

Thank you for your interest in **Carmel Montessori Academy and Children's House**. We have prepared this *Handbook* for our CMA STUDENTS and their Families and others interested in familiarizing themselves with Montessori education generally and CMA specifically. (There is a short annotated bibliography at the end of this *Handbook* for more in-depth reading.) We invite you to call the Academy for an appointment to observe any level of the school:

***Lower School***

Toddler Class, 2-3 year olds  
Preprimary Class, 3-6 year olds

***Middle School***

Primary Class, 6-9 year olds  
Elementary Class, 9-12+ year olds

***Upper School***

Lower Erdkinder, 12-15 year olds  
Upper Erdkinder, 15-18 year olds

The CHILDREN and Faculty  
of



A DIVISION OF FAMILY PARTNERS, INC.

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3 S 238 Route 59 Warrenville, Illinois 60555  
(630) 393-2995

August 2022

When we added the *Erdkinder* Program for twelve- to eighteen-year-olds in our thirteenth year, we needed a new designation for our Montessori community in Warrenville. In true Montessori fashion, Parents narrowed the choice to three names from a list of over thirty suggestions; all STUDENTS voted on the final decision, and so we became:



## Carmel

A special school whose environments offer a "fruitful field" in which to grow,

## Montessori

Based on the philosophy of Maria Montessori,

## Academy

In a special "grove for instruction" for adults, YOUNG PEOPLE, and

**Children's House** - for the very young CHILD.

# Carmel Montessori Academy and Children's House

is a member of

*The American Montessori Society*

and is dedicated to the facilitation of the development  
of the CHILD and his/her Family.

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# CLASSROOM

## OBSERVATION

### GUIDELINES

While observing, please assist the CHILDREN in the following ways:

Please choose a place to sit that will not interfere with the CHILDREN'S activities or their access to materials.

Do speak to a CHILD if she/he initiates the conversation. Please understand, however, that uninterrupted concentration is important to his/her work. Please tell the CHILDREN that you are observing the whole class so you need to concentrate, too.

Please refrain from talking to other adults in the environment so that you may make the best use of your observation time. You may ask to speak to the Director/Directress after you observe if you wish.

- Choose one or two CHILDREN to observe plus the class as a whole.
- Does the CHILD concentrate on chosen work for a long while?  
How long?
- Is the CHILD orderly in use of the material and in returning it to its original location?
- What materials did he/she use?
- Did he/she return the materials?

- Is the CHILD independent in choosing his own work?  
What work did he/she choose?  
Was it a challenge?
- Does the CHILD work independently?
- Does the CHILD socialize while he/she is working?
- Does the CHILD finish his/her chosen work?
- Does the CHILD need much assistance from an adult or can s/he work on his/her own? Why?
- Does the CHILD relate well with others in a group situation?
- Is the CHILD coordinated in his/her movements?

# ADMISSION

## REQUIREMENTS AND

## PROCEDURES

We are delighted that you have taken an interest in the educational environments offered at **Carmel Montessori Academy and Children's House**. In the best interest of the CHILD and his/her Family, we present the following requirements and procedures for admission:

**All CHILDREN are accepted on a “first come, first served” basis, without regard to race, creed, color, or national origin.**

### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

**Lower School** - (Toddler & Preprimary) ages 2 – 6 years

**Middle School** - (Primary & Elementary) ages 6 – 12 years

**Upper School** - (Lower & Upper Erdkinder) ages 12 – 18 years

- Parents must have a commitment to the education of their CHILD(REN) through Montessori philosophy and pedagogy as interpreted by the Faculty of **Carmel Montessori Academy & Children's House**. Dual or multiple-school enrollments would conflict with this commitment, and in the best interest of the CHILD, are not permitted.
- Parents must understand that Montessori education can be most beneficial for the CHILD who fully participates in the three-year/six-year cycles of the *Montessori Planes of Development*, with developmental competence required for graduation. Except for cases of transfer out of the area, Parents should have the intention to commit their CHILD'S enrollment within the following:

- 3 years of Preprimary; 4 years, including the Toddler year, if applicable; and/or
  - 6 years of Primary/Elementary; and/or
  - 6 years of Erdkinder.
- Parents must be committed to supporting their CHILD(REN) through attendance at parent conferences and meetings, school activities and programs. In Erdkinder, Parents must commit to full participation of both the STUDENT and Parents within the Erdkinder community. This participation includes, but is not limited to: (1) regular participation in the STUDENT/Parent “Becoming” class; (2) assisting their CHILD(REN) in selection of and participation in classes both on and off campus; (3) one full class transportation participation or its equivalent in Lower as well as Upper Erdkinder; and (4) regular evaluation sessions for album and class work.
  - Parents must have a commitment to support the CHILDREN and the Academy through volunteer programs and fundraising activities.
  - Parents must understand the value of both the indoor and outdoor environments, as well as field excursions. CHILDREN use both the indoor and outdoor environments each day; field excursions are planned weekly. CHILDREN who are unable to participate fully in the activities of the day will need to remain at home.
  - Because consistency of program for the CHILD and his/her Family is of paramount importance, we have formulated the following acceptance policy:
    - The CHILD is accepted into the Toddler class from age 22 months to 3 years, and Parents plan a 4-year commitment to Montessori education.
    - The CHILD is accepted into the Preprimary class from age 3 years (except for Montessori transfer STUDENTS), and Parents plan a 3-year commitment to Montessori education.
    - The CHILD, who has had Montessori Preprimary, is accepted into the Primary/Elementary class as developmentally appropriate at approximately age 6 (except for Montessori transfer STUDENTS), and Parents plan a 6-year commitment to Montessori education.

- The CHILD, who has had Montessori Preprimary and Primary/Elementary, is accepted into the Erdkinder class at age 12, and Parents plan a 6-year commitment to Montessori education.
- The usual order of acceptance of the CHILD, whom the School has determined it can serve, is indicated below:
  1. A CHILD who fulfills the above requirements.
  2. Younger siblings of current CMA STUDENTS.
  3. CHILDREN of CMA Alumni
  4. Transfer STUDENTS from other Montessori schools who have had no interruption in their Montessori education.
  5. Transfer STUDENTS from other Montessori schools who have had some interruption in their Montessori education and who the CMA Administrator has determined can be served by the environments at CMA.
  6. Other STUDENTS who the CMA Administrator, as a community service, has determined can be served within the environments of CMA.

***CMA reserves the right to alter the above order based on the needs of the CHILD, his/her Family, and/or the environments of the Academy.***



## ADMISSION PROCEDURES

**Lower School** - (Toddler & Preprimary) ages 2 – 6 years

**Middle School** - (Primary & Elementary) ages 6 – 12 years

**Upper School** - (Lower & Upper Erdkinder) ages 12 – 18 years

- Parents must observe a class in session during an academic day, (typically Monday through Thursday); we recommend a minimum of two hours of observation. **Adolescents** may come to visit the environments and attend classes, meet with other STUDENTS, etc. Please call for an appointment, since the CHILDREN are frequently out of the environments. If applying during the summer months, while visiting the school and seeing the environments is required, the recommendation to observe a class in session is waived.
- Parents meet with the Director/Directress of the class, if possible, and a member of the administration of the Academy to discuss the observation and have questions answered.
- We recommend that Parents observe *at least two other Montessori schools* before final admission.
- Parents must read the information provided by the Academy. In addition, we strongly suggest that you read at least one book by Maria Montessori.
- Parents submit the signed/dated Application and the application fee, as well as the signed/dated Financial Arrangement Sheet.
- Upon receiving the Admission Letter, Parents must return the CMA copy of the signed/dated Admission Letter to finalize the admission procedures.
- All **CHILDREN** must have required School Health Forms or CMA acceptable alternative on file within two weeks of enrollment.

# A FEW CMA POLICIES

## HEALTH & MEDICAL

### School Health Forms

Each STUDENT must have a School Health & Dental Form on file at the School within the first two weeks of classes. Physical examinations of all CHILDREN are required within State of Illinois guidelines; immunization records must be kept up-to-date, except in the case of philosophic or religious objection, in which case a letter to this effect must be on file, as described by the State of Illinois. Special physical or other health problems and/or allergies must be completely documented **before enrollment**, with a physician's signature and appropriate recommendations for the School environment.

### Medical Treatment Forms

Parents may choose to have a Medical Treatment Form on file at the School; this form gives permission to have the STUDENT treated in the case of an emergency in which the Parents cannot be notified. If the form exists, it must be notarized.

Please note that Emergency Medical Permission Forms are often required for some field excursions and for traveling STUDENTS.

### Medication

The administering of medication of any kind by a member of the Faculty of Carmel Montessori Academy is expressly prohibited. Parents may schedule the necessary dispensing of any medications outside of school hours; or Parents may come during school hours to administer the medicine. We regret that there can be no exception to this policy.

### Illness & Disease

A STUDENT who has symptoms of a communicable disease will be excluded from the School for the health and safety of all CMA STUDENTS. Parents will be notified of the immediate need to remove the CHILD from the School and must do so within a reasonable length of time as determined by the School Nurse. CMA must have written notice from the CHILD'S physician that the illness is no longer contagious before the CHILD will be re-admitted to the School.

# SCHOOL HOURS

## Arrival & Dismissal

Please allow extra time (and patience) for every CHILD to prepare for school. In order to assist the STUDENTS in forming good habits, promptness on arrival is most important; prompt arrival also helps the CHILD to begin his/her day in a positive way. For the consistency and peace of mind of your CHILD, we ask that you be prompt about dismissals as well.

## Tardiness

Promptness on arrival is most important to help the STUDENTS to form good habits. STUDENTS who are habitually tardy (more than three [3] times in a 30-day period) will be referred to the Principal of CMA for inquiry and possible disciplinary action.

## Absence

On each day of absence, Parent(s) must call in before 8 a.m. to notify a Faculty member at the School of the reason for the absence; a written note of explanation should be brought in on the day the CHILD returns to school. A STUDENT who misses school for three (3) or more consecutive days or more than five (5) days in a 30-day period is required to bring a doctor's note stating the nature of the illness and the reason for absence. Please note that in all cases of absence, except illness for which there is a doctor's note, only the Principal of the School may give permission for absence.

It is of special concern that ***Erdkinder*** attend school regularly. Failure to bring the required written notes may result in exclusion from class until the note is received, notification of Parents, school-parent meeting, and possible loss of credit. The Principal/Director must give written approval to miss a specific class, either a class on campus or a field excursion class. The Director or instructor may assign work in addition to regular class work as the STUDENT'S needs dictate. Because the nature of ***Erdkinder*** field classes is entirely experiential, we highly discourage absences for day or multi-day field excursions. If a STUDENT has been absent during the experiential part of the course, the decision as to whether the STUDENT may continue that course lies with the Principal/Director of CMA. If the CMA Principal/Director deems it is *possible* to make up the actual planned experience with all the academic, personal, and social goals being satisfied, the STUDENT in question, with his/her Parents, is required to bear the research and expense of the make-up exercises. Failure to meet the above stated goals

as determined by the Principal/Director may result in forfeiture of credit and the necessity to retake the course in the next curriculum cycle at additional time and tuition expense for the STUDENT and his/her Family.

### **Time Commitment**

Hours for Lower and Middle School STUDENTS are individualized at enrollment, and may be adjusted later, according to the needs of the CHILD and his/her Family. A school day for ***Lower Erdkinder STUDENTS*** is approximately nine (8) hours, plus daily and weekend experiential traveling time; actual hours may vary by year or due to off-campus classes. ***Upper Erdkinder STUDENTS*** have a flexible schedule to accommodate Professional Involvement as well as individual off-campus classes, but must maintain a minimum of nine (8) hours or designated year/hours of participation daily. The Principal and/or Director must approve the daily schedule for all ***Lower*** and ***Upper Erdkinder STUDENTS***.

## **THE CMA STUDENT**

### **STUDENT Conduct**

The CMA STUDENT must conduct him/herself at all times in a manner which brings credit to him/herself, his/her Family, and the School. Serious breaches of acceptable conduct may, at the discretion of the Principal of Carmel Montessori Academy, result in the suspension or expulsion of a STUDENT. A STUDENT who has been suspended from community classes will spend the balance of the class time under the direct supervision of the CMA Director and will retake the course at Family expense during the following cycle. The Family of a STUDENT who has been expelled from CMA ***for any reason*** owes the balance of the school year's tuition regardless of the time remaining in the school year.

### **Dress & Clothing**

CMA STUDENTS use both the indoor and outdoor environments each day all year round. Please refer to the current CMA Dress Code for details. The CHILD should be dressed appropriately for outdoor and field trip activities. ***Every CHILD attending participates in all activities.*** If the CHILD is unable to participate in regularly scheduled activities or special lessons either outdoors or indoors due to illness, please keep him/her at home for that day. CHILDREN participate in all

their scheduled activities each day. We highly discourage attending some classes or lessons and not others; this requires special permission from the Principal, which will be granted for only the most significant reasons.

**All CHILDREN** are required to have both indoor and outdoor footwear. Indoor dress (including clothing, accessories, hair style/coloring, etc.) must be conducive to physical, personal, social and academic development in the classroom setting. We encourage CHILDREN to bring an extra set of clothing for outdoor use, which may be kept in a drawstring bag. Final decisions regarding appropriateness of dress rest with the Principal/Director of the School.

### **Food & Related Issues**

***All STUDENTS, from age two through age eighteen, should begin each day at home with a good breakfast.***

Nutritious lunches and snacks for the Lower and Middle Schools are provided by the School. If your CHILD must have a special diet for reasons of health or philosophic or religious beliefs, please notify the School in writing. Consistent respect for and adherence to dietary restrictions is extremely important for the CHILD both for physical and psychological reasons. If, for the above reason(s), the CHILD is bringing a special lunch or part of a lunch, please be aware that water is the substitute beverage for milk, and please include only fruit or nuts for dessert.

Due to the frequent travel component of the Erdkinder Program, ***Erdkinder STUDENTS*** normally provide their own lunch. STUDENTS should participate in making their own *nutritious* lunches and snacks appropriate to Montessori philosophy and pedagogy and CMA guidelines. ***Erdkinder STUDENTS*** should bring to the School only food items which meet these guidelines. At the discretion of the Erdkinder Director/Directress and as time and travel allow, ***Erdkinder STUDENTS*** may be involved in the total School Home Economic Program on occasion.

***Bring-Your-Own-Lunch Day:*** Once each week (Friday) all CHILDREN in the Lower and Middle Schools participate in Bring-Your-Own-Lunch Day. We highly encourage each CHILD to help prepare his/her own lunch, which should include foods from each of the four major food groups, fruit juice or water to drink (no soda pop or sweet drinks), and fruit or nuts for dessert (no candy/cake type desserts). Please refer to current CMA policies on food for further details.

***Birthdays:*** The CHILD may bring a treat for the class for his/her birthday. We invite the CHILDREN of Carmel Montessori Academy to join with Montessori CHILDREN all over the world in celebrating their birthdays by giving the CHILDREN of their School a book with their name and birthday inscribed on the inside front cover.

Once each month the CHILDREN celebrate all the birthdays that occur in that month at a special CMA lunch, often planned and prepared by the birthday CHILDREN. Parents are cordially invited to join these special school celebrations.

In deference to the feelings of all of the CHILDREN, the issuing of birthday party invitations and/or thank you notes at school is absolutely prohibited. CMA recognizes that neither Parents nor CHILDREN would like to cause any CHILD distress because she/he was not invited. Also, presents for parties may not be brought to School; if the CHILD is going to a party right from school, the gift may be delivered ahead of time or when the CHILD is picked up at the party location. Thank you for following these birthday party policies; we regret there can be no exception to them.

### **Items from Home**

The prepared environment supplies all materials to meet the CHILD'S developmental needs. Toys, jewelry, cell phones and other electronic devices, etc., are discouraged and in some cases prohibited. Please refer to current CMA policies on items from home for further details. Older STUDENTS (***Elementary*** and ***Erdkinder***) may bring personal items from home, provided their presence and use is appropriate to the Montessori educational environments, and provided STUDENTS and their Parents understand that the *responsibility* for those items rests with the STUDENT. Parents, in cooperation with their CHILD'S Director/Directress, are requested to monitor items brought from home and support school policies on such items.

On field trips, ***Preprimary CHILDREN*** may not bring money. ***Elementary CHILDREN*** may bring a reasonable amount of money for educational purposes. ***Erdkinder STUDENTS*** may bring money for field excursions as directed by their Parents. Please see current CMA policies and procedures in the Community Education Program for further details.

**Bullying Policy** – as per required by the State of Illinois

“Bullying” includes “cyber-bullying” and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed towards a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- (1) Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student’s person or property;
- (2) Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student of student’s physical or mental health;
- (3) Substantially interfering with the student or student’s academic performance; or
- (4) Substantially interfering with the student 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 one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

“Cyber-bullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sound, data, or intelligence or any nature transmitted in whole or in part by wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectronic 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 or 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 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.

Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of the non-sectarian nonpublic school and is consistent with subsection (a-5) of this Section (free exercise of religion).

Nothing in the section is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views

protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or under Section 3 or Article 1 of the Illinois Constitution.

