

*Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School***BEHAVIOR AND DISMISSAL POLICY
(Subject to Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act Terms as may apply)****I. PURPOSE**

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Children are expected to move safely in the environment, speak respectfully to each other and all staff, treat the materials respectfully, follow staff instruction and respond appropriately when being directed by staff. Staff will model this behavior, do conflict resolution to support the children to work through their disagreements in a constructive manner, and engage children in grace and courtesy lessons so that children have an opportunity to practice the desired behavior.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Efforts will be made to coordinate communication between the teacher, the Head of School, and parent to generate a plan to ensure that undesired behavior is handled consistently well before a child's behavior escalates.
- B. Children receiving Special Education services will be addressed on a case by case basis, following each child's Individualized Education Plan and/or Behavior Intervention Plan.
- C. Teacher will send children to the administrative office who do not follow the above stated rules with a referral slip. The referral slip will be filed in the child's file, and the incident will be documented in the child's file. Based on the recommendation of the teacher, as indicated on the referral slip, administrative staff will discuss the behavior, call home, or decide on a loss of privilege.
- D. As each child and each situation is unique, repeated unsafe behaviors will result in a behavior plan as determined at the Head of School's discretion, with input from the teacher, parent, and possibly the child.
- E. Possible plans for addressing behavior include:
 - a. In the first instance of violent or unsafe behavior towards self or others, the child receives a phone call home. The second time such an incident happens, the child goes home. The third time, a one day suspension.
 - b. A child who has been sent to the office two times in a given day remains at the office on the third time. Prior to the child's return to their environment, parents, administrators, teachers, and the child meet to discuss the child's behaviors and how to support correction of that behavior.
 - c. A child repeatedly speaks unkindly or inappropriately to other children. They are required to sit at an individual table during the work cycle.
- F. Exclusion from recess is not an acceptable disciplinary practice unless a child causes or is likely to cause physical harm. Exclusion from meals or delaying a meal is never an acceptable disciplinary practice
 - a. If recess detention is utilized, the family must be notified within 24 hours

- b. All recess detentions will be logged and made available upon request at the end of each school year

- G. All children and staff have the right to be safe at school. Extreme or violent acts such as hazing, intentionally injuring another child, or acts of violence may be met with immediate suspension. The child and family must meet with administrative and teaching staff in order for the child to be admitted back into school.

- H. Whenever possible, restoration will be the goal for inappropriate or unsafe behavior, rather than punishment
 - a. Children who cause harm will work with administrative staff or the relevant instructional staff (for example, classroom teacher, Special Education teacher, or social worker) to repair relationships and correct behavior
 - b. Children who respond to bullying or other negative behavior with a forbidden action will be supported in problem-solving and provided appropriate alternative responses

- I. Children in grades kindergarten through 3 will not be suspended from school at any time or for any reason. Prior to any permanent dismissal of any child, at least one of the following methods will be implemented:
 - a. Collaboration with the child's family, mental health consultant, or community support
 - b. Written plan, including action steps and supports needed, for the child to fully participate in their educational program
 - c. A referral provided for services including, but not limited to, parenting education, home visits, or special education.

- J. While exclusion or permanent dismissal is never the preferred outcome, the school and family may agree that it is in the child's best interest. If the school decides to expel a child:
 - a. The school will provide the family a description of the nonexclusionary disciplinary practices that were previously implemented
 - b. The school will notify the family in writing of the intent to expel
 - c. The school will appoint a liaison to communicate with the family and to ensure the following provisions are documented:
 - i. The school will provide ongoing educational services until the child is enrolled elsewhere
 - ii. The school will provide the family referrals to free or sliding-fee mental health services
 - iii. The school will provide the family referrals to free or low-cost legal assistance
 - iv. The school will create a readmission plan should the child wish to be reenrolled
 - v. The school will report to MDE the student withdrawal

- K. If any member of the school community wishes to file a complaint regarding the application of discipline policies and the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, they may do so without any risk of reprisal or retaliation
- a. Submit a written complaint via email to the Head of School and CMES Board of Directors Chairperson
 - b. The HOS and Board Chair will invite other involved parties to submit additional information within 3 school days
 - c. The HOS will appoint an individual to manage the investigation or will do so themselves
 - d. The appointed individual will complete an investigation through interview, file review, and any other relevant documentation
 - e. The appointed investigator will issue a written determination that addresses each allegation and contains findings and conclusions
 - f. If any policies are found to be implemented inappropriately, a corrective action will be issued and staff will receive the necessary training to ensure future compliance

Legal References: Minn. Statutes 121A.40-121A.611

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