even though they may have had the disease.
- **Mumps** given between 12-15 months.
- **Hepatitis B** given at birth, between 1-2 months and between 6-18 months.
- **Hib** given at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, and 12-15 months.
- All new students, age 2-5, and current students entering kindergarten, must show evidence of having received the **Varicella** vaccine or of having had chicken pox with booster at 4-6 years.
- **Tdap** booster (whooping cough) is required for all students entering 6th grade.
- **Meningitis** vaccine is required for all students entering 6th grade.

Exact dates of immunizations must be indicated on the medical form completed by the physician. Please check the form before submitting to the school office to be sure all dates are properly completed. Students will be excluded from school by October 15 if state mandated requirements for health examinations and immunizations have not been met.

The Cook County Department of Public Health (708-445-2400) holds immunization clinics where children may receive vaccinations free of charge. Please call that office for additional information.

Brickton Montessori School, per Section 122.27 8.1 of The School Code of Illinois, will report to the state and city on the level of immunization compliance of children enrolled in the school.

Communicable Diseases

State law requires that any child with an undiagnosed rash or unhealed sore may be excluded from school until the rash or sore has disappeared unless a physician's note verifies that the condition is non-communicable.

A physician's note shall be required for readmission to the school after absences due to an illness of five or more days, after any length of absence due to a reportable communicable disease (any of the following illnesses described below such as chicken pox, scarlatina, scarlet fever), or at the discretion of the Head of School. Please note that there are no refunds of tuition because of absences.

Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act

Under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (Ill. Rev. STAT. CH. 23, par. 2051), every employee of the Brickton Montessori School is required to report cases in which child abuse and/or neglect is suspected.

Parking Lot Safety

Parents and other drivers are cautioned to drive slowly and to exercise extreme caution when entering our parking lot.

The areas immediately in front of the entrance doors shall be designated NO PARKING ZONES, and are marked as such.

Transportation Safety for Children

As required by the Department of Human Services, if the authorized driver other than the parent arrives to pick up a child in a condition or driving in a manner that the Brickton Montessori School staff deems as unsafe for transporting the child, we will not let them leave with the child. If a parent arrives in a condition or drives in a manner that is considered unsafe for transporting a child (ie: not safely securing a child in the appropriate car seat), we are not allowed to prevent his or her leaving with the child, but are obligated to call the police to

report the situation. We will also try to contact the other spouse if appropriate. Nido/Young Toddlers and Toddlers will not be transported off site.

Hygiene

Infection control procedures recommended by the Cook County Department of Public Health and OSHA will be reinforced for faculty and staff. These measures will include:

1. Adequate hand washing by the staff when coming into contact with a child's blood,urine, stool, vomitus, tears, nasal or oral secretions,
2. Covering and containing spills and accidents involving body fluids. Clean-up of spills and accidents with an appropriate disinfectant.
3. Wearing rubber gloves when attending to a child who is bleeding in order to minimize exposure to blood.

Children will be encouraged to tend to their own injuries, as appropriate to their age.

Lice

Brickton will take precautions to prevent the spread of lice. A child found to have a case of lice will be sent home and allowed to return after treatment. A child found to have nits (nits are the tiny eggs that can be found on the hair shaft, very close to the scalp) will be allowed to stay at school, but will need to be treated before returning to school the next day. For helpful information on lice and treatment, see http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/epi.html

Integrated Pest Management Program

Brickton is committed to providing a healthy, safe environment for our students and staff. To that end, Brickton utilizes an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program to control pests and to decrease hazards to the environment and individuals, especially children, whom we know are most at risk for exposure to pesticides. IPM programs are designed to prevent pest problems through natural, non-chemical means, whenever possible, and utilize inspection,

monitoring, good sanitation, pest-proofing the building and other ecologically-based management strategies. Brickton has regular inspections, monitoring and reporting procedures in place to support an effective IPM program. The decision to use a pesticide treatment will be based on a review of available options, using non-chemical means whenever possible. Pesticides will be used only in containerized baits or for spot treatments targeting infestations or problem areas where a minimal amount of material can be used. We do not utilize routine spraying for pest control. Parents/guardians will be notified prior to pesticide treatment application, if it becomes necessary. Pesticides shall be applied in minimum amounts with no children or staff present in the area being treated and will remain outside the treated area for a minimum of two hours, or longer if specified on the pesticide label. Any items handled or mouthed by students will be removed from the area before pesticides are applied.

Product Safety Recall

To support product safety at school and home and in compliance with Department of Children and Family Services regulations, Brickton maintains a recall list of FDA product recalls for parents to reference. The binder of notifications is available in the main office or on the Safe Kids Worldwide website at http://www.safekids.org/product-recalls.

Asbestos

The Brickton Montessori School contains no materials containing asbestos. The School has filed a management plan with the Illinois Department of Public Health and is in compliance with AHERA stating there is no asbestos in the building. A copy of this plan is available for review in the school office.

Firearm Safety

Brickton Montessori School Prohibits carrying firearms on school property, school-provided transportation, or other areas used for school activities. The school has "Gun-Free Zone" signs posted on all doors and will report violations to the appropriate authorities.

Appendices

School Map