The school procedure for promptly reporting bullying, including, but not limited to, identifying and providing the school email address (if applicable) and school telephone number for the staff person or persons responsible for receiving such reports and procedure for anonymous reporting; however, this shall not be construed to permit formal disciplinary action solely on the basis of an anonymous report. The complain manager is Jacob LaFranzo, (630)393-2995, [cmamch@comcast.net](mailto:cmamch@comcast.net).

Consistent with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the bullying policy includes procedures for promptly informing parents or ians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying and discussing, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures. Examples of restorative measures may include: teaching students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, and teaching students to serve, build, and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities.

The bullying procedures for promptly investigating and addressing reports of bullying including the following:

- (A) Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying.
- (B) Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
- (C) Notifying the principal or school administrator of his or her designee of the report of the incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.
- (D) Consistent with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents and guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the principal or school administrator or his or her designee to discuss the investigation, the finding of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

The school interventions that can be taken to address bullying, which may include, but are not limited to, school social work services,



restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community-based services.

The school will consider consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person found to have falsely accused another of bullying as a means of retaliation or as a means of bullying.

The school prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying and will determine appropriate consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation.

The bullying prevention and response plan is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians.

The bullying policy is posted on the school's existing internet website and is included in the student handbook, and, where applicable, posted where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted in the school, and is distributed annually to parents, guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees when hired.

To assess the outcomes and effectiveness of the bullying policy, actions will include, but is not limited to, factors such as the frequency of victimization; student, staff, and family observations or safety at a school; identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs; the types of bullying utilized; and bystander intervention or participation. The non-sectarian nonpublic school may use relevant data and information it already collects for other purposes in the policy evaluation. The information developed as a result of the policy evaluation must be made available on the internet website of the school. If an internet website is not available, the information must be provided to school administrators, school board members, school personnel, parents, guardians, and students.

The bullying policy is consistent with other school policies.

Date of Approval  
February 9, 2022

## Counseling

CMA is vitally interested in the physical and psychological well-being of each STUDENT under its care. Parents who are experiencing difficulty with their CHILD are urged to avail themselves of in-house counseling and/or ask a Director/Directress for a list of Family and/or Child Counselors in our community. For the protection of our CHILDREN, cases of child abuse will be dealt with first between Parents, Director/Directress, and Principal *in complete confidentiality*; however, if the matter cannot be handled in-house, professional help will be sought for the CHILD and his/her Family with or without parental consent. CMA supports and adheres to the State of Illinois policies and procedures in dealing with and reporting cases of suspected child abuse.

## PARENT PARTICIPATION

We encourage and appreciate participation of Parents in the School. Some ways in which Parents have enjoyed sharing their time with the CHILDREN are:

- driving and accompanying the School on field trips in the Community Education Program;
- driving and participating in special lessons with CHILDREN;
- sharing a talent or special interest with the CHILDREN;
- presenting sandpaper letters to CHILDREN;
- reading to the CHILDREN;
- listening to CHILDREN read;
- helping CHILDREN learn mathematics tables;
- making materials for the classroom;
- working on special projects either with the CHILDREN at home or on weekends;
- participation in "Workdays" which occur in the Fall and Spring of the year;
- involvement in our many construction projects throughout the year;
- creative, exciting projects which parents initiate.

The CHILDREN also enjoy having a Parent join all the CHILDREN of the School for lunch or a special activity. The Faculty welcomes other suggestions and ideas from Parents.

Within the Upper School (Erdkinder) some participation is mandatory, including but not limited to attendance at Morals and Ethics Class in Lower Erdkinder and one full class transportation participation or its equivalent in Lower as well as Upper Erdkinder.

**Parents are the prime educators of their CHILDREN**; please let us know in which additional ways you would like to participate.

### **Parent Director/Directress Conferences**

Maria Montessori highly encouraged "doorstep" conferences. The Directors/Directresses welcome comments, suggestions, and questions from Parents. The Directors/Directresses of CMA are happy to discuss the development of the CHILD with his/her Parents at any mutually convenient time. If the discussion requires privacy or a greater length of time than the Director/Directress can take from the class immediately, a conference can be set up at any time mutually convenient to the Parent(s) and the Director/Directress.

In addition to these spontaneous conferences, each class has scheduled conferences in Fall, Winter and Spring. These conferences are profoundly important in assessing the development of the whole CHILD, so we can better "follow the child" as Maria Montessori taught. Because the CHILD moves from one level to the next at the appropriate developmental time (not at the end of a year or semester or on a birthday), parental input is especially vital in deciding when that right developmental time has come.

In addition to, or sometimes in place of, these three annual conferences, Erdkinder Grade Conferences are held at the end of each content area course, usually at the end of the school year. ***It is most beneficial to the CHILD when both Parents attend.***

The nature of the evaluation program at all levels of the School requires the consistent and frequent participation of Parents. As the CHILD matures, most especially in Erdkinder, she/he becomes a part of those evaluation sessions. At any mutually convenient time, however, either the STUDENT or Parent(s) may request a private conference with the Director/Directress or Principal.

### **Parent Meetings**

Parent Meetings are scheduled approximately three times per year. The attendance and involvement of both Parents is an important factor in the CHILD'S development.

## **FREEDOM OF CAMPUS**

CMA supports the right of the CHILD to the freedom of movement and the privacy which independent, self-directed education and growth require. CMA provides CHILDREN with the opportunity for freedom in their use of the campus with and without adult supervision. Parents should be aware that their CHILDREN will be both inside and outside at times each day without the presence of an adult.

## DRUGS, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO

In deference to the sensitive nature of the CHILD, CMA requests that adults observe

### NO SMOKING ON CAMPUS.

The use, possession, or involvement with drugs, alcohol, or tobacco by CHILDREN is expressly prohibited. The use, possession, or involvement with drugs, alcohol or tobacco by any CHILD is grounds for disciplinary action, including expulsion; the decision rests with the Principal of the School. The Family of a STUDENT who has been expelled from CMA **for any reason** owes the balance of the school year's tuition regardless of the time remaining in the school year.

## STUDENT DRIVING

**STUDENTS** as *Seniors* are granted the privilege of driving to school and parking their vehicles on campus. STUDENTS must maintain the absolute highest safety standards both on and off campus to maintain this privilege. They must be able to operate a vehicle in all its modes in all types of weather. If the weather conditions create uncertainty or fear on the part of the STUDENT, she/he *must not* operate the vehicle. Parents of the STUDENT must make appropriate arrangements for his/her transportation both to school and/or back home, even if the weather should change during the day. Absence (or even tardiness) due to weather conditions (except in the most extreme cases) is not acceptable.

Of course we understand that STUDENTS are still learning and growing. There is, however, a certain level of good judgment and sound practice (in their daily lives as well as on the road) that must be maintained to afford this privilege. STUDENTS who cannot or do not meet the guidelines set by the Principal may well lose their vehicle privileges. Please note that withholding safety-related information from the Administrator, parking a vehicle off campus and walking to school, or any other attempt to circumvent these guidelines would be a serious setback to the personal (ethical and moral) development of the CHILD. Please refer to current CMA Student Driving Guidelines for further details.

A STUDENT leaving campus with another STUDENT who is driving at dismissal, to off-campus classes or for any other reason, must have written permission from all Parents concerned as well as the approval of the Erdkinder Director/Directress.

A STUDENT may not take a vehicle off campus during the school day or away from school activities without written permission from both Parents and the Erdkinder Director/Directress.

## **COURSE SUBSTITUTION**

Any course with substantially the same content and experience may be substituted for a required course. STUDENTS may substitute any course at their own research and expense, with the approval of the Principal, and provided that the substitution does not interfere with the CMA schedule. See current *CMA Calendar and Schedules* on all levels of the School for further details.

## **RECORDS**

The academic and medical records of all STUDENTS are completely confidential. Please note that standardized tests results are used in total school evaluation programs *only*. Individual scores are not retained in STUDENT records, and thus are not forwarded to receiving schools, nor are they available for parental perusal at any time. Parents have full access to all permanent records of their CHILD(REN) and may add comments at their discretion; five school days' request notification is required. Parents must sign the completed transcript before academic and medical records can be sent out to any organization or institution. Records are released only upon written parental consent and when all financial obligations have been met, as well as requirements of the Illinois Board of Education and the State of Illinois.

Records of all *Elementary* and *Erdkinder* graduates are kept permanently in the Active Alumni File. Records of all CMA STUDENTS are kept in the Active File for one year after withdrawal and permanently in the Inactive File. Four weeks may be required to retrieve information on STUDENTs who have withdrawn from the School.

# BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF A MONTESSORI PROGRAM

## Growth in the *Child*

- Independent
- Self-directed
- Responsible Group Member
- Self-disciplined
- Self-accepting
- Joyful in Learning
- *A Unique Individual*

## Program Emphasis

- Auto-education
- Intrinsic Motivation
- Process, Not Product Emphasis (as the *child* matures, this emphasis becomes less profound)
- Cooperation, not Competition
- Fostering Autonomy in the *Child*
- Fostering Competencies Based upon Success
- Spontaneous Activity
- Peer Teaching
- Sensory-Motor Preparation for Intellectual Development
- Natural Social Development
- Biological Basis for Support of Developmental Needs
- Responsible Freedom

(From the American Montessori Society)

## Discipline

"The liberty of the *child* should have as its limit the collective interest, as its form, what we universally consider good breeding. We must, therefore, check in the *child* whatever offends or annoys others, or whatever tends toward rough or ill-bred acts."

Maria Montessori

# PHILOSOPHY

## *“The Guiding Stars”*

The Faculty of **Carmel Montessori Academy and Children's House** recognizes and supports with deep respect the responsibility of Parents as the prime educators of their CHILDREN: "the idea that education must begin at birth is a consistent theme" in all of Montessori's works (*The Child in the Family*). The CMA community is keenly aware of its responsibility to the CHILD and his/her Family who have entrusted this Montessori community with a part of his/her education.

The Faculty of Carmel Montessori Academy strives to serve the needs of the CHILD and his/her Family in the spirit of Maria Montessori, as this Montessori community interprets her philosophy and pedagogy, validated through membership in:

### *The American Montessori Society*

We encourage Families to visit our website at [www.carmelmontessoriacademy.com](http://www.carmelmontessoriacademy.com) for further information.

Montessori is a system of education which encompasses both a philosophy of the child's growth and a rationale for guiding such growth. It is based on the child's developmental needs for freedom within limits and a carefully prepared environment which guarantees exposure to materials and experiences through which to develop intelligence as well as physical and psychological abilities. It is designed to take full advantage of the self-motivation and unique abilities of children to develop their own capabilities. The child needs adults to expose him to the possibilities of his life, but the child himself must direct his response to those possibilities.

-- Paula Polk Lillard, Montessorian and author

The Faculty of **Carmel Montessori Academy and Children's House** respects the CHILD as different from adults and as an individual who is different from all other CHILDREN; a person who possesses unusual sensitivity and mental powers for observation and learning; a person who has a deep love and need for purposeful work.



At CMA, we interpret the injunction “follow the child” in the philosophy and pedagogy of *Maria Montessori*, and according to the standards of:

### *The American Montessori Society*

The Faculty of CMA “is dedicated to providing researched-based, virtue-focused, continually evolving environments within the philosophy and pedagogy of Maria Montessori as interpreted by qualified, competent CMA Faculty to facilitate the balanced development of the physical, personal, social, and academic growth of the CHILD and his/her unique Family towards his/her self-creation of a happy, competent, continually developing person who is a citizen of our world” (from the CMA mission statement).

## **THE GUIDING STARS...**

Because *The Authentic American Montessori School* protocol represents the highest standard of excellence which an *authentic* Montessori school can offer Families for their CHILDREN, an outline of the two sections of that protocol most pertinent to Philosophy and Curriculum has been included below. *The Educational Nature* delineates in the most specific manner the type of philosophy/pedagogy and educational environment and teachers which an *authentic* American Montessori school offers; *The Nature of the Outcomes* sets the goals that an *authentic* American Montessori school has for its CHILDREN. These are the stars by which an authentic American Montessori school steers its course. They should be before us all – CHILDREN, Families, Directors/Directresses, administration, and the wider American Montessori community - in our service to CHILDREN on all the successive Planes of Development.

## **The Educational Nature**

### **The Montessori Learning Environment**

- A Child-Centered Environment
- A Responsive, Preparing, Adaptive Environment
- Individually Construed Competence

### **Montessori's Learning Activity**

- First Hand Experience with Materials
- Spontaneous Activity
- Active Learning Methods
- Self-Directed Activity (Auto Education)
- Liberty within Limits
- Intrinsic Motivation

### **The Montessori Learning Relationships**

- Mixed Age (Family) Grouping
- Social Setting as a Community
- Cooperation, Collaboration, *not* Competition

### **The Montessori Spirituality**

- Child as a Spiritual Being

## **What the Montessori Teacher Is**

- Authoritative
- Observer
- Resource/Consultant
- Model

## **What the Montessori Teacher Does**

- Respectfully Engaged with Learner
- Able to Facilitate "Match" Between Learner and Knowledge
- Environmental Designer/Organizer/Preparer

## **The Nature of Outcomes**

- Independence**
- Confidence and Competence**
- Autonomy**
- Intrinsic Motivation**
- Ability to Handle External Authority**
- Social Responsibility**
- Academic Preparation**
- Spiritual Awareness**
- Citizens of the World**

## **PHILOSOPHY - "The Child & His World"**

Each curricular area below contains reflections on the application of *The Educational Nature of the School* and *The Nature of the Outcomes* in the environments offered at **Carmel Montessori Academy and Children's House**, through all levels from Toddler through Upper Erdkinder. Please refer to the most recent CMA Accreditation for more details about these concepts.

### **AREAS OF CURRICULUM**

#### **Practical Life**

#### **Spiritual Development**

*Because Practical Life experiences and the Spiritual Development of each CHILD are the curricular foundation of Montessori philosophy and pedagogy, the "cosmic view threads" which support the fabric of Montessori education, all of the "guiding stars" are referenced under these two areas of curriculum. In fact, the essence of both Practical Life and Spiritual Development can be found throughout the curriculum, throughout the day, throughout the year. For brevity's sake, yet in recognition of the necessity for "cosmic view," all other areas of curriculum description below contain a few such references.*

#### **Sensory Education**

*plus Sensitive Periods in the Montessori Method*

#### **Language**

*plus Materials & The Three-Period Lesson in the Montessori Method*

#### **Mathematics**

*plus Mixed Age (Family) Groupings in the Montessori Method*

#### **Science**

*plus Animal Care and Barn – A CMA Signature Program*

#### **Social Science**

*plus Community Education – A CMA Signature Program*

#### **Art**

*plus Family Programs - A Montessori Tradition*

#### **Music**

*plus Community Line – A daily CMA Signature event*

#### **Physical Education**

*plus Special Lessons – A CMA Signature Program*

#### **World Languages And Culture**

*plus Home Economics – A CMA Signature Program*

## PRACTICAL LIFE

*The works of Practical Life “are tasks which not only require increasing skills but also a gradual development of character because of the patience necessary for their execution and the sense of responsibility for their successful accomplishment.”*

*Maria Montessori, The Discovery of the Child, p. 61-62.*

*“Men with hands and no head, and men with head and no hands are equally out of place in the modern community.”*

*Maria Montessori, From Childhood to Adolescence, p.99.*

In the CHILD-centered environments of the Toddler and Preprimary classes, the Practical Life curriculum offers the CHILD the opportunity to develop **confidence and competence** in such preparatory activities as dish washing, floor scrubbing, and chair washing. Such activities enable the CHILD to develop his/her own interior discipline and order, building **autonomy** and **intrinsic motivation**, through the use of his/her hands. The Home Economics Program, centered on nutritious lunches and snacks, provides the CHILD with the real-life **social setting** to frequently and consistently utilize these skills in a **directed** environment. The CHILD’S tasks include care of self and the physical environment, menu selection, shopping, cooking, table setting and serving, complete clean-up, and also ecological care for both the indoor and the outdoor environments.

As the CHILD grows toward a more product-oriented stage of development through the Primary and Elementary classes, she/he builds upon the order and skills acquired earlier, using them in a program meticulously **designed, organized, and prepared** by a certified Montessori Director/Directress. Practical Life activities at this level include a thorough cleaning of his/her own environment, detailed menu selection, advanced consumer education (e.g. price comparison), more intricate food preparation, fabric/yarn projects, and other Practical Life activities, including typing, reception, barn supervision, and outdoor activity supervision. Through **first hand experience with the materials** of daily living, the CHILD develops **independence** and the **social responsibility** required for living within a community.

The extension of Practical Life into the Erdkinder classes is characterized by ever more refined and in-depth activities. **STUDENTS** act as mentors to younger CHILDREN, lead the CMA Student Council, and assist in Lower and Middle School preparation of environments. Because their **competence is individually construed** and

*cooperation and collaboration* are emphasized, the STUDENTS can determine the areas of Practical Life that most meet their interests and needs under the direction of an *authoritative resource consultant* – the Montessori Director/Directress. The STUDENTS participate in advanced consumer education projects, work in animal husbandry and landscaping, construct composting areas, and volunteer in community-based civic projects, to name a few. Strengthened by his/her own **independence** and **autonomy** and his/her awareness of **social responsibility**, the STUDENT'S Practical Life experience culminates in the Professional Involvement Program in which the STUDENT takes part in the operating of a school-based business and finally in the economic community itself.

## SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

*“The origins of the development, both in the species and in the individual, lie within.”*

*Maria Montessori, The Montessori Method, p. 105.*

*“Moral Education is the source of that spiritual equilibrium on which everything else depends and which may be compared to the physical equilibrium or sense of balance without which it is impossible to stand upright or to move into any other position.”*

*Maria Montessori, From Childhood to Adolescence, p. 116.*

The development of a CHILD'S interior being is an essential aspect of the Montessori Method. *Spiritual development* is the other side of the fabric of "cosmic threads" which tie all disciplines into a meaningful whole. They center the CHILD, giving him/her a place to personally and intellectually locate individual concepts and skills in a cosmic view. The CHILD is a *spiritual being; spiritual development*, however, does not necessarily mean religious development, although it can and does to individual CHILDREN and their Families. *Spiritual development* in the Montessori environment begins in the Toddler and Preprimary classes with natural and logical consequences, the development of self-discipline using the principles of *respectful engagement, liberty within limits*, and adult *models* of striving for interior strength of character. The dawning of **spiritual awareness** in the young CHILD is a function of not only the structures of the classroom, but also the *spontaneous activities* of the CHILD in a *responsive, preparing, adaptive environment*, and the social, *mixed-age* discussion groups of daily classroom experience.

As the CHILD matures through the Primary and Elementary classes, World Religion Studies in the Social Science Curriculum, Current Events Line, Socratic moral discussion groups, ecumenical experiences, and philosophic/psychological exploration provide the CHILD with the peripheral experiences to mold his/her own personality, soul, being. At Parent option, the CHILD may also participate in Scripture class, based primarily upon five major world religions, and Rite classes (of the faith of the Family). The Montessori Director/Directress **observes** the CHILD in these many settings, shares his/her observations with the CHILD and his/her Family, and plans with them this delicate **match between the learner and the knowledge and wisdom** to be ultimately acquired through **auto-education**. Again, the CHILD has the opportunity through **first hand experience with materials and ideas** and **active learning methods** to develop **independence, confidence, autonomy, and social responsibility** in a nurturing, **responsive, preparing, adaptive environment**.

**Spiritual development** for the *Erdkinder* STUDENT is facilitated by the Director/Directress and the Family, but also broadened through the **independence, confidence and competence** about his/her own **spiritual awareness**, his/her **autonomous** decisions regarding both personal and **academic preparation** of self, and, as a **citizen of the world**, the **social responsibilities** inherent in the **ability to handle external authority** rising from well-developed **intrinsic motivation**. Morals and Ethics classes (including evening sessions which Parents attend once a month for the three-year cycle) and Development of a Personal Philosophy are integral at the Erdkinder level.

The environments are so designed to direct the CHILD toward positive modes of behavior. The CHILD is free to experiment personally, socially, and academically within his/her environment, respecting the needs of him/herself, others, and the materials that serve him/her. "The child has the right (freedom) to do what is right." The CHILD who infringes upon these rights may be redirected, separated from the situation, or, more ideally, the environment itself will offer logical consequences. The CHILD who spills water mops it up. As the CHILD grows, the needs for increased responsibility parallels the needs for increased commitment. In the Elementary class, the CHILD sets his/her own goals and completes his/her work before she/he leaves the environment. In Erdkinder, the STUDENT is able to choose to complete assignments with ample time in class or she/he may take his/her work home; the assignments, however, must be completed. The CHILD grows, then, personally, socially, and academically. The goal of the **Spiritual Development** curriculum is to prepare the philosophical and psychological environment in order that the CHILD may learn to meet his/her personal, emotional,

and social needs within his/her Montessori community and ultimately in the society and world in which she/he lives.

## SENSORIAL EDUCATION

*“The training and sharpening of the senses has the obvious advantage of enlarging the field of perception and of offering an ever more solid foundation for intellectual growth. The intellect builds up its store of practical ideas through contact with, and exploration of, its environment.”*

*Maria Montessori, The Discovery of the Child, p. 99.*

**Sensorial education**, whose goal is so aptly stated in the above quotation, begins in the Toddler and Preprimary Classes. Not only does **first hand experience with materials** like the Pink Tower, Brown Stair, Baric Tablets, and Binomial Cube serve the CHILD to be more aware of environmental possibilities, but it also provides an excellent syntactic base for later **academic preparation** in mathematics and science. Field excursions for the young CHILD offer a generous opportunity for “sensing” new environments – from smelling the apple pies on the sills of an Amish home, to listening to the oboe in Prokofiev’s “Peter and the Wolf” at a performance of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, to fingering the dress of the wicked witch at the Yellow Brick Road Museum. Both the CHILD’S physical and **spiritual** being is enriched by his/her sensory experiences.

In the Primary and Elementary classes, obvious **sensorial** refinements (e.g. fabric discrimination) combine with sensorial/intellectual presentations of the basic skills in language, mathematics, social science, science, art and music. The CHILD develops **confidence** in his/her own senses and **competence** in using the knowledge thus gained for further exploration through the **active learning methods** systemic to interpretative reading, concretization of mathematics using bead chains or racks and tubes, creation of time lines, science experimentation, a field trip to the Art Institute, playing a recorder or a violin, and running up a sand dune at the bottom of Lake Michigan.

Within the **social setting as community**, **sensorial education** on the Erdkinder level ranges from the sheer pleasure of baking pumpkin pies for the annual Thanksgiving Family Feast, to painting scenery for a school play, to strumming a guitar for songs at daily Community Line, to saddling a horse for the young CHILD she/he is mentoring, to paddling a canoe across a lake. **Cooperative, collaborative relationships** with

young CHILDREN, peers, and adults allow the **adolescent** to not only develop his/her physical senses, but also his/her psychological, **spiritual awareness**, and social senses which are essential to the goals of **social responsibility** and **world citizenship**.

### SENSITIVE PERIODS in the Montessori Method

*“Nature has placed an extraordinary sensitivity in a child... There is no going back: what a child’s mind assimilates during the sensitive period remains as a permanent acquisition for his whole life, and it can never be acquired at another stage.”*

*Maria Montessori, The Discovery of the Child, p. 171.*

Within the construct of Sensorial Education, a word on the concept of Sensitive Periods and the Montessori Method may be most appropriate. Perhaps one of the greatest gifts of Maria Montessori was her ability to draw research, ideas, and practices from many scientists, psychologists, and educators and weave them into a philosophic and pragmatic method. The Dutch scientist, Hugo de Vries, discovered these sensitive periods in animals. Through Montessori’s insistence on **child-centered environments**, **spontaneous activity**, **intrinsic motivation**, **mixed age (family) groupings**, **the child as a spiritual being**, and, perhaps most importantly the **observation of the Director/Directress**, the concept of human sensitive periods, periods in which the CHILD demonstrates such extraordinary sensitivity to absorb special skills and concepts, unfolded. Or was it her strong belief in Sensitive Periods that led her to insist upon these facets of her pedagogy? No one of Maria Montessori’s own books describes this phenomenon with more acuity than *The Secret of Childhood*.

On the First Plane of Development, the life of the **Toddler** and **Preprimary** CHILD abounds with examples. The young CHILD has a great affinity for the absorption of knowledge through his/her senses; color tablets, sound cylinders, preparation of snack, fabric comparisons, and seasoned jars are most alluring during this period in an environment in which s/he is able to **self-direct** his/her own education in a **spontaneous** manner in a **well-prepared, adaptive environment**. The CHILD reveals the facile acquisition of verbal language the world over beginning even before the CHILD is two; materials and exercises in the Toddler and Preprimary classes (e.g. the three-period lessons, matching materials in vocabulary, one-to-one correspondence) reinforce this interest. The absorption of the written symbols of language follows



so rapidly; the CHILD'S own written symbols, sandpaper letters, word building, reading, creative writing grow out of many sensitive language periods for many different skills and concepts. What is more, the acquisition of these skills and concepts during the CHILD'S Sensitive Period for language provides him/her with a strong, natural foundation for more advanced language learning.

The Second Plane of Development is perhaps the most stable, the most even of the three. For example, the CHILD in the Primary and Elementary classes develops the urge toward sociality. The desire to work with a partner or in small groups is very strong. Still using **active learning methods**, still with great **spontaneity**, but with the **authoritative** approach by the Director/Directress (necessary in a complex society) to explore **liberty within limits**, the CHILD experiments with his/her new-found feelings of **social privilege and responsibility**, more explicit **spiritual awareness, cooperative** vs. competitive associations, and the personal value of learning to appropriately **handle external authority**. The CHILD chooses the type of work setting she/he wishes (e.g. table, desk, rug) and the order in which she/he will do his/her work (e.g. grammar boxes, science experiment, food preparation). The CHILD participates in structured classes on the development of moral awareness and responsibility. The CHILD assists in the evaluation of his/her own ability to work productively in a small group. These activities, and so many more to which the CHILD on the Second Plane of Development is so sensitive, lay the foundation for the wider life community for which she/he will soon be preparing.

The **Erdkinder STUDENT** reveals one of his/her greatest "sensibilities" to the adults about him/her, for surely in the great agitation of mind and body of the adolescent, the undulations of uncertainty, tremendous responsibility, doubt, error, and achievement can only be attributed to the example she/he receives, and through his/her **autonomy** decides to incorporate into his/her own life. Perhaps the **modeling** role of Parent and/or Director/Directress is never so paramount for the CHILD who will soon become adult. In the development of **independence, confidence and competence, autonomy, social responsibility, spiritual awareness, and world citizenship**, as well as **academic preparation**, the adolescent observes, experiments with, rejects and accepts the example of the adults surrounding him/her. From the expectation of Parents and Directors/Directresses as reflected in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of his/her work (e.g. grading conferencing procedures), to the STUDENT freedom to make choice within acceptable limits (e.g. elective choice and creation), to participation in regional and national events, to giving presentations throughout the School, the CMA **Erdkinder student** grapples with the

challenges of preparing for adulthood, for this is undoubtedly the sensitive period for becoming a **citizen of a community, a nation, a world**. The adults facilitating the CMA environments are not perfect; fortunately, Maria Montessori assures us that they do not have to be: “the good teacher does not have to be entirely free from faults and weakness... We must be taught and we must be willing to accept guidance if we wish to become effective teachers” (*The Secret of Childhood*, p. 149). By the time the CHILD is approaching the end of the Third Plane of Development she/he has a stronger grasp of the frailty of the human spirit, but also an awareness of the inestimable value of sincere intentions of the adults who have been facilitating his/her education.

Many more examples on each Plane of Development can be cited. Using Maria Montessori’s own observation methods, Directors/Directresses at CMA continue to facilitate the growth and development of the CHILD from age two through age eighteen through the utilization of currently known sensitive periods at all levels of development as well as their own **observations** of the sensitivity of the CHILD - windows of opportunity for the CHILD’S acquisition of concepts, skills, behaviors.

## LANGUAGE

*“...language is the expression of agreement among a group of men, and can be understood only by those who have agreed that special sounds shall represent special ideas... It is the instrument of thinking together.”*

*Maria Montessori, Education for a New World, p. 39.*

The CHILD comes to the Montessori environments with a wide range of verbal language skills. The initial Toddler and Preprimary language activities are designed to broaden the CHILD’S real experiences (e.g. discussions around the lunch tables; rabbits in their hutches outside the classroom window; a field trip to the botanic gardens) as well as vicarious experiences (e.g. matching cards; classic children’s literature). The geometric insets are a preparatory writing, reading, art, and mathematics material, revealing the interdisciplinary nature of the Montessori curriculum. Sandpaper letters, three-letter phonics drawers, and configuration and context exercises are but a few of the sequential materials available for the CHILD to use again and again until she/he is **confident** of his/her understanding. Parallel materials for each concept serve the CHILD’S individual learning style and rate because the environments are **child-centered** and **competence is individually**

**construed.** Writing is integral to the program, and, in fact, within Montessori philosophy and pedagogy, usually precedes reading.

Language materials are continuous from the Preprimary to Primary to Elementary and into the Erdkinder Program. Presentations in the Preprimary are usually verbal, while in Primary and Elementary, in addition to the intellectual/sensorial presentation, three-period materials themselves facilitate the progression toward **competence** and **autonomy** in their use and application. **Academic preparation** in language development relies heavily on the **responsive, preparing, adaptive environment**, including materials related to description (e.g. literary style), form (e.g. grammar, sentence types), etymology, and syntax (e.g. logical analysis) and is augmented by application in drama, creative writing, the CHILDREN'S newspaper, Montessorus Tracks, the Junior Great Books Program, and the Social Science Core Interdisciplinary Literature Curriculum as well as field experiences to the historic homes of authors, plays, and field writing experiences.

Language skills as well as literature concepts are refined at the Erdkinder level in both research and content classes. Basic skills in both language and mathematics are reviewed each year using the daily focus sheet format, allowing constant evaluation by the Montessori Director/Directress so that she/he will be able to **facilitate the match between learner and knowledge**. A wide variety of writing assignments provide the STUDENT with the opportunity to “epiphanyze,” to discover his/her own **autonomous** writing strength, while at the same time appreciating and respecting not only classic authors but the work of peers as well. The written work of each STUDENT in all content areas is channeled through the language skills instructor to provide the **consultation** necessary to apply these skills in his/her daily work. Weekly readings and discussion groups in the Great Books Program and Social Science Core Interdisciplinary Literature Curriculum as well as the required (for graduation) World, English, and United States Literature courses allow the adolescent to intellectually experiment with ideas, concepts, and theories in the **social setting of a supportive community**. Field experiences to historic sites, museums, drama performances, interdisciplinary speakers, etc., contribute to the STUDENT'S **ability to respect and handle external authority**, both research authority and immediate, personal authority. Under the direction of the Montessori Director/Directress who **designs, organizes, and prepares** the physical, psychological, and social as well as the academic aspects of the wider adolescent environments, the STUDENT becomes more **independent**, more competent to **direct his/her own education** based upon his/her own interests, abilities, and the support of Family and the School.

**MATERIALS & THE THREE-PERIOD LESSON**  
**in The Montessori Method**

*“The educative process is based on this: that the control of error lives in the material itself, and the child has concrete evidence of it.”*

*Maria Montessori, Dr. Montessori’s Own Handbook, p. 71.*

*“In every exercise... the teacher gives a lesson... in three ‘periods’:*

*Period 1. Naming.*

*Period 2. Recognition.*

*Period 3. The Pronunciation of the Word.”*

*Maria Montessori, Dr. Montessori’s Own Handbook, p. 126.*

Within the construct of Language, a word on materials and Montessori’s three-period lesson may be most appropriate. In addition to the didactic Montessori materials in the environment from Neinhaus in Holland, Gonzaga in Italy, and Kaybee in England and India, the Directors/Directresses **design, organize, and prepare** the environment using many prototype materials on a continual basis to extend traditional Montessori materials, and add concepts consistent with recent educational research and United States cultural patterns. All materials in the classrooms are scientifically designed to be **CHILD-centered**, aesthetically pleasing, self-correcting (perhaps one of the strongest of Maria Montessori’s statements regarding materials lies in this “control of error”), positively repetitive, reinforcing, sequential, and to involve as many senses as appropriate, present but one concept at a time, and to lead from the concrete to the abstract. Materials are presented verbally in the three-period lesson on the Toddler and Preprimary levels. Essentially, the Three-Period Lesson is:

1st Period - "This is (a sphere); This is (an ovoid)."

2nd Period - "Show me (a sphere); Show me (an ovoid)."

3rd Period - "Which is this?" (pointing to the sphere) "Which is this?" (pointing to the ovoid)

In addition to the sensorial presentation and verbal three-period lessons, in the Primary and Elementary three-period materials for each concept/skill are available to the CHILD. Materials at this level parallel the three-period lesson:

1st Period Material - Definition

2nd Period Material - Description

### 3rd Period Material - Application

Because the CHILD is encouraged in his/her *spontaneous activity* and is in the process of internalizing the concept of *liberty within limits*, these materials assist the CHILD in the development of **intrinsic motivation** which leads to **confidence and competence** at his/her own developmental level.

Although at the Erdkinder level the three-period lesson and the three-period material may be used, the STUDENT is encouraged to manipulate *ideas* as well as materials to strengthen his/her **academic preparation** and **independence**. And, as in the first two Planes of Development, field excursions at the adolescent level provide a wide variety of “materials” to observe, appreciate, and experiment with. The three-period lesson provides the foundation for both physical, concrete development and *spiritual*, reflective development.

## MATHEMATICS

*“The children possess all the instinctive knowledge necessary as a preparation for clear ideas on numeration. The idea of quantity was inherent in all the material for the education of the senses: longer, shorter, darker, lighter. The conception of identity and of difference formed part of the actual technique of the education of the senses, which began with the recognition of identical objects, and continued with the arrangement in gradation of similar objects... The child’s mind is not prepared for number ‘by certain preliminary ideas,’ given in haste by the teacher, but has been prepared for it by a process of formation, by a slow building up of itself.”*

*Maria Montessori, Dr. Montessori’s Own Handbook, p. 126.*

Conceptually and practically, mathematics preparatory activities begin in sensorial education for the *Toddler* and *Preprimary CHILD*. Through *first hand experience with materials*, number concepts are presented through such materials as sandpaper numbers and spindle boxes, and through the Golden Bead Material, the basis of Montessori mathematics. Geometric shapes and solids not only provide a basis for future geometry but also a foundation for the fine and practical arts and, thus, **independence** and **autonomy**. The concrete facets of addition,

subtraction, multiplication, and division are presented in the Preprimary through *active learning methods* and *self-directed activity*.

The CHILD in the Primary and Elementary classes continues the static and dynamic aspects of these operations, again concretizing and verbalizing the sensorial concepts acquired at an earlier stage through spontaneous activity in the classical Montessori *family, or mixed aged, groupings*. Through repetition in *self-directed activity* with materials like the stamps and the beads, the CHILD begins to compute on a more abstract basis. The CHILD has a wide range of individual choices among practical applications for math skills, including problems such as computing our horse's weight, and which of two food items is the best value. The computer is of tremendous value, not only to enable the CHILD to develop skill in using common programs, but also in the areas of mathematics, language, logic, and concept skill experiences in the cultural subjects. Through *active learning methods*, sequential mathematics materials continue through geometry, fractions, decimals, percentage, measurement, and into algebraic computation, advanced geometry, and trigonometry, from Elementary into Erdkinder, to provide firm **academic preparation** in this basic area of study.

Basic skills in both language and mathematics are reviewed each year using the daily focus sheet format, allowing constant evaluation by the Montessori Director/Directress in order that she/he will be able to *facilitate the match between learner and knowledge*. For many *Erdkinder STUDENTS* this review in Mathematics, as in Language, is primarily a reexamination of previously mastered skills and concepts. However, the Director/Directress, through *observation* and evaluation of both isolated mathematics work and/or its application in that specific course or other content area, may determine that a STUDENT has not completely conceptualized a mathematics concept. Using an *authoritative* approach, acting as a *resource and consultant*, the Montessori Director/Directress can facilitate the mastery of the specific skill, fortifying **confidence** while strengthening **competence**. Mathematics Developmental Concepts, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, and further advanced mathematical courses are available to the *Erdkinder STUDENT*. All STUDENTS, throughout their six year Erdkinder experience, continue to study and refine both their Language and Mathematics skills and concepts to whatever level their abilities and interests allow in these two basic areas of **academic preparation**.

MIXED AGE (FAMILY) GROUPINGS  
in The Montessori Method

*“What matters is to mix the ages. Our schools show that children of different ages help one another... People sometimes fear that if a child... gives lessons, this will hold him back in his own progress. But, in the first place, he does not teach all the time and his freedom is respected. Secondly, teaching helps him to understand what he knows even better than before. He has to analyze and rearrange his little store of knowledge before he can pass it on. So his sacrifice does not go unrewarded.”*

*Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind, pp. 226-277.*

Within the construct of Mathematics, a word on Montessori's insistence on *mixed age (family) groupings* may be most appropriate. *Mixed age (family) groupings* are essential in skill as well as content areas in all Montessori environments across all Three Planes of Development. Perhaps there is no better curricular area in which to illustrate this point than mathematics. The seeds of mathematics can be found in the Toddler and Preprimary classes in the sensorial didactic materials, as for example, the pink tower. Initially, the Director/Directress has *modeled* through a specific presentation the construction of this centimeter-graduated tower to a young CHILD. The joy in the face and hands of that CHILD during the *autonomous* construction of a tower taller than him/herself cannot but attract a fellow classmate to share the triumph *and* provide an opportunity to demonstrate the manual dexterity and balance necessary to such construction. And, of course, the builder becomes even more adept through his/her teaching. Now the Director/Directress observes both CHILDREN, only *respectfully engaging* if necessary; she/he takes note of the next *facilitation* which may be appropriate at another time for each of the CHILDREN. The Teens Board, perhaps by virtue of its repetitive attraction and beautiful, precise organization, often presents the opportunity for *child-teaching-child*, as do so many more of the Montessori didactic materials. The *Primary* and *Elementary CHILD* has entered a solidly stable, if outstandingly social, period of development. The occasions for older CHILDREN teaching younger CHILDREN extend not only to their own classmates but to the *Preprimary CHILDREN* as well. In addition to offering a presentation on the checkerboard (a didactic multiplication material) or the racks and tubes (a didactic division material) to a younger classmate, a CHILD on this Second Plane of Development is often found laying out the Golden Bead materials with a *Preprimary STUDENT*. And, at the same time, reinforcing his/her own concept of base-10, the “feel” of 100 as compared to 1000, the “space” of 6000 beads,

but now on a more advanced level of sensorial-intellectual development. The Mentoring Program in Erdkinder in which the older CHILD shares his/her experience, physical abilities, knowledge, and wisdom with a younger CHILD may at first seem the epitome of the value of mixed-age groupings for the younger CHILD. However, **observation** has also strongly supported the benefit to the older STUDENT as well. At this tumultuous time in the growth and development of the adolescent the equanimity and deliberateness of the young CHILD can offer the 12- to 18-year-old a more cosmic, more objective view of reality than any adult can through lecture or classroom presentation. **Mixed-age (family) groupings** allow CHILDREN on all Three Planes of Development to grow in a **social setting that reflects the community nature** of adult life in **organized** environments designed specifically for their developmental level by an **authoritative resource model**, the Montessori Director/Directress.

## SCIENCE

*“... it is exact and scientific language which characterizes the trained observer... In fact, our little ones have the impression of continually ‘making discoveries’ in the world about them; and in this they find the greatest joy.*

*Now, the scientist who has developed special qualities of observation and who ‘possesses’ an order in which to classify external objects will be the man to make scientific discoveries...”*

*Maria Montessori, Dr. Montessori’s Own Handbook, p. 126.*

Observation within the environment as well as in the community is basic to the Science Curriculum. Through use of the three-year cycle of curricular school themes in both science and social science, the CHILD, employing **active learning methods** and through **self-directed activity**, is free to choose the breadth and depth of his/her inquiry from wide and varied immersion environments. In the interdisciplinary mode so indicative of Montessori pedagogy, the **Toddler** and **Preprimary CHILD** begins with the very development of language itself to express verbally and precisely his/her observations of the world. The young CHILD can avail him/herself of real and vicarious experiences and materials both in the classrooms and throughout the campus. The classroom offers matching cards on the parts of a rabbit and the blossom of a lily. On Line, songs about bones and muscles abound. The States of Matter (solid, liquid, and gas) bottles sit on a wooden tray beckoning to



be examined by the *intrinsically motivated* CHILD through his/her *spontaneous activity*. Often small boxes of experiments with magnets or floating objects or wheels are shared in *mixed age groupings*. From “the hill” outside the classroom window in the fall, she/he can see the pumpkins round the outdoor stage or decide whether to join the square dancers in the little meadow; they are preparing for a family barn dance and some star gazing afterwards. In the winter, she/he can make innumerable trips up the snow-encrusted east side only to whisk down the south side “as far as I can go!” In the spring from atop “the hill” she/he can see from tree tops to recycling bins to the donkey in the pasture. Field trips to museums, forest preserves, observatories, fossil hunts augment the *prepared and preparing environments designed* by the Director/Directress. The sensorial experiences so necessary to scientific investigation immerse the young CHILD, providing growth in **autonomy** and **independence** and **confidence** and **competence**.

So, too, the *Primary* and *Elementary CHILD* shares and builds upon these sensorial, *first-hand experiences*. With his/her more advanced thinking processes, she/he is able to organize and categorize his/her experiences and studies into the more traditional, seven-faceted cosmic view of science: Botany, Zoology, Human Anatomy & Physiology, Astronomy, Earth Science, Physics, and Chemistry. His/her classroom environment is *organized, prepared, adaptive, and responsive* to his/her need for *spontaneous activity* with shelves of real and vicarious materials, yet designed in such an *authoritative* manner that she/he is **intrinsically motivated** to *direct his/her own activities* in responsibility to him/herself and as a **citizen of a wider world**. Within the school science themes base, the *Primary* and *Elementary CHILD interacts with materials*, performs experiments, plans projects with his/her *Director/Directress as resource*, participates in the annual Science Fair, and offers to his/her school community the fruits of the labor, whether an ecology plan or a suggestion for the school fruit baskets or an idea for a field excursion. The CHILD is able to explore the historical significance of scientific discovery through the Social Science Core Interdisciplinary study. Field trips are frequent in science. Often they are *designed and organized* around the school science theme; but neither the CHILD nor his/her Director/Directress are bound by this arbitrary curricular function. *Spontaneous* excursions to a forest preserve, a locally advertised college exhibit, a nursery, a specialty store, or an open prairie are not uncommon.

The *Erdkinder STUDENT* is encouraged to integrate his/her knowledge in the nine science courses required for graduation, which include Physical Science, Life Sciences, Botany, Zoology, Human Anatomy & Health Science, Astronomy, Earth Science, Physics and Chemistry. *Directors/Directresses facilitate* the creation of

individualized albums for each course with each STUDENT, albums which contain an age-appropriate cosmic view of the subject matter, but go on to reflect the ***student's first hand experience with materials and concepts, active learning, and auto education.*** Through the vehicle of Erdkinder Albums (STUDENT-created texts) in Science as well as other content areas, the ***student*** acknowledges the overall outline of the content area and then demonstrates his/her knowledge and understanding through written work as well as material collections, photographs, and evaluations. So, although each STUDENT'S album in each course begins with the same cosmic view, the ***child-centered nature*** of his/her work is maintained and his/her ***academic preparation and competences are individually construed.*** Close communications with *parents*, parental participation in classes and evaluations (as noted elsewhere), mentoring in science areas for young CHILDREN, and extensive field experiences to places like planetariums, botanical gardens, museums, observatories, week-long camping to ***experience first hand*** biomes in Illinois and neighboring states, etc., all contribute to the ***student's ability to respect and handle external authority***, both research authority and immediate, personal authority.

### **ANIMAL CARE AND BARN – A CMA Signature Program**

***“Children have an anxious concern for living beings, and the satisfaction of this instinct fills them with delight. It is therefore easy to interest them in taking care of plants and especially of animals.”***

*Maria Montessori, The Discovery of the Child, p. 71.*

Since its establishment in the mid-1970's, CMA has offered the CHILD and his/her Family both indoor and outdoor ***child-centered environments*** which stimulate the CHILD'S physical, personal, social, and academic development through the care and maintenance of living things and animals. There is perhaps no more effective way to facilitate the concept of ***liberty within limits*** than interaction with living things. The care of plants and animals in a ***structured, responsive, adaptive environment*** is the developmental foundation of ***social responsibility*** and ***world citizenship*** stewardship. Green and flowering plants, many from current continents under study, and examples of vertebrate and non-vertebrate animals can be found in the care of the CHILDREN in every classroom. The campus environment and the field excursions offer the CHILD many examples of domestic as well as wild flora. Mentors from Erdkinder frequently assist the young CHILDREN in their care of the inside as well as the outside Preprimary animals (rabbits).

*Primary* and *Elementary* participate in all-school care responsibilities as well as caring for the animals in their own classrooms. Lessons in the cycle of life are presented to the CHILD through his/her natural experiences with plants and, especially, animals. The *spiritual*, deeply personal aspects of the development of the CHILD are facilitated by these interactions and lessons. Again, the importance of *mixed-age (family) groupings* within Montessori philosophy/pedagogy can be observed.

## SOCIAL SCIENCE

*“The history of civilization is a history of successful attempts to organize work and to obtain liberty.”*

*Maria Montessori, Dr. Montessori’s Own Handbook, p. 188.*

*“A child must acquire the customs prevailing in his environment. This is why he must have an opportunity to exercise himself in them. It is not enough that he see what others do. His movements are not those of a machine that only has to be regulated; they are rather those of a mechanism that has a definite task to fulfill. Motor activity, therefore, must have a goal and must be connected with mental activity. There is a close relationship between movement and the desire to learn.”*

*Maria Montessori, The Discovery of the Child, p. 305.*

Awareness of the diversity of the world and the responsibilities of **world citizenship** are presented to the CHILD via an integrated approach of all concept areas, using the Social Science Core Interdisciplinary Curriculum as foundation. In the Toddler and Preprimary classes awareness often begins with a small globe or community helper dress/uniform. Stories and visits from essential members of community (e.g. firefighters) offer the young CHILD the concept of **social setting as a community**. Field trips include the mayor’s office, post offices, and Springfield, as the capital of Illinois. Jigsaw puzzle maps and land-water forms provide the young CHILD with the means to explore his/her world geographically. Historical concepts are presented in the Preprimary classes through story, art, music, and holiday celebration. Community Line offers the young CHILD experiences in a **mixed age (family) grouping of cooperation and collaboration** (e.g. performing together with a mentor) and **liberty within limits** (e.g. being listened to by others and listening to others).

Geographic concepts are integrated in two three-year sensorial history cycles in Primary and Elementary. Areas of historical study are: World, North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania, with an in-depth study of United States History. An interdisciplinary study, correlating the history, philosophy, religion, geography, scientific achievement, literature, art, and music of a given historical period, offers the CHILD an overview yet an individualized study, discussion, and materials, which, while giving each CHILD a broad knowledge of the times, allows him/her to choose those incidents and concepts most interesting to him/her within the cosmic view. The CHILD learns the value of Director/Directress as **resource/consultant** and learns to become a resource and consultant for other CHILDREN as well. Time Lines, used extensively to afford the CHILD a sense of history in a semi-concrete manner, give **first hand experience with materials**, as well as **independence** and strong **academic preparation**. Continental study on a structured, interdisciplinary basis is also an option for the CHILD. An extensive current events program (which correlates with the Spiritual Development Curriculum) places the CHILD in contact with his representatives in Congress as well as local officials and issues. The Elementary class culminates in a week-long trip to our nation's capital, Washington, D.C. Participation in local community projects and an extensive Community Education Program offers the CHILD an opportunity for growth in **academic preparation, social responsibility, spiritual awareness**, and the obligations of **world citizenship**.

The uneven sequential development of STUDENTS at all levels, but especially in adolescence because of their emerging **autonomy**, necessitates a wider latitude of **liberty** and conversely a more refined concept of **individual and social limits**. Choices in content, implementation of projects, and evaluation are many. **Erdkinder STUDENTS** participate in the study of World History and Geography, United States History and Geography, United States Government, and Illinois History and Government (required courses). Studies, experiences, recordings, and evaluation are often communal, emphasizing **social responsibility**, yet individualized to support the development of **autonomy, confidence and competence**, and **spiritual awareness** in each STUDENT. Travel around the state, country, and the world is integral to the interdisciplinary social science curriculum at the Erdkinder level. STUDENTS have traveled to Chicago, Springfield, Jamestown, Philadelphia, Washington D.C., New York, Yosemite National Park, the Ozarks, Key West Florida, Quebec, Canada, Ireland, England and France. The concepts of **independence, the ability to handle external authority, social responsibility, spiritual awareness, academic preparation, and world citizenship** are offered sensorially, concretely, and intellectually to the Erdkinder

STUDENT in a *child-centered environment* which has evolved into their world.

**COMMUNITY EDUCATION – A CMA Signature Program**

*“...the child needs wider boundaries for his... experiences...” (p. 9), “...it is necessary for us to provide him with culture and to enlarge his social experience...” (p. 17), “when the child goes out, it is the world itself that offers itself to him. Let us take the child out to show him real things...” (p. 34) “...the outing is a new key for the intensification of instruction ordinarily given in the school” (p. 35).*

*Maria Montessori, From Childhood to Adolescence, pp. 34*

"The Child - His World" is the beginning and end of the curriculum and can be most concretely observed in the **Community Education Program**. The CHILD spends six to eight hours per week in the community of which he is a part. To cite only a few examples, the **Community Education Program** expands the curriculum in many areas:

- Practical Life (e.g. grocery shopping, hardware shopping)
- Spiritual Development (e.g. visits to temples, “Wide-Sky,” historic churches)
- Sensorial Education (e.g. Indiana Dunes, bakery)
- Language (e.g. Museum of Natural History, Illinois Railway Museum)
- Mathematics (e.g. Museum of Science and Industry)
- Science (e.g. Museum of Surgical Science, Arboretum)
- Social Science (e.g. Chicago Historical Museum, Office of the Mayor)
- Art (e.g. Art Institute, Museum of Contemporary Art)
- Music (e.g. Orchestra Hall)
- World Languages and Cultures (e.g. Polish Museum, Native American PowWow)
- Physical Education (e.g. sledding at Windmill Park, canoeing down the Fox River)

The CHILD observes, listens to lectures, participates in activities designed especially for him/her, and questions experts in their respective fields. Within the **Community Education Program** about one half of the experiences are **academic** in nature (e.g. museums, science field studies); one quarter are service to the community within **social**

**responsibility**, (e.g. cleaning the prairie path); and the final quarter are social (e.g. Annual Bike Hike), that, is reinforcing **social setting as community**. Most notably within the academic area, the actual on-site experience is divided into three parts:

- an age-appropriate session/activity for CHILDREN on each of the Three Planes of Development (3-6, 6-12, 12-18), accenting **academic** concepts and goals
- a mentoring session in which older STUDENTS accompany and/or instruct their young CHILDREN in areas of importance, interest, and pleasure, accenting personal and **social responsibility**
- A third period in which time is allotted for individual and small group interests across age levels, accenting **independence and confidence and competence**.

The Community Education Program at CMA takes the CHILD out to his/her world in order that the CHILD may develop greater **spiritual awareness** of self, build strong **academic preparation**, and demonstrate essential **social responsibility** as a **citizen of the world**.

## ART

*“Musicians, singers, artists, athletes... heroes... all are born in the same way, but each carries within him the enigma of his own special development that motivates his unique activity in the world.”*

*Maria Montessori, The Child in the Family, p. 21*

*“Aesthetic and moral education are also closely connected with the training of the senses. By multiplying sense experiences and developing the ability to evaluate the smallest differences in various stimuli, one’s sensibilities are refined and one’s pleasures increased. Beauty is found in harmony, not in discord; and harmony implies affinities, but these require a refinement of the senses if they are to be perceived.”*

*Maria Montessori, The Discovery of the Child, p. 148.*

The Fine and Practical Arts Curriculum is fully integrated into the Social Science Core Interdisciplinary study. On all Planes of Development the

CHILD may avail him/herself of the two-fold function of the art specialist: art activity director and **resource/consultant** for the Head Montessori Director/Directress. In the Toddler and Preprimary classes the art teacher visits the classroom once a week for small group instruction and activity. Concepts such as color, hue, intensity, space, and rhythm may be highlighted through specific art activities and the use of various media, including pencil, pastels, watercolors, collage materials, clay, etc. The materials and methods are structured to meet the individual needs and interests of the CHILD, as part of the **community grouping**. The art specialist meets with the Head Montessori Director/Directress to (1) note her **observations** as she has worked with the small groups; (2) receive **consultation** for working with individual CHILDREN; (3) discuss the interdisciplinary curricular focus of the week with the Head Montessori Director/Directress; (4) assist in the **design, organization, and preparation** of daily art activities for the following week, incorporating geographic, holiday, and other content area concepts into the presentations to be offered to the CHILD.

Although the two functions of the art specialist in the Primary and Elementary classes are similar to her functions in the Lower School, the content and media become more sophisticated, more detailed *and* more integrated throughout content areas. Advanced concepts include: elements of art - line, color, shape, texture, space and form; and principles of art - unity, balance, contrast, rhythm, pattern, and movement. Groupings at this level are more flexible, more reflective of the CHILD'S interest and **individually construed competence**. Through **first hand experience with materials**, the CHILD, individually or in small groups, becomes facile with drawing, painting, collage, printing making, sculpture, pottery, crafts, and photography. The collaboration between the art specialist and the Head Montessori Director/Directress focuses on the historical period and/or scientific discovery which the class, a small group, or an individual CHILD is studying. Daily art activities for the CHILD can then be encouraged or suggested for the remainder of the week within the classroom, building **independence and confidence and competence** in this area. The wide variety of artistic expression in historical period or culture is studied and often imitated by the **Primary and Elementary CHILD**.

The STUDENT in the Erdkinder classes has a vast foundation upon which to express his/her artistic views, a wide perspective from which to draw inspiration, and many principles and techniques from which to create his/her own images for his/her own pleasure or in daily work. STUDENTS also incorporate these skills and techniques into the creation of curricular albums, often through the use of photographs. In addition the Erdkinder STUDENT takes a (required) Art History class whose primary focus is field work at institutes, galleries, and museums

in Illinois and neighboring states. Electives in Art are offered frequently at this level and focus on such topics as Ancient Art, the Renaissance, Abstract Art, the Art of Native American Cultures or a specific in-depth course in photography or sculpture or print making. The development of **intrinsic motivation** and **autonomy** is supported. The Community Education Program provides a broad experiential background and draws the CHILD to further study and exploration in the arts from the Preprimary class through the Erdkinder classes in such activities as visits to the Art Institute, study of the fashions of historical periods in nearby museums, field excursions to nearby forest preserves for drawing, sketching, etc.

### **FAMILY PROGRAMS - A Montessori Tradition**

***“Those who are conversant with the chief problems of the school know that to-day much attention is given to a great principle, one that is ideal and almost beyond realization – the union of the family and the school in the matter of educational aims.”***

*Maria Montessori, The Montessori Method, p. 63.*

So important is the Family in the education of the CHILD that Maria Montessori devotes an entire, treasured volume, *The Child in the Family*, to unfolding three principles of parenting: respecting “all reasonable forms of activity in which the child engages...” (p. 88); supporting “as much as possible the child’s desire for activity...” (p. 93); and the need to be “most watchful in our relationships with children because they are quite sensitive – more than we know – to external influences” (p. 96). Parents are the prime educators of their CHILDREN and within the Montessori tradition worldwide, programs which encourage parental appreciation of and participation in the work of the CHILD are highly valued. Some of the annual procedures, programs, and activities at CMA which support this union of the Family and the school include:

- Fall, Winter, Spring **Parent Conferences**
- Doorstep Conferences
- **Parent Meetings** (usually 3 per year)
- Family Studies of the Great Ideas of the Western World (weekly)
- CMA Holiday Celebrations & Bi-monthly Focus of five of the major religions of the world
- The monthly explorations of *The Nature of the Outcomes of an Authentic American Montessori School*
- Monthly **Erdkinder Morals & Ethics Meetings**



- First Day of School Peace Rededication Ceremony
- Barn Dance & Pot Luck
- Harvest Festival & Halloween Celebration
- Family Reading Night (a home activity)
- Thanksgiving Opera & Feast
- Any and all of our December Global Light Celebrations
- Senior Caroling
- Annual Holiday Party
  
- Any and all of our Children-Helping-Children fund raising activities
- Snovernighter
  
- Valentine’s Day Celebration
- Mardi Gras Talent Show
  
- Children’s Presentation Night
  
- Math & Science Creativity Fair
  
- Fine Arts Open House
- All school plays involving *all students*
  
- Annual End-of-the-Year Events
  - Lesson Showcase
  - Annual Canoe Trip
  - Annual Trike/Bike Hike
  - International Children’s Day
  - Graduation Luncheon, for Preprimary, Elementary and Upper Erdkinder Graduates and Families
  - Graduation Day
    - Family Picnic
    - Graduation Pot Luck & Ceremony

## MUSIC

*“... success here depends to a great extent upon having a child hear a good deal of music. His environment must be such that it can arouse in him a feeling for, and an understanding of, music.”*

*Maria Montessori, The Discovery of the Child, p. 286.*

The Fine and Instrumental Music Curriculum, too, is fully integrated into the Social Science Core Interdisciplinary study. On all Planes of Development the CHILD may avail him/herself of the two-fold function

of the music specialists: music activity director and **resource/consultant** for the Head Montessori Director/Directress. In the Toddler and Preprimary classes the music teacher visits the classroom, often on the Classroom Line (a Montessori group activity), once a week or more for presentation of music, songs, instrumental presentations, and related activities. Concepts such as melody and rhythm are explored. The materials (e.g. Montessori bells, rhythm band instruments) and methods are structured to meet the individual needs and interests of the CHILD, as part of the **community grouping**. The music teacher meets with the Head Montessori Director/Directress to (1) note **observations** she has made; (2) receive and offer **consultation** for working with the individual CHILD; (3) discuss the interdisciplinary curricular focus of the week with the Head Montessori Director/Directress; (4) assist in the **design, organization, and preparation** of daily music activities for the following week, incorporating geographic, holiday, and other content area concepts into the presentations to be offered to the CHILD, individually, in small groups, and on the Classroom Line.

The **Primary** and **Elementary CHILD** at CMA has a wide and diverse opportunity to experience many facets of music, as well as study it from a more academic perspective. In these classes the two functions of the music specialist are similar to her functions in the Lower School, but the content and media become more sophisticated, more detailed *and* more integrated throughout content areas. Advanced concepts include harmony, theory, form, and timbre. Groupings at this level are more flexible, more reflective of the CHILD'S interest and **individually construed competence**. Small groups frequently form to practice their instruments and vocal arrangements; **spontaneous activity, independence, and social responsibility** are thus encouraged. Special Lessons (arranged privately with instructor) in piano, violin, cello, guitar, etc. are common. Class as well as all-school concerts are frequent and interdisciplinary in nature, especially at daily Community Line. Often the work of the CHILD forms around the School Historical Theme as well as **multi-age group experience**. Several times each year, concerts by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at Orchestra Hall as well as concerts by other local musicians, interdisciplinary composer study, and individualized music work provide each CHILD with a wide experiential background in the area of music.

The STUDENT in the Erdkinder classes has a vast foundation upon which to base his/her musical views, a wide perspective from which to

draw inspiration, and many principles and techniques from which to create his/her own musical expressions for his/her own pleasure or in daily work. The STUDENTS may incorporate these skills and

techniques into the creation of curricular albums, often through the use of CDs and photographs. In addition, the *Erdkinder STUDENT* takes a (required) Music History class whose primary focus is the appreciation of music in the life of mankind through the ages. Field work at concert halls and other musical venues in Illinois and neighboring states is frequent. Electives in Music are offered frequently at this level and are often “created” by the STUDENT and his/her Parents. The Community Education Program provides a broad experiential background and draws the CHILD to further study and exploration in music, from the Preprimary class through the Erdkinder classes, in such activities as visits to the Orchestra Hall, study of the instruments of the recent and more distant past in nearby museums, field excursions to STUDENT and professional performances, etc.

### **COMMUNITY LINE – A daily CMA Signature event**

***“All the older ones become heroes and teachers, and the tinies are their admirers. These look to the former for inspiration.”***

*Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind, p. 224.*

***“Goodness must come out of reciprocal helpfulness, from the unity derived from spiritual cohesion. This society created by cohesion, which children have revealed to us, is at the root of all social organizations.”***

*Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind, p. 239.*

Each day the entire CMA community – *Preprimary, Primary, Elementary, and Erdkinder CHILDREN*, Faculty, and any Parents or visitors present – meet together for *CMA Community Line*. The philosophical basis for this gathering is clearly embodied in the word “community.” CHILDREN join the assembly from their classrooms or the kitchen or from the outdoor campus; they come in large and small groups or individually from music practice or silent reading. Often they sit with other classmates; frequently the small CHILD will find his/her mentor. The buzz of social intimacy fills the room. Then silence falls, the individual refocuses to become part of the group, and Community Line begins.

- The Pledge of Allegiance
  - with some CHILDREN, not of United States citizenship, standing respectfully by, silently or verbally offering their own allegiance

- Announcements
- Sensorial-Intellectual Presentation
  - usually based round the Science or Social Science Core
  - often with a music or art theme
- Usually... *Student* presentations
  - Poetry Readings
  - A Fiction or Non-Fiction Selection
  - An “Opinion” Presentation of community interest
  - Leading of a song on a guitar or keyboard or thumb harp
- Often...
  - Celebration of a Holiday or Holyday
  - A Guest Presenter
  - Other Issues of Importance

Community Line ends with *Silence*, one of Maria Montessori’s most important reflective exercises. And then CHILDREN are dismissed to table for lunch.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

*“The care and management of the environment itself afford the principal means of motor education...”*

*Maria Montessori, Dr. Montessori’s Own Handbook, p. 50.*

As clearly elucidated by Maria Montessori herself, the foundation of Physical Education within a Montessori environment is Practical Life. In addition, physical education exercises permeate the entire *responsive, preparing, adaptive environment* from the hall balance beam, to the physical education stations around the fifth-of-a-mile track encircling the back of the two acre campus, to the exercise of the animals to develop **independence** and **social responsibility**. The CHILD participates in organized and *spontaneous* physical activity each day in a *mixed age (family) community* both inside and outside in all kinds of weather. The *Toddler* and *Preprimary CHILD* can not only choose the areas of both the *child-centered indoor and outdoor environments* as they move with their Directors/Directresses among environments, but their mentors from the Erdkinder and Upper Elementary classes spend time with them nearly every day after lunch in organized, sequential physical development activities which supports *cooperation and collaboration* among STUDENTS. *Primary* and

*Elementary STUDENTS* study the basis for physical activity in their Human Anatomy and Physiology classes with **first hand experience with materials** and join in physical activities both indoor (e.g. yoga classes) and outdoor (e.g. recycling) on a daily basis. In addition to materials for physical development in the classroom and on campus, *Erdkinder STUDENTS* have a strenuous Practical Life program which includes setting up for daily programs, campus work such as garden preparation and recycling, and off-campus work such as cleaning of the prairie path, etc. to facilitate the development of **autonomy** and **social responsibility**. All STUDENTS participate in a vast number of physical experiences in all the environments plus field excursions.(e.g. Practical Life activities of every class, wall climbing, sledding down the hill, animal care, hiking, canoeing, biking). While **facilitating the match between the learner and knowledge** and action, the Montessori Director/Directress **designs, organizes, and prepares the physical indoor, outdoor, and field excursion environments** to meet the **individual** and group needs of the CHILDREN at CMA.

### **SPECIAL LESSONS – A CMA Signature Program**

***“Physical exercise, such as long hikes, also forms a part of the activities... The children become accustomed to the greater challenges of a more serious and a harder form of life.”***

*Maria Montessori, From Childhood to Adolescence, p. 18.*

***“For this purpose there would be all kinds of artistic occupations... Some must be for the individual and some would require cooperation of a group. They would involve artistic and linguist ability and imagination, including... Music... Language... Art...”***

*Maria Montessori, The “Erdkinder” and The Functions of the University, p. 6.*

The Special Lessons Program at CMA offers an opportunity for the CHILD and his/her Family to choose from two different strands of activities (on a special fee basis): Physical Education (Life Sports Program) and Fine Arts. Curricular and “authentic” notations made above address these facets of curriculum. The purpose of the Special Lessons Program is to provide the CHILD and his/her Family with additional physical and fine arts options which, by the nature of their necessary content or implementation, may not be able to be available in the on-campus structure or environments. CMA makes every effort to follow the counsel of Maria Montessori: “There must also be... visiting teachers, men and women who come to give lessons. They should have the proper qualifications for teaching... but this does not mean that they

should be free to use their own methods, for they must agree to adopt special methods and cooperate..." with the underlying philosophy and pedagogy of the School (Maria Montessori, *The "Erkinder" and The Functions of the University*, p. 120). Not all lessons are offered every session or every year. The interests of the CHILD and his/her Family determine the offerings and content. The Special Lessons Program may include, but may not be limited to:

**Physical Education Strand (Life Sports)**

- Archery
- Bowling
- Climbing and Repelling
- Horseback Riding
- Skating (Ice and Roller)
- Skiing
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Tumbling

**Fine Arts Strand**

- Ballet
- Creative Images
- Basic Drama
- Cooking
- Jazz Dancing
- Piano
- Sewing
- String Instruments
- Tap Dancing
- Woodworking

**WORLD LANGUAGE AND CULTURE**

*"...all children are endowed with this capacity to 'absorb' culture. If this be true...let us provide the children with [many] elements of culture."*

*Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind, p. 19.*

*"One of the most important aspects of our method has been to make the training of the muscles enter into the very life of the children so that it is intimately connected with their daily activities. Education in movement is thus fully incorporated into the education of the child's personality."*

*Maria Montessori, The Discovery of the Child, p. 79.*

Of all the facets of CMA curriculum, World Language and Culture has evolved the most over more than three decades of research and discovery. However, in many ways World Language and Culture has paralleled the English language curriculum. Although two major language/cultures, French and Spanish, have long been the focus of this facet of the curriculum, many languages (e.g. German, Japanese, Italian, Russian, Swahili, to name a few), and the worldwide cultures which embrace them have been included for the CHILD'S appreciation, study, and **academic preparation**. The young CHILD comes to the Montessori environments with strong cultural and language skills reflecting his/her own language and cultural heritage. The initial Toddler and Preprimary World Language and Culture activities are designed to have cosmic view and to broaden the CHILD'S real experiences (e.g. national heritage dress, songs and dance from around the world; field trips to a wide variety of cultural museums) as well as vicarious experiences (e.g. matching cards; classic songs and stories from around the world) through a **responsive, preparing, adaptive environment** and **first hand experience with materials**. World Language and Culture teachers assist in or visit the classroom many times during the week to (1) note their **observations** as they have worked with the CHILDREN; (2) receive and offer **consultation** for working with individual CHILDREN both academically as well as personally; (3) discuss the interdisciplinary curricular focus of the week with the Head Montessori Director/Directress and incorporate world language and cultures concepts therein; (4) assist in the **design, organization, and preparation** of daily language and culture activities for the following week, incorporating geographic, holiday, and other content area concepts into the presentations to be offered to the CHILD, individually, in small groups, and on the Classroom Line.

The World Language and Culture curriculum is continuous from the Preprimary to Primary to Elementary and into the Erdkinder Program; basic materials, however, and many related activities are expanded and a more in-depth study is presented to the **Primary** and **Elementary CHILD** to facilitate the progression toward **competence** and **autonomy** in their use and application. Sensorial experiences, both real and vicarious, continue into the Middle School classes. In addition, computer programs in many languages together with more advanced cultural perspectives are offered to the CHILD. The collaboration between the World Language and Culture teachers and the Head Montessori Director/Directress focuses on the geographical and/or historical period which the class, a small group, or an individual CHILD is studying. Daily activities for the CHILD can then be encouraged or suggested during the remainder of the week within the classroom,

building **independence** and **confidence and competence** in this area. The celebration of annual cultural holidays in ***mixed age (family) groupings*** and Social Science Core Interdisciplinary activities provide the CHILD with **academic preparation** on a sensorial-intellectual basis for further studies, and also **spiritual awareness** and **social responsibility** at this most stable age. Field experiences include museums, community groups, and individuals with language and culture expertise. Additional materials in social science, art, and music as well as specific adjunct programs serve the CHILD'S individual learning style and speed because the environments are ***child-centered*** and ***competence is individually construed***.

World Language and Culture skills (e.g. grammar, form) as well as literature concepts are refined at the Erdkinder level. It should be noted, however, that at the adolescent juncture many STUDENTS, with parental and Director/Directress ***consultation***, opt for a ***primarily language*** (e.g. speaking, grammar, structure, writing) or a ***primarily cultural*** (e.g. geography, history) emphasis in their studies. The goal of the World Language and Culture curriculum at this point is to ***facilitate the match between learner and knowledge***. Development is continuous throughout Erdkinder. Field experiences to historic sites, museums, drama performances, interdisciplinary speakers, etc. contribute to the STUDENT'S **ability to respect and handle external authority**, both research authority, culture "authority," and immediate, personal authority. Under the direction of the Montessori Director/Directress who ***designs, organizes, and prepares*** the physical, psychological, and social as well as the academic aspects of the wider adolescent environments, the STUDENT becomes more **independent** and more competent to ***direct his/her own education*** based upon his/her own interests and abilities. Older ***Elementary*** and all ***Erdkinder STUDENTS*** are encouraged to participate in language immersion programs during the school year (often on weekends) or more extensively during the summer months in four, six, or eight week residential camp programs offered throughout the Midwest, which provide them the opportunity to further develop their **independence, confidence and competence**, and strong **academic preparation** in their chosen study of language and culture, and the foundation for deeper **spiritual awareness** and **world citizenship**.

## HOME ECONOMICS – A CMA Signature Program

***“The furniture... consists, in addition to tables, of low cupboards accessible to all the children, who can themselves put in their place and take away the crockery, spoons, knives, and forks, table-cloth and napkins. The***



*plates are always of china, and the tumblers and water bottles of glass.”*

*Maria Montessori, Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook, p. 43.*

*“For him to progress rapidly, his practical and social lives must be intimately blended with his cultural environment.”*

*Maria Montessori, From Childhood to Adolescence, p. 26.*

Perhaps no program or activity is more illustrative of Montessori philosophy and pedagogy and the **educational nature** and the **nature of the outcomes** at CMA than the Home Economics Program. If Practical Life and the Spiritual Development form the “cosmic view threads” which support the fabric of Montessori education, surely the programmatic cloak which most exemplifies the philosophy and pedagogy made from these threads is the Home Economics Program.

The Home Economics Program initially grew out of Social Science and World Language and Cultures. **Primary and Elementary CHILDREN**, under the guidance of their Directors/Directresses, began to assemble recipes, prepare snacks and offer them to fellow STUDENTS with the precise and deliberate motions so well described by Maria Montessori herself when queried about fine motor control and physical development in her schools. And then lunches began to appear from the countries and cultures, from not only the CHILDREN'S study but from Parents who shared their ethnicity with the entire school community through treats, snacks, and often lunches with deep cultural roots, a much-prized practice with a long history at CMA. The Sensorial curriculum was enhanced with every new taste and aroma. CHILDREN began researching new recipes, writing about their findings and gustatory experiences in their journals and in the NewSheet. Language skills were reinforced and expanded. At a fairly early date, these activities began to take on a life of their own and ultimately rose to the status of “program” by virtue of the involvement of the entire STUDENT body, and Faculty and Parents as well. **Preprimary CHILDREN** used their Mathematics skills to count plates and achieve a one-to-one correspondence with knives, spoons, forks, napkins, and glasses. In Primary and Elementary, CHILDREN requested that they be able to prepare lunches *daily*. **Erdkinder STUDENTS'** research began to take

on Science qualities, with forays into Human Anatomy and Physiology revealing physiological needs and current scientific research on diet and menus. A trip to the Art Institute, the story of Helen Keller, the history of foods in Time Line form, brought Art and more history, more literature into play.

Today at CMA, the Home Economics Program can often be experienced from the moment the front door of the school is opened in the

morning. Early-arriving *Elementary* and *Erdkinder CHILDREN* frequently participate in preparing soup stock, cutting vegetables and fruits, preparing sauces before formal classes begin. *Primary* and *Elementary CHILDREN* still plan menus around the historical or cultural area of classroom studies and take turns cooking in the kitchen with the facilitation of the Home Economics director (often a Montessori Director/Directress). *Preprimary CHILDREN* wash fruit for dessert and the fruit baskets and arrange serving plates in the Practical Life area of their classroom. Shortly before Community Line each day, *Erdkinder STUDENTS* set up tables in the classrooms; *Elementary STUDENTS* prepare dishwashing stands; *Preprimary, Primary, and Elementary STUDENTS* put linen table cloths and napkins on the tables, set them with china plates and tumbler glassware and knives, spoons, and forks, and arrange seating around the tables. And, then, while a few CHILDREN remain in the kitchen for last minute preparations and serving, most STUDENTS go to Community Line. When STUDENTS are dismissed from Community Line, they go to their regular seating at tables, mentors sitting with their young charges; *Upper Erdkinder*, by virtue of their “upper” status, often have a separate table with their Director/Directress. If Erdkinder STUDENTS are off-campus, adjustments need be made. Music, played throughout the lunchtime, is usually selected from the historical/cultural period of study or the current holiday celebration. CHILDREN eat family-style, with all the courtesies and customs which pertain to community table. Conversations are varied, and often, at least initially, facilitated by an adult at table. The opportunities in Spiritual Development seem infinite and, in practice, are as varied as the CHILDREN and their interests. After everyone at the table is finished with his/her lunch, individual dishwashing, rinsing, and sanitizing begins, again facilitated by adults at tables and mentors, as well as the Home Economics director. “Jobs” (e.g. sweeping the floors, replacing tables and seating, returning classrooms to original order) are completed. Mentors take their young CHILDREN to the coatroom to assist them, when necessary, in dressing for outdoor activities. The *Primary* and *Elementary CHILDREN* whose turn it is to work in the kitchen for the two-week period, return to the kitchen for final cleaning procedures.

The Home Economics Program at CMA exemplifies so many of the pragmatic aspects of *The Educational Nature* of this Montessori community:

- The Montessori Learning Environment
- Montessori’s Learning Activity
- The Montessori Learning Relationships
- Montessori Spirituality
- What the Montessori Teacher Is

- What the Montessori Teacher Does

In no other single program at CMA may *The Nature of the Outcomes* be more easily demonstrated:

*Independence*  
*Confidence and Competence*  
*Autonomy*  
*Intrinsic Motivation*  
*Ability to Handle External Authority*  
*Social Responsibility*  
*Academic Preparation*  
*Spiritual Awareness*  
*Citizens of the World*

# ERDKINDER

The Montessori community known as **Carmel Montessori Academy and Children's House** is a member of

## *The American Montessori Society*

The information below reflects the standards of the American Montessori Society.

The Erdkinder Montessori community of Carmel Montessori Academy serves the YOUNG PERSON in two three-year cycle developmental programs: Lower Erdkinder, for the STUDENT from 12-15 years of age, and Upper Erdkinder, for the STUDENT from 15-18 years of age.

We use Maria Montessori's own words as a guide:

*Men and Women with hands and no head and with head and no hands are equally out of place in the modern community.*

and

*Education should therefore include the two forms of activity, manual and intellectual, for the same person, and thus make it understood by practical experience that these two kinds complete each other and are equally essential to a civilized existence.*

To these ends, the Faculty of Carmel Montessori Academy offers the following curriculum to the YOUNG PERSON from 12-18 years of age and his/her Family as a continuation of Preprimary, Primary, and Elementary education within the Montessori tradition. The following are additional principles of the philosophy and pedagogy of Maria Montessori as interpreted by the Faculty of CMA, which appear to be most applicable to the ***Erdkinder YOUNG PERSON***:

1. Parents of YOUNG PEOPLE between the ages of twelve and eighteen years continue to be the ***prime educators of their children***. Contemporary research in adolescent psychology indicates that the Family has the greatest influence on the ADOLESCENT, with the peer group only taking precedence if the Family relinquishes the privilege and responsibility of model

and guide. The Faculty of CMA wholeheartedly subscribes to this view. CMA Erdkinder pedagogy most clearly reflects this philosophy in the participation of Parents in the “Becoming” program, as well as parental involvement in all class offerings, both on campus and within the community, and the evaluation process.

2. The Erdkinder Program at CMA has as its focal point the support and continuation of the Family, both from the point of view of the **ADOLESCENT** in his/her Family, and the development of familial concepts for the becoming adult. Its long-term goals are personal happiness, individually construed success, and world citizenship.
3. The **YOUNG PERSON** from 12-18 years needs to be involved both mentally and physically (with mind and hands) as much as the younger **CHILD**. While the period of development of a *Preprimary CHILD* may be described as *sensorial*, and the *Primary* and *Elementary CHILD* as *sensorial-intellectual*, the *Erdkinder YOUNG PERSON* may be described as *intellectual-sensorial*.
4. The practical aspects of this interpretation of Maria Montessori’s philosophy involve both a program of work experience on the campus and work experience within the larger community. It is also, however, an approach to academic work which totally immerses the **YOUNG PERSON**, mind and body, in the cosmic reality of the academic pursuit. To this end the goal of academic programs in the CMA Erdkinder is to offer the *Erdkinder STUDENT* sufficient time and excellence of instruction in a nurturing atmosphere in which the **STUDENT** can concentrate fully on the topic, in an environment designed to immerse the **STUDENT** in the cosmic reality of the content area.
5. The **ADOLESCENT** has the privilege and responsibility to keep learning to form his/her own life plan. The Faculty of CMA encourages the **STUDENT**, together with his/her Parents, to give direction to his/her own Elective Program and assist in forming the School’s Elective Program, drawing on the community’s limitless possibilities for continued growth.
6. *Responsibility* and *commitment* are the cornerstones of a happy adult life for which the **STUDENT** is preparing. Rules of conduct which are established within the Erdkinder Program at CMA have these two principles as their foundation.

Both the Lower and Upper Erdkinder communities are designed to present the world of American Society and World Civilization to the YOUNG PERSON through:

1. A continuation of the Spiritual Development Program which in the Erdkinder Program is called “Becoming” or “The Psychology of the Growth of Young People to Adulthood,” for the STUDENT both as a developing individual and as a successful part of a larger group, beginning with the most important social grouping for YOUNG PEOPLE - Family. For again, the Faculty of CMA reiterates:

***Parents are the prime educators of their children.***

2. A continuation of the Practical Life Program which begins in the Toddler class and progresses throughout Preprimary, Primary, and Elementary classes to find its fruition in the Erdkinder as the “Living” Program. This program includes daily life management, as well as the successful operation of a school-based business in the Lower Erdkinder and a wider community business involvement in the Upper Erdkinder.
3. A program of Life Sports, which runs concurrently with other programs throughout the six years of enrollment, including such sports as swimming, hiking, skiing, tennis, biking, etc. The STUDENT is encouraged to compete with his/her own past record of accomplishment, making his/her best better through continual participation and practice. The STUDENT is encouraged to apply for credit for all life sports either within or outside of school programs.
4. A social program which includes interaction with YOUNG PEOPLE from our own community, our state, our nation and ultimately from other countries. This program takes place through home and community activities, and academic interactions during travel immersion classes.
5. A full academic curriculum using the great cultural and scientific wealth of our community, the city of Chicago, the State of Illinois, the United States, and our world as a living classroom for all STUDENTS.

The three major goals of this Montessori community, known as CMA, are:

1. that the YOUNG PERSON reach the fullest potential possible in his/her life-long pursuit of physical, personal, social, and intellectual excellence. [Accreditation Standards: *Competence and Confidence, Intrinsic Motivation, Ability to Handle External Authority, Academic Preparation*]
2. that the YOUNG PERSON attain the fullest extent of happiness through his/her lifetime as defined by his/her own unique character within the widest parameters his/her society/culture allows. [Accreditation Standards: *Confidence and Competence, Autonomy, Spiritual Awareness*]
3. that the YOUNG PERSON develop him/herself into a responsible citizen of the world. [Accreditation Standards: *Independence, Social Responsibility, Citizens of the World*]

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

All STUDENTS in the CMA Erdkinder Program are required to have forty-two (42) credits to graduate. A credit is equal to one hundred forty (140) hours of instruction, the content and substance of which is demonstrated by the STUDENT in an Erdkinder album (or combined albums) for each credit or partial credit. Albums are examined throughout each course with special notation being made at the end of the course. *Immersion* class credits must be completed during a single academic year, although it is common for the STUDENT to add to previously completed albums as he/she discovers new material. Some *skill* class credits may require a one-, two-, or three-year period for completion. STUDENTS must complete all assignments and final examinations within ninety days of the usual end of the course, or forfeit the credit for that course. Time may only be extended in the case of written exception by the Director/Principal of CMA. Written and/or oral examinations are a part of each course. In addition, each STUDENT takes comprehensive examinations, tailored to his/her individual ability level, two to three months prior to graduation or after completion of subject requirements. All classes require some type of final examination. For financial requirements for graduation, see the Financial Arrangement Sheet. All courses are one credit unless otherwise indicated. A suggested distribution follows:

***Living*** Requirements (6 credits)  
including 2 credits of Business Experience – Professional Involvement

Lower Erdkinder

- Typing

Upper Erdkinder

- Consumer Education
- Home Management & Economics
- Comprehensive Concepts

***Becoming*** Requirements (3 credits)

Lower Erdkinder

- Ethics & Morality – A Family Approach

Upper Erdkinder

- Psychology of the Human Being
- Developing a Philosophy of Life

***Life Sports*** Requirements (non-credit graduation requirement)

Lower Erdkinder - 200 hours

Upper Erdkinder - 200 hours

***Service*** Requirements (non-credit graduation requirement)

300 hours donated by STUDENT to any group or organization operated for the public benefit

***Professional Involvement*** Requirements (see ***Living*** above)

Lower Erdkinder - 300 hours

Upper Erdkinder - 600 hours

***Fine Arts*** Requirements (2 credits)

Lower or Upper Erdkinder

- History of Art
- History of Music



**English** Requirements (5 credits)

Beginning in Lower Erdkinder

- Language Developmental Concepts\*
- Research Techniques\*\*
- Grammar, Structure, & Writing\*\*

Lower and Upper Erdkinder

- United States Literature
- English Literature
- World Literature

\* A course designed for STUDENTS to review basic English concepts, including, but not limited to: initial grammar, syntax, form, writing, spelling, vocabulary, and reading concepts. Credits for these courses may be applied to Elective Requirements.

\*\*Continuous class designed to meet individual abilities, needs, and interests.

**World Culture and Language** Requirements \* (4 credits)

Lower Erdkinder

- World Culture (.5 cr.)
- World Language (.5 cr.)

Upper Erdkinder

- World Language (2 cr.)
- Foreign Living or Travel Experience (1 cr.)

\*World Culture and Language requirements, with parental and Director/Directress consultation, may have a *primarily language* (e.g. speaking, grammar, structure, writing) or a *primarily cultural* (e.g. geography, history) emphasis; requirements may be adjusted to meet the individual STUDENT'S needs.

**Mathematics** Requirements (3 credits)

Beginning in Lower Erdkinder, into Upper Erdkinder

- Mathematics Concepts\*
- Algebra I
- Geometry
- Algebra II

- \* A course designed for STUDENTS to review basic mathematics concepts, including, but not limited to: basic operations, fractions, decimals, percentages, problematic situations, etc. Credits for these courses may be applied to Elective Requirements.

Mathematics classes are continuous and designed to meet individual abilities, needs, and interests. The individual STUDENT may be required, with parental consultation, to continue on to Trigonometry and/or Calculus if his/her abilities so warrant.

**Science** Requirements (7.5 credits)

Beginning in Lower Erdkinder, into Upper Erdkinder

- Life Science
- Botany / Zoology
- Physical Science
- Earth Science / Astronomy
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Human Anatomy / Physiology

**Social Science** Requirements (4 credits)

[All Social Science courses begin in Lower Erdkinder and extend into Upper Erdkinder for one full credit. (Note: Although the initial course work in Lower Erdkinder is required for graduation, .5 credit is not issued for this Lower Erdkinder work.)

Lower Erdkinder

- Illinois History & Government
- United States History

Upper Erdkinder

- United States Government
- World History & Geography

Community offerings, courses at neighborhood centers, classes in interest areas given at colleges, etc., are highly desirable possibilities.

**Elective** Requirements (8 credits)

The Faculty of CMA encourages the STUDENT and his/her Family to seek many and creative options within the Elective Program. for elective credit. Hours toward elective credit must be approved in

writing *prior* to the beginning of the class by the Principal/Head of School and the Head of the Department to which it is appropriately assigned.

## GRADING POLICY

Within the Montessori tradition as interpreted by the Faculty of CMA, STUDENTS progress at their own rate. They may compress duration or need additional time with the Director or instructor for a level of understanding commensurate with their ability level. STUDENTS must fulfill all course requirements to the required level before credit will be issued. STUDENTS, Parents, Heads of Department, the Erdkinder Director/Directress, and the Principal of CMA determine the level of quality and quantity of requirement against as objective criteria as possible:

A - superior understanding, work, and album

B – good understanding, work, and album

C – satisfactory understanding, work, and album

No credit is given for unsatisfactory work.

**Please Note:** Grade Conferences with STUDENT, Parents, and school Faculty member(s) may be scheduled throughout the school year; Grade Conferences are regularly scheduled for May/June of each school year. If Grade Conferences with STUDENT, Parents, and school Faculty are not arranged prior to June 30 following each school year, grades (including IP [“In Progress”]) and “Incomplete” will be permanently assigned to each course by CMA Teachers/Head of School, unless special, written arrangement with and written approval from the Head of School has been made prior to June 30 following the school year.

***Please note that all classes at CMA, while formatted in a variety of small and large groupings, are individualized in instruction, assignment, and evaluation based upon the STUDENT'S ability level - physical, personal, social, and academic. To accommodate the cultural and aptitude diversity of United States society into which graduating YOUNG PEOPLE must enter, STUDENTS attend classes within the most academically and socially diverse classroom and field excursion environments possible.***

*Special note:* Within the framework of *The Authentic American Montessori School*, the following nine outcomes of a Montessori education are emphasized throughout individual classes and in all evaluation programs of STUDENTS, Faculty, and the School itself. They are the hallmark of traditional American Montessori education and are listed here to provide focus and perspective to the evaluative process at CMA.

***Independence***

***Confidence & Competence***

***Autonomy***

***Intrinsic Motivation***

***Ability to Handle External Authority***

***Social Responsibility***

***Academic Preparation***

***Spiritual Awareness***

***Citizens of the World***

## BECOMING

<u>Course</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Credit</u>
012*	Psychology of the Human Being	1
022*	Ethics & Morality - A Family Approach	1
032*	Developing a Philosophy of Life	1
042	Service	1 or .5
052	Scripture	1 or .5
092	Rite of _____	1 or .5

**012\* PSYCHOLOGY OF THE HUMAN BEING** - A course designed to assist the YOUNG PERSON in the understanding of what it means to be fully human within individual potential including emotions, human sexuality, cognitive processes, etc.

**022\* ETHICS & MORALITY: A FAMILY APPROACH** - The course deals with contemporary moral, social and personal issues in the light of Family-oriented solutions to problems. Parents are involved in the discussions and activities of this course. The focus of the course is the uniquely human goal of seeking happiness over pleasure. *Parental participation in this class is mandatory.*

**032\* DEVELOPING A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE** - This course includes a background in many world philosophies as well as a program designed to help the STUDENT clarify and form his/her own personal philosophy within the guidelines of familial and societal realities.

**042 SERVICE** – A STUDENT taking this course is involved in volunteer work within our community or in the larger Chicago area.

**052 SCRIPTURE** - This course(s) examines the theology, philosophy, and psychology of the Old and New Testaments.

**092 RITE OF \_\_\_\_\_** - The involvement in the faith community of the YOUNG PERSON'S choice.

## LIVING

<u>Course</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Credit</u>
112*	Consumer Living	1
122*	Typing	1
132*	Home Management & Economics	1
142	Business Law	1
162	Professional Development	.5
190*	Professional Involvement	2
199*	Comprehensive Concepts	1

**112\* CONSUMER LIVING** - This course is intended to continue the curriculum of Practical Life begun on the Preprimary, Primary, and Elementary levels of education. On this level, the STUDENT becomes familiar with concepts used in the business world, learns new practical skills, and becomes more proficient in the skills introduced earlier. These skills may include, but are not limited to: financial planning and budgeting, auto maintenance and repair, home management and repair, sewing, dancing, cooking, purchasing, advertising.

**122\* TYPING** - A course designed to enable the STUDENT to type with enough speed and control to complete reports, letters, and tabulated data. Techniques in typing research papers and resumes are covered.

**132\* HOME MANAGEMENT & ECONOMICS** - Includes a study of accounting procedures appropriate in a household situation, including journal entries, posting to ledgers, financial reports, bookkeeping problems, and the economics of home management.

**142 BUSINESS LAW** - Business Law presents the nature and history of our legal system. Significant rulings have been incorporated to present prevailing or preferred view. Development of legal vocabulary and analytical and systematic thinking is stressed. Content includes contracts, law enforcement, and business organization.

**162 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** - This course focuses on the general job market, applying for a position, sources for continuing education, professional ethics, etc.

**190\* PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT** - A course which essentially involves six 100-hour experiences in the business professional community. The first 50 hours are usually observation; the second 50 hours usually include participation to whatever level the business recommends or allows.

**199\* COMPREHENSIVE CONCEPTS** - This course, designed for the final year of Upper Erdkinder, includes a comprehensive overview of all course work in the Erdkinder Program as well as a review of all skills in Mathematics and English. Comprehensive oral and written examinations are a part of this class.



## FINE ARTS

<u>Course</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Credit</u>
212*	History of Music	1
220	Orff Music	1 or .5
222	Applied Instrument	1 or .5
232*	History of Art	1
250	Series Applied Art	1 or .5
252	Color & Design	.5
254	Pottery 1	.5
255	Pottery 2	.5
256	Drawing & Painting 1	.5
257	Drawing & Painting 2	.5
258	Sculpture	.5
262	Creative Dramatics	.5
264	Introduction to Theater	.5
266	Advanced Theater	.5

**212\* HISTORY OF MUSIC** - An overview of the development of musical experience and its significance in man's progress personally and socially.

**220 ORFF MUSIC** - Further development in the music skills learned in Primary and Elementary Orff, with an emphasis on ensemble playing, improvisation and composition.

**222 APPLIED INSTRUMENT** - STUDENTS may choose from Suzuki piano, violin, or traditional instruction in the instruments of their choice (at STUDENT expense).

**232\* HISTORY OF ART** - An overview of the development of art throughout history as a mode of expression and an influence on society.

**252 COLOR & DESIGN** - Basic principles in color and design through use of materials and displays.

**254 POTTERY 1** - Beginning principles in the use of materials and techniques of pottery.

**255 POTTERY 2** - Advanced study and use of materials; included in this class are design and finishing.

**257 DRAWING AND PAINTING 1** - Beginning principles in drawing and painting.

**258 DRAWING AND PAINTING 2** - Advanced study in drawing and painting.

**262 CREATIVE DRAMATICS** - A study of the principles and techniques of the dramatic art including opportunities for expression and creativity.

**264 INTRODUCTION TO THEATER** - This course presents the history of theater, including basic types, principles and techniques of theater programming along with the opportunity of participation.

**266 ADVANCED THEATER** - Continued study of theater with more emphasis on participation.

## ENGLISH

Course	Title	Credit
311*	Language Concepts	1
312*	Research Techniques	1
322*	Grammar/Structure/Writing	1
332	English Development 1	.5
333	English Development 2	.5
342	Speech	.5
352	Speed Reading	.5
362*	Literature, World	1
364*	Literature, United States	1
366*	Literature, English	1

### **311\* LANGUAGE CONCEPTS -**

A course designed for STUDENTS to review basic English concepts, including, but not limited to: initial grammar, syntax, form, writing, spelling, vocabulary, and reading concepts. Credit for this course may be applied to Elective Requirements.

**312\* RESEARCH TECHNIQUES** - An initial, intensive course of study in the development of composition, writing, outlining, and organizational skills necessary for completion of Erdkinder Albums and research papers for work in the Erdkinder as well as higher education studies. *Research Techniques* is a skills course which continues throughout the six years of Erdkinder. Non-graduation credit is granted for the Upper Erdkinder continuation of this skills course. Three-year+ course.

**322\* GRAMMAR/STRUCTURE/WRITING** - Written communication is stressed in this course with emphasis on mastering the parts of speech on an abstract level, advanced diagramming techniques, and advanced sentence and paragraph development Grammar/Structure/Writing is a skills course which continues throughout the six years of Erdkinder. Non-graduation credit is granted for the Upper Erdkinder continuation of this skills course. Three-year+ course.

**332 ENGLISH DEVELOPMENT 1** - The emphasis in this course is skills development: vocabulary development - word meaning, spelling, pronunciation/syllabication - advanced reading comprehension, and oral and written expression.

**333 ENGLISH DEVELOPMENT 2** - The goal of this course is the further development of communication skills through vocabulary development, improved spelling skills, further work in the parts of speech, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar usage, reading comprehension, oral and written expression.

**342 SPEECH** - This course presents to the STUDENTS many elements of public speaking, including formal and informal speeches, interpretation, oral readings, dramatic presentations, etc. Additional areas of study will include voice, articulation, action and movement.

**352 SPEED READING** - A course designed to increase reading speed, to improve skimming skills, research reading, and the reading required of higher education.

Note: Literature Courses run concurrently with appropriate history courses and thus are 2-year courses. Credit: 1 Credit Per Course, granted after successful completion of the second year. (Note: .5 credit is not issued for first year only).

**362\* LITERATURE, WORLD** - A study of the major literary contributions of the six continents. This course work is completed in conjunction with the World History Program, through an interdisciplinary approach which includes both the art and music of specific cultures.

**364\* LITERATURE, UNITED STATES** - A general survey of the ideas, men and women, and their works that have shaped the literature of America from its beginnings to the present. The novel, short story, drama and poetry are included. This course work is completed in conjunction with the United States History program, through an interdisciplinary approach which includes both the arts and music of specific periods.

**366\* LITERATURE, ENGLISH** - A study of the major literary works of the English speaking world. This course work is completed in conjunction with the World History Program, through an interdisciplinary approach which includes both the art and music of specific periods.

## WORLD LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

World Languages and Cultures courses are “400” series courses.

Four credits are required for graduation.

Languages and Cultures Courses may include but are not limited to:

French

German

Japanese

Latin

Russian

Spanish

World Languages and Cultures requirements, with Parent and Director/Directress consultation, may have *primarily language* (i.e. speaking, grammar, structure, writing) or *primarily cultural* (i.e. geography, history, culture, in an interdisciplinary approach in the social science programs) emphasis or a combination of language and culture; requirements may be adjusted to meet the individual STUDENT’S interests and needs. The Faculty of CMA encourages the STUDENT and his/her Family to seek many and creative options within the World Languages and Cultures Program and to pursue any language of interest (including American Sign Language) to meet this requirement, provided approval in writing prior to the beginning of the course/experience has been granted by the Principal/Head of School. The above listed languages are often offered in the language mode at CMA as STUDENT interest and school scheduling allow; all STUDENTS participate in the on-going culture mode throughout their six years in Erdkinder, as a continuation of the programs in Primary/Elementary. *Immersion courses associated with universities and offered specifically for adolescents (e.g. Concordia College Language Villages, Minnesota) are highly recommended. However, it is the responsibility of the STUDENT and his/her Family to decide upon the modality, scheduling, fees, and location of the language mode of his/her World Languages and Cultures requirement.*

## MATHEMATICS

<u>Course</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Credit</u>
511*	Mathematics Concepts	1
512*	Algebra 1	1
522*	Geometry	1
532*	Algebra 2	1
533	College Algebra	1
542	Mathematical Reasoning	.5
552	Trigonometry	1
562	Calculus	1
580	Independent Study – Computers	1

**511\* MATHEMATICS CONCEPTS** - A course designed for STUDENTS to review basic mathematics concepts, including, but not limited to: basic operations, fractions, decimals, percentages, problematic situations, etc. Credit for this course may be applied to Elective Requirements.

**512\* ALGEBRA 1** - This course includes the study of real numbers, linear equations, polynomials, factoring polynomials, rational expressions, linear inequalities, graphs, linear systems in two variables and operations with radicals. For those STUDENTS interested, it also covers quadratic equations, functions, and rational expressions.

**522\* GEOMETRY** - An introduction to the mathematics of two-dimensional Euclidean space - mathematical logic, the concepts of similarity and congruence, ratios, deductive and indirect proof, and constructions. It may also include non-Euclidean geometry, three-dimensional geometry and initial trigonometry.

**532\* ALGEBRA 2** - This course is a continuation of Algebra 1 and covers the following topics: solving equations and inequalities, sequences of real numbers, linear functions and relations, systems of linear equa-

tions, polynomials and rational algebraic equations, radicals, irrational numbers, quadratic equations, polynomial functions, and initial trigonometry.

**542 MATHEMATICAL REASONING** - This course includes inductive and deductive reasoning, sequences, vectors, analytic geometry, conic sections, complex numbers, matrices, and determinants. (An excellent introduction to college calculus)

**552 TRIGONOMETRY** - The following topics are included in this course: trigonometry, ordered fields, mathematical functions of induction, sequences and series, vector algebra, plane analytic geometry, and functions.

**562 CALCULUS** - This course introduces the principles of calculus to the advanced STUDENT. (An individualized course)

**580 INDEPENDENT STUDY: COMPUTERS** - A course designed with the STUDENT and his/her Parents to reflect his/her abilities and interests. Topics may include computer applications, computer literacy, and computer programming, as well as other areas of focus.

## SCIENCE

<u>Course</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Credit</u>
713*	Physical Science	1
723*	Life Sciences	1
726*	Botany /Zoology	1
732*	Human Anatomy & Health Science	1
753*	Earth Science / Astronomy	1
754	Archeology	1
762*	Physics	1
772*	Chemistry	1

**713\* PHYSICAL SCIENCE** - This course provides a background of scientific method in Chemistry and Physics. Laboratory experimentation is emphasized in the study of the nature of matter, composition, energy, and forces as they relate to everyday events.

**723\* LIFE SCIENCE** - A study of the life process and the relationship between living things and their environment. Includes an overview of the Five Kingdoms with an emphasis on the organization of living organisms from their behavioral, ecological, genetic, and evolutionary relationships. Major topics include the chemical and cellular organization of life (cell biology) and basic principles of Anatomy, Physiology, Botany, Zoology, Ecology, Taxonomy, Genetics, and Evolution. This course includes observation, investigations, hypothesis, experimentation, verification, and conclusions.

**726\* BOTANY / ZOOLOGY** – *Botany* is an in-depth study of plant life from the simplest to the most complex forms. Covers basic structural organization, identification, and classification of the Plant Kingdom. Studies include anatomy, physiology, growth, reproduction, characteristics, evolution, and the relationship of plants and animals



within their environment. Emphasis is placed on the concepts of ecology and evolution and man's global use of plant life.

**Zoology** is an in-depth study of animal life from the simplest to the most complex forms. Covers basic structural organization, identification, and classification of the Animal Kingdom. Studies include anatomy, physiology, growth, reproduction, characteristics, evolution, and the relationship of plants and animals within their environment. Emphasis is placed on the concepts of ecology and evolution and man's global use of animal life.

**732\* HUMAN ANATOMY & HEALTH SCIENCE** - A study of the systems and functions of the human body. The course also includes a study of nutrition, medicine, drug use and abuse, human sexuality, and total human development.

**753\* EARTH SCIENCE / ASTRONOMY – *Earth Science*** stresses the pre-human period of earth's development initially with a strong emphasis on the preservation of the earth's resources in balance with the needs of technological human society. Major topics include origin and classification of rocks and minerals, plate tectonics, constructive and destructive forces of the earth, meteorology, and the relationship of the earth to the universe. Environmental problems are examined from scientific, ethical, economic and sociological perspectives.

**Astronomy** emphasizes the cosmic aspects of the study of the universe and the development of the thinking and reasoning of mankind in regard to universal principles. Major topics include birth of the universe, studies of the solar system, galaxies, stellar evolution, and constellations.

**754 ARCHEOLOGY** - The study of early botanical and zoological development through use of the techniques of modern archeology.

**762\* PHYSICS** - A study of the physical world including measurement, motion, forces, circular and projectile motion, conservation of energy and momentum, wave motion, sound, light, electricity, and magnetism. Laboratory work and reports are part of this course.

**772\* CHEMISTRY** - This course is a study of the natural combinations of different kinds of matter in nature. Composition, properties, interactions, and transformations of matter are studied along with practical aspects of daily life. Laboratory work and reports are part of this course.

## SOCIAL SCIENCE

<u>Course</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Credit</u>
822*	World History & Geography	1
835*	United States History	1
833	United States Geography	.5
842*	United States Government	1
852*	Illinois History & Government	1
862	Current Events	1

**822\* WORLD HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY - STUDENTS** experience the concept of world culture in an in-depth study of the forces of world conditions and geography, past and present. Contact with other cultural groups and their history is explored through travel as well as personal contacts. First Section of this course is offered in Lower Erdkinder. Second Section of this course is offered in Upper Erdkinder. Credit: 1 Credit for First /Second Sections, granted after successful completion of the second year. (Note: .5 credit is not issued for first year only).

**835\* UNITED STATES HISTORY - STUDENTS** study the history of the U. S. through an immersion program in which they travel to historical sites in a program which includes research and on-site experience from Early Civilization Sites and Jamestown to contemporary sites of significance. This is an interdisciplinary study which includes art, music, folklore, etc. of the area under study. First Section of this course is offered in Lower Erdkinder. Second Section of this course is offered in Upper Erdkinder. Credit: 1 Credit for First /Second Sections, granted after successful completion of the second year. (Note: .5 credit is not issued for first year only).

**833 UNITED STATES GEOGRAPHY** - This course may be taken concurrently with United States History or in conjunction with travel by the STUDENT with his/her Family. It is designed to offer the STUDENT a concrete look at the effects of U. S. geography on the social, economic, and political development of the nation.

**842\* UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT** - This course involves the STUDENT in the federal, state and local day-to-day operations of government in the U. S. The changes in our government and the importance of the effect of history on a developing nation are stressed. Special emphasis will be placed on the "workings of government for the individual citizen." STUDENTS may participate in the Illinois Youth and Government Program during all three of their Upper Erdkinder years as part of this study.

**852\* ILLINOIS HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT** - STUDENTS study the history and government of Illinois through an immersion program in which they travel to historical sites and the capital in a program which includes research and on-site experience. This is an interdisciplinary study which includes art, music, folklore, etc. of the area under study. It includes emphasis on the "workings of government for the individual citizen."

**862 CURRENT EVENTS** - This course deals with contemporary issues and their historical and social impact in modern society and their impact on the individual within our society.

## MARIA MONTESSORI: WHO WAS SHE?

Maria Montessori was born in Ancona, Italy, in 1870. When she was 12, her parents moved to Rome and encouraged her to become a teacher, the only career open to women at the time. She was first interested in mathematics, and decided on engineering, but eventually became interested in biology and finally determined to enter medical school.

In 1896 she became the first woman to graduate from the University of Rome Medical School and joined the staff of the University's Psychiatric Clinic. As part of her duties, she visited children committed to the insane asylums. She became convinced these mentally deficient children could profit from special education and studied the work of pioneers Jean Itard and Edouard Seguin.

Montessori was named director of the State Orthophrenic School in 1889. She worked with the children there for two years. All day she taught in the school and then worked preparing new materials, making notes and observations and reflecting on her work. These two years she regarded as her "true degree" in education. To her amazement, she found these children could learn many things that had seemed impossible. This conviction led Montessori to devote her energies to the field of education for the remainder of her life.

Dr. Montessori returned to the University of Rome to study philosophy, psychology, and anthropology. She also served on the staff of the Women's Training College in Rome (one of the two women's colleges in Italy at that time), practiced in the clinics and hospitals in Rome and carried on a private practice of her own.

In 1907 she was asked to direct a day-care center in a housing project in the slum section of San Lorenzo, Italy. Montessori accepted, seeing this as her opportunity to begin her work with normal children. She was to have the care of sixty children between the ages of 3 - 7 while their illiterate parents were working. The sparse furniture was similar to that used in an office or home, and the only education equipment was the pieces of sensorial apparatus Montessori had used with her mentally defective children.

Montessori says she had no special system of instruction she wished to test at this point. She wanted to compare the reactions of normal children to her special equipment with those of her mental defectives. She attempted to set up as natural an environment as possible for the

children, and then relied on her own observations of what occurred. After instructing the teacher in the use of the sensorial apparatus, she remained in the background, and waited for the children to reveal themselves to her.

There was one startling development of direct academic significance. Montessori had not intended to expose children so small to any activity bearing on writing and reading: the mothers began to beg her to do so. She finally gave the four-and-five-year old some sandpaper letters to manipulate, and trace over with their fingers. Some children eventually began to connect sounds with the letters, and to try to sound out and put together words. Soon they had taught themselves to write. They would read the words they had written, but were uninterested in those anyone else had written. They then began to read with the same enthusiasm that they had written, reading every extraneous item in their environment - street signs in shops, etc. They showed little interest in books, however, until one day a child showed the other children a torn page from a book. He announced there was a "story" on it, and read it to the others. It was then that they seemed to understand the meaning of books.

They began reading them with the explosion of energy they had previously exhibited in writing and reading words encountered at random in their environment. The process was interesting on three counts: one, spontaneity and direction of this activity from the beginning belonged to the children; two, the usual process of reading preceding writing was reversed; three, the children involved were only four and five years old.

In observing all these developments in the children, Montessori felt she had identified significant and hitherto unknown facts about children's behavior. She also knew that, in order to consider these developments as representing universal truths, she must study them under different conditions and be able to reproduce them. In this spirit that same year, a second school was opened in San Lorenzo, a third in Milan, and a fourth in Rome in 1908, the latter for children of well-to-do parents. By 1909, all of Italian Switzerland began using Montessori's methods in their orphan asylums and children's houses.

Word of Montessori's work spread rapidly. Visitors from all over the world arrived at the Montessori schools to verify with their own eyes the reports of these "remarkable children." Montessori began a life of world travel - establishing schools and teacher training centers, lecturing, and writing. The first comprehensive account of her work, *The Montessori Method*, was published in 1909.

Montessori made her first visit to the United States for a brief lecture tour in 1912. An American Montessori association was formed with Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell as President, and Miss Margaret Wilson, President Woodrow Wilson's daughter, as Secretary. So pleased was Montessori with her reception here she returned in 1915, this time to give a training course in California. During this visit a Montessori class was set up at the San Francisco World's Fair and received much attention.

During the years 1916-1918, Montessori herself traveled between Spain, where she was directing the *Seminari Laboratori de Pedagogia* at Barcelona, and the United States. Except for the temporary closing of Montessori schools in countries taken over by the Nazi and Fascist regimes, Montessori continued to flourish in other parts of the world without interruption. Much of the work today is directed by the Association Montessori Internationale with headquarters in Amsterdam.

Montessori was appointed Government Inspector of Schools in Italy in 1922. However, she was increasingly exploited by the Fascist regime, and by 1931 she had begun to work chiefly out of Barcelona, and she established permanent residence in the Netherlands. Her work was interrupted in 1939 when she went to India to give a six-month training course, and was interned there as an Italian national for the duration of World War II. She established many schools, however, in India, and today it is an active Montessori center. Montessori died in the Netherlands in 1952 receiving in her later years honorary degrees and tributes for her work throughout the world.

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# MONTESSORI EDUCATION

## A Few Questions and Answers

**WHAT IS IT?** This system of education is both a philosophy of *child* growth and a rationale for guiding such growth. It is based on the *child's* developmental needs for freedom within limits and carefully prepared environment which guarantees exposure to materials and experiences through which to develop intelligence as well as physical and psychological abilities. It is designed to take full advantage of the self-motivation and unique ability of *children* to develop their own capabilities. The *child* needs adults to expose him to the possibilities of his life but the *child* himself directs his response to those possibilities. Premises of Montessori education are:

*Children* are to be respected as different from adults, and as individuals who differ from each other.

The *child* possesses unusual sensitivity and mental powers for absorbing and learning from his environment that are unlike those of the adults both in quality and capacity.

The most important years of growth are the first six years of life when unconscious learning is gradually brought to the conscious level.

The *child* has a deep love and need for purposeful work. He works, however, not as an adult for profit and completion of a job, but for the sake of the activity itself. It is this activity which accomplishes for him his most important goal: the development of himself - his mental, physical, and psychological powers.

**IS IT FOR ALL CHILDREN?** The Montessori system has been used successfully with *children* between ages two and a half and eighteen from all socio-economic levels, representing those in regular classes as well as gifted, retarded, emotionally disturbed, and physically handicapped. Because of its individual approach, it is uniquely suited to public education, where *children* of many backgrounds are grouped together. It is also appropriate for classes in which the student-teacher ratio is high because *children* learn at an early age to work independently.

**IS THE CHILD FREE TO DO WHAT HE CHOOSES IN THE CLASSROOM?** The *child* is free to move about the classroom at will, to talk to other *children*, to work with any equipment whose purpose he understands, or to ask the teacher to introduce new material to him. He is not free to disturb other *children* at work or to abuse the equipment that is so important to his development.

**WHAT DOES THE DIRECTRESS DO?** The directress works with individual *children*, introducing materials, and giving guidance where needed. One of her primary tasks is the careful observation of each *child* in order to determine his needs and to gain the knowledge she needs in preparing the environment to aid his growth. Her method of teaching is indirect in that she neither imposes upon the *child* as in direct teaching nor abandons him as a non-directive, permissive approach. Rather, she is constantly alert to the direction in which the *child* himself has indicated he wishes to go and she actively seeks ways to help him accomplish his goals.

**WHAT DOES IT DO FOR THE CHILD?** The goals of Montessori for *children* are several: it encourages self-discipline, self-knowledge, and independence, as well as enthusiasm for learning, an organized approach to problem-solving, and academic skills.

**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN CHILDREN GO FROM A MONTESSORI CLASS TO A TRADITIONAL CLASS?** Most *children* appear to adjust readily to new classroom situations. In all likelihood this is because they have developed self-discipline and independence in the Montessori environment.

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# A CHILD'S HOME ENVIRONMENT

"Designing or reworking your home to meet your child's needs can be as simple as eliminating the toy box and replacing it with some gaily painted boards and bricks. Or it can involve a major change in your attitude about children's rights and their concurrent responsibilities. Three years ago in Italy I babysat for a five year old American boy whose home represented a blend of the Italian attitude of respect toward children and Yankee ingenuity.

Johnny's room was in the quietest corner of the house with a view onto a courtyard overgrown with vegetation. The shutter-type windows were the right height for him to look out and open and close himself. Light switches and doorknobs were also at his level. Johnny's junior size bed was a mattress on top of a box springs - just the right height for freedom, comfort, and safety. A sleeping bag, instead of sheets and blankets, made it easy for him to make the bed each morning. Small pinocchio hat rack held his pajamas and his outdoor coat. A large piece of felt over the bed served as a bulletin board with pictures of animals, flags, people, and Johnny's drawings.

Shelves for books and toys filled one complete wall. Yet the look was sparse rather than cluttered because such an eye had been kept to finding appropriate containers. Everything was in some kind of box, basket, tray, or even plastic bag. A wooden crate held blocks. There was one base set and scrap lumber had furnished many extra and unusual pieces. A farm barn made by Johnny and his mother out of heavy cardboard was painted bright red and labeled "Johnny's Farm" in white over the loft. A small box of farm animals, and another box of people could combine with these open-ended sort of toys to create many different scenes. His Lego blocks were in a straw bag with a lid and handle so he could easily take them traveling. A tiny red table and chairs reflected the current project - an airport being constructed from cardboard and paper.

A long chest held Johnny's clothes. The drawers were the right height for him to open and look inside. The four drawers were labeled by Johnny - socks, shirts, pants, underwear. A side compartment had a slide out rack for his one good outfit. One father built such a cabinet for his child and included a round hole for receiving dirty clothes. A small straw laundry basket in the room could serve the same purpose. Truly if the child's sensitive period for wanting to dress and care for himself is met with patience, love and a prepared environment, there can be no obstacle to his independence.

The continual feeling the room gave me was that this was not the "child's room" but "Johnny's room" and it reflected his current interests and occupations. At the present he had a special interest in airplanes, models, the air force, aircraft carriers and a general interest in animals and all types of transportation. Order prevailed. Each toy was self-contained and replaced on the shelf. (A digression: Many parents have lamented to me that their efforts to order their child's toys - blocks here, cars there, all the parts of the game in the right box - are undermined by the other parent's looser concept of order which is off the floor, out of my way and into any available box.) This external order is necessary for children, especially 3 1/2 and under.

A sensitiveness to the orderly arrangement of things, to their relative positions, is contemporaneous with simple perception, i.e., with the first taking in of impressions from the environment. Also, in his purposive actions, the child can only sustain them if there is an exact procedure to be followed, and in no other way can he arrive at concentration and constancy in his work.

It is essential that the bathroom be prepared for a child's needs. Can they reach the sink, turn on the water, and reach their toothbrush without help? Can they reach the soap? Is there a special and consistent place they can reach for their own towel and washcloth? Can they reach the toilet paper sitting on the toilet? Most parents provide bathroom stools, but small wobbly stools often do not provide enough secure, comfortable space for bathroom functions. Some Montessori schools confronted with adult size facilities build wooden platforms 6-8 inches high that actually fit around the toilet and provide 3' by 3' of space in front of the sink.

Montessori felt that there should be a child's corner in every room of the house. In the living room Johnny's records and record player were kept by a small straw chair and table. In a corner of his mother's room were rocks from a museum, fossils they had found and two butterflies. In the large hallway an art area was set up with a long low table and a shelf containing all manner of art supplies. Separate containers held magic markers, crayons, paste, paper, fabric scraps and recycled household articles for collages: paper tubes, bottle tops, corks, old gift wrap, ribbons, meat trays, egg carton, etc. Tupperware divided cups kept his paint fresh and ever ready. One portion of the wall was covered with washable wallpaper. Here Johnny could write or draw on the wall and a scrubbing exercise with brush, soap, sponge, drying cloth and bucket was set up to scrub the wall clean. All children from 2 1/2 to 6 take delight in caring for their environment, dusting, mopping, scrubbing, cleaning, and

polishing, and they should be able to do so as easily - no, more easily - at home, than at school."

(The above article was written by Barbara Kahn and appeared in the September, 1975, issue of the Illinois Montessori Society Newsletter. It is reprinted here by permission of IMS.)

# RATIONALE BEHIND LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

At **Carmel Montessori Academy and Children's House**, we recognize and respect Parents as the prime educators of their CHILD. At the same time, we realize our obligation to the CHILD and Parents who come to CMA seeking guidance and instruction in Montessori philosophy and pedagogy, a method which is not only an educational system but a way of life. The Montessori Method emphasizes, among other qualities, orderliness, interior as opposed to exterior structure, self-initiation of the work of life, independence, responsibility and commitment to self, Family and community, a cosmic understanding of the principles of education and thus a global view of the world. To accomplish these goals in the growing and developing CHILD and his/her Family, long-term commitment is necessary.

Developmentally, within the Montessori education system, long term commitment is defined for the entering two-year-old as a four year commitment, and for the entering three-year-old as a three year commitment. (Thus, the commitment for both *Toddler* and *Preprimary* STUDENTS includes the kindergarten year.) For the *Elementary* STUDENT, long term commitment is through his/her twelfth year; and for the *Erdkinder* STUDENT, six years through his/her eighteenth year. Additional time may be required at any level to meet basic requirements of that level, at a particular CHILD'S developmental capacity. Too, movement from one level to another is scheduled individually for each CHILD, "resting no longer on a curriculum or a timetable" (at the end of a semester or year), but on the development of the CHILD *him/herself*.

Second, the Montessori Method gives strong emphasis to the older CHILD teaching and serving the young CHILDREN. Multi-aged instruction is absolutely necessary within the Montessori framework. To ensure that the young CHILD will continue to have good role models and the opportunity to learn from the CHILD-TEACHER perspective, long-term commitment on the part of Families is essential.

Within the Montessori environments, the primary goal is self-initiation of one's own work and the ultimate planning of one's own education program within cosmic guidelines. The amount of time that a Director/Directress spends with the CHILD (and frequently his/her Parents) working toward this goal is often in inverse proportion to the amount of time that the CHILD has spent in the specific environment. The heterogeneous grouping of CHILDREN and the high TEACHER-

STUDENT ratio depend upon the interaction of the wide variety of age levels and stages of development in the well-balanced classroom. For the cohesiveness and efficient operation of a Montessori Preprimary, Elementary, *or* Erdkinder classroom, long-term commitment on the part of Families becomes even more integral to the Method.

Fourth, **Carmel Montessori Academy**, like most educational institutions, highly discourages the transfer of a CHILD from one school to another because of its negative effects on the CHILD. CMA requires observation in its classes and extensive interviewing of Parents prior to acceptance to be assured that it is this particular Montessori school that the Parents desire. Historically, CMA has found that a monetary commitment on the part of Parents will cause greater reflection, investigation, and recognition by the Parents of the magnitude of the decision to enroll their CHILD in a long-range program.

**Carmel Montessori Academy** recognizes that Families have as many varying needs as individuals and, thus, it offers a variety of commitment options from which Parents may choose. In this way, the School seeks to meet the individual needs while maintaining the system of Montessori philosophy and pedagogy which it espouses.

# ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Montessori, Maria. **Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook**. New York: Schocken, 1975. Written in very concrete terms, this book offers a clear, concise look at the initial Montessori materials and the philosophy behind their use.

Montessori, Maria. **The Montessori Method**. New York: Schocken, 1974. First published in 1909, this text presents the Method in its initial stages and a great deal of the thinking which its development required; it is most appropriate for an in-depth study.

Montessori, Maria. **The Discovery of the Child**. New York: Ballantine Books, 1967. This overview of Montessori's principles, including discipline, freedom, materials, music, art and the development of the teacher, provides excellent foundation reading.

Montessori, Maria. **The Secret of Childhood**. New York: Ballantine Books, 1966. The basic premise of this book - the contribution the child can make to humanity - is beautifully revealed in each chapter, from "The Intelligence of Love" to "The Rights of the Child."

Montessori, Maria. **The Montessori Elementary Materials**. New York: Schocken, 1973. The development of mathematics and initial language materials, especially grammar and interpretative reading, are examined in this book. The materials and their use are clearly explained and examples supplied.

Montessori, Maria. **From Childhood to Adolescence**. New York: Schocken, 1974. This book presents advanced Montessori philosophy, psychology, and method, including Erdkinder (Montessori education for the adolescence) and the Function of the University.

Lillard, Paula Polk. **Montessori - A Modern Approach**. New York: Schocken, 1973. Written by a Montessorian, this book is an excellent one for parents and for those who have just begun their study of Montessori in the classroom.

Standing, E. M. **Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work**. London: Library Limited, 1962. This text is a complete study of Maria Montessori, her background, the times in which she lived, and the expertise she brought from the scientific field into the field of education.

Notes: