



Preschool Parent/Student Handbook

Laramie Montessori School
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Section 1

LARAMIE MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL

About LMCS

Laramie Montessori Charter School

Laramie Montessori Charter School is a charter school within Albany County School District #1. A charter school is a public school that operates largely independent of the District's administrative structure, although it receives state funds and must follow state and federal law for public schools. Since LMCS is a public school, it is tuition free for all Kindergarten – 6th grade students in Albany County, and it has no religious or political orientation. LMCS is part of the District, and operates with ACSD#1 oversight, but it uses a different curriculum, has a separate budget, and has an independent governance system. LMCS's operating guidelines are laid out in Wyoming's Charter School Act (Wyoming Statutes 21-3-301 through 21-3-401), and in the five-year charter signed with the District. A copy of the charter, contract, and bylaws are available for review in the LMCS main office or online at www.laramiemontessori.org.

Laramie Montessori Charter School Preschool Program

The Preschool at Laramie Montessori Charter School is a non-profit Pre-K program for 3-6 year old children not in Kindergarten. This program operates under the umbrella of the education non-profit Laramie Montessori School, Inc. and is not included at this time in the charter for Laramie Montessori Charter School granted by ACSD#1. This is a tuition-based program, with both DFS certification and scholarships to help parents provide this quality education opportunity for their children. The Primary program at Laramie Montessori Charter School combines two years of preschool with our Kindergarten in order to teach kids on the same plane of growth, foster independence, confidence, and mentoring, as well as teach them at the level of learning they are at no matter their age.

History

The Laramie Montessori School is Wyoming's first Montessori charter school and third charter school in the state. In January 2008 a few parents wanted something different for their children. This group of parents created the non-profit group, Laramie Montessori Elementary School Steering Committee to begin the process of bringing elementary Montessori to Laramie, WY. With support from the Albany County Resource Center, the Wyoming Community Foundation, assistance from the Wyoming Department of Education and several Montessori schools in Colorado, this pioneering group of parents took the first steps toward opening Laramie Montessori School.

- In September 2008, the Laramie Montessori Community Organization, a non-profit group, was created with the purpose of obtaining funding and approval for a Montessori charter school in Laramie.
- In May 2011, all the pieces fell into place and the charter application was approved by the Albany County School District #1. The Montessori school was also awarded two grants: Charter School grant and a Daniel's Fund grant to help with the start-up costs. A lease was acquired for space within the Lincoln Community Center at 365 W. Grand Ave.
- On August 25th, 2011 after extensive renovations of the historic Lincoln Community Center, the Laramie Montessori School opened under the direction of a non-profit board and Christina Allen, Principal.
- February 2015 Laramie Montessori Charter School Board of Trustees hired Elizabeth Coffey as Interim Principal
- July of 2015 Laramie Montessori Charter School Board of Trustees hired Elizabeth Coffey as Principal.
- On February 10th, 2016 a second charter was granted to Laramie Montessori School by Albany County School District #1 under Elizabeth Coffey, Principal.
- In July of 2016 Laramie Montessori Charter School secured a lease with St. Laurence O'Toole Catholic Ministries to rent a new location at the previous St. Laurence O'Toole Catholic School which had closed. LMCS moved into their new location in August of 2016.
- July 2017 Laramie Montessori Charter School Board of Trustees hired Mark Crawford as Principal.
- July 2020 Laramie Montessori Charter School Board of Trustees hired Jeff Verosky as Principal.
- On April 14th, 2021 a third charter was granted to Laramie Montessori Charter School by Albany County School District #1 under Jeff Verosky, Principal.

Mission

Our mission is to support the development of the whole child through a stimulating prepared environment that honors the child's intrinsic motivation to learn and supports each individual's unique intellectual, physical and emotional development.

Beliefs

The Montessori Method is based on the belief that children are born with an intrinsic desire to learn and to improve themselves, and that the responsibility of the adults who care for them is to protect and propel that desire. Our responsibility is to assist the child build within himself the foundations for a lifetime of creative learning.

The activities and environments provided at Laramie Montessori School support the children's thirst for learning, engage their abiding curiosity about their surroundings, and develop their ability to learn and live independently.

Our goal for each child is the development of his or her ability to solve problems using an organized approach, to use freedom wisely, to respect him/herself, to respect others, and to take joy in learning.

Goals

To encourage self-directed learning, self-esteem, academic achievement, artistic expression, group collaboration and respect by upholding Montessori principles in a thoughtfully prepared and non-competitive environment

To conduct assessments that authentically demonstrate each student's intellectual, emotional, social and physical development.

To develop healthy life habits that foster care of the self and care of the environment through meals, physical movement and a quality school facility and surrounding natural environment.

To build a community centered around nurturing children and their families through parent education, parent involvement, school events and service to the larger Laramie community.

The Montessori Primary Program

Meet the Child: The Plane of Development

Early Childhood: Ages 3 - 6

The transition from toddlerhood to preschool is marked by the awakening of the unconscious mind. These young children begin to individuate, moving from generalizations (e.g., all women are “mom”) to specificity (e.g., “my mom”). They seek out social connections in a new way, now interested in developing friendships and working together with others. They begin to practice the social customs that they absorbed in their first years. This conscious awareness also introduces greater complexity to the skills they acquired in their first years. Still, like their younger selves, these children continue to thrive from a careful mixture of routine and independence.



Areas of Development

- Refinement of coordination and dexterity
- Rapid increase in new vocabulary and absorption of new languages
- Propensity for order and categorization
- Increased concentration for task completion
- Increased autonomy and independence

The Curriculum

The 3-hour work cycle is free-flowing and uninterrupted, giving students opportunities to receive lessons from teachers, individually or in small groups. Children choose their materials and work at their pace, taking time for multiple repetitions to practice and build mastery where needed. When they need a break—for a snack, toileting or just to move around—they are allowed to step away from their activities to recharge. After a break, students often return to the same activity to deepen their practice, though they may also move on to receive a new lesson when ready.

Teachers support and encourage continued learning, but young children, with their abundance of energy and confidence, exemplify what it means to have intrinsic motivation. In this age group, children are not yet ready to learn abstractions (e.g., $4+3=7$), so they are presented with concrete materials that will support later abstract thinking (e.g., 4 beads and 3 beads together make 7 beads). All materials in our Montessori Primary classrooms are beautifully and intentionally designed to be hands-on with built-in control for error. After the initial presentation of the lesson by the teacher, students can work on their own with the material and still recognize and correct their mistakes, thereby building independence, confidence, and problem-solving skills.

During the Primary Capstone (Kindergarten) year, 5 and 6-year-old students build on their years of experience and take on more advanced materials, including the introduction of abstract concepts. They also rise to the exciting challenge of a leadership role, offering guidance and lessons to younger peers.

Language

- Mastery of letters and letter sounds
- Word-building, phonics, and writing skills
- Early reading skills

Math

- Mastery of the decimal (base ten) number system
- Understanding of systems of measurement, including time and money
- Knowledge and understanding of abstract math concepts, including the four basic mathematical operations

Culture

- Biology
- Geography
- History
- Botany
- Cultures

Practical Life

- Independence around caring for oneself: dressing, tying shoes, etc.
- Mealtime: setting places, preparing snacks, washing dishes
- Cleaning the environment: straightening shelves, sweeping, scrubbing tables, etc.
- Manipulative practice to build hand-eye coordination
- Caring for living things in the environment: plants and animals

Supplemental Curriculum

- Peace Education
- Music and Movement
- Sensorial (learning concepts through concrete forms)
- Art and Art Appreciation
- Sustainability and Mindfulness

Nurturing the Person

Through our Peace Education, Primary students are guided daily with Grace and Courtesy lessons. In addition to teaching children how to practice self-care and hygiene skills (peace comes from within), we teach children how to care for their workspace and materials, as well as the personal space, belongings, and emotional well-being of others. This includes a focus on conflict-resolution techniques which are taught to facilitate healthy and peaceful social interactions. Children also learn how to care for animals, plants, and the environment, building a deeper emotional connection to the world around them.

The children can work collaboratively through group lessons and assist each other when they need help. Kindergarten students are given opportunities to model tasks for the younger children, demonstrating how to complete a lesson and guiding their learning. These moments of leadership develop self-confidence and cement skill mastery.

Hands as Instruments of the Mind

The Primary environment offers children the opportunity to refine the physical skills acquired in their toddler years. Control of hand movements is especially important in the preparation for writing with a pencil grasp, vital for later learning. Thus, the curriculum, particularly Practical Life, offers opportunities to hone hand control through careful transfers from one vessel to another using a variety of tools, such as eyedroppers, spoons, tongs, and pitchers. Additionally, Art and Music fine-tune the hand muscles through the use of specific tools: paintbrushes, beadwork, striking bells, gluing, playing instruments, etc.

Gross motor development, while fairly developed at this age, sharpens and becomes more graceful with conscious practice. A child learns to walk carefully on a line and around a work rug, so as not to disturb another's work. They carry a pitcher of water without spilling across a busy room.

The Montessori Environment

The Classroom

As with the Toddler environment, the Primary classroom belongs to and is cared for by the community. Teachers curate the available lessons with care, preparing it to meet the needs of the children in the environment.

- Open layout with child-sized shelves, chairs, and tables allows for easy access to materials and freedom of movement.
- Materials are appropriately sized for a young child's body and hands in order to encourage success in their use.
- Materials are organized by subject, and sequenced from simple to complex, to aid discovery, foster order, and encourage growth.
- Shelves are sparse so that materials can be easily seen and returned, without overwhelming a child with choices.
- Natural light, living plants and animals, family photos (from children in the classroom), and natural materials create a peaceful and home-like ambiance.
- Peace corners for self-regulation (see Nurturing the Person).

Daily Schedule

- 7:30-8:00: Before care program.
- 8:00-11:15: Morning work cycle: Individual and small group lessons, repetition and practice with familiar materials, snack.
- 11:15-11:40: Outside time and playground
- 11:40-12:15: Community Lunch
- 12:15-1:00: Rest Time Pre-K 2 students.
- 1:00-3:00: Preschool: afternoon work cycle, Specials such as music, art, movement, gardening, mindfulness depending on the day.
- 12:15-3:00: Kindergarten program including afternoon work cycle, Specials such as P.E., Music, Art, Gardening, Library, Robotics, Keyboarding depending on the day.
- 3:00–5:30: After School program.

While our Primary students are given freedom during morning and afternoon work time to choose their tasks and devote as many repetitions as needed to master the related skills, it is important to remember that this is freedom within limits. Teachers carefully curate the available materials and guide students in their work through individual and group lessons. Over the course of the time a child is in the Primary environment, they have the opportunity to work with and master all of the available materials.

Note: The term “work” in the Montessori environment is used deliberately to elevate and bring import to the great effort the child puts forth. That said, for the child, this often looks like “play.” because this effort is joyful and natural.

Laramie Montessori Primary Class Contact List

Administrative Staff

Jeff Verosky, Director.....jverosky@acsd1.org
Bronwyn Thompson, Administrative Assistantbthompson@acsd1.org
Norman Frost, Business Managernfrost@acsd1.org

Teachers

Makena Cameron, Head Teacher of Primary.....mcameron@acsd1.org
Eli Lilley, Teacher Assistant of Primary.....elilley@acsd1.org
Jacy, Teacher Assistant of Primary.....

Laramie Montessori Charter School Board of Trustees

Jana Heisler-White, Board Presidentjanaheislerwhite@gmail.com
Emily Vercoe, Vice-President.....vercoe@gmail.com
Ashlee Kupilik, Secretaryashleekupilik@gmail.com
Megan Hawken, Treasurer.....meganhawkenlmcs@gmail.com

Parent Teacher Organization

Shawn Bunning, Presidentshawnb@uwyo.edu



Hours of Operation

School Year Office Hours: 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM

School Year Schedule Hours:

Kindergarten: 7:30 AM – 3:00 PM

Preschool:

Half Day:

Morning: 8:00 AM – 12:00 AM

Afternoon: 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM

School Day: 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM

After School Program: 3:00 PM - 5:30 PM

Summer Preschool Program hours will be different from School Year hours. Please contact the office for hours.

Admission

Enrollment Considerations

Laramie Montessori Charter School determines the target number of students based on the recommendations of the Head Teacher and the physical capacity of the learning space. Considerations for granting enrollment include:

- **Registration Criteria:** Children must meet the Registration Criteria found below.
- **Current Siblings in Laramie Montessori Charter School:** Preference will be given to families that have students currently enrolled in K-6th grade education at Laramie Montessori Charter School.
- **Parent Commitment to Montessori Education:** The parent and child are highly encouraged to visit the school for a pre-enrollment meeting (which may include a tour, observations in the classrooms, and meeting with the Head Teacher and child) to ensure the program will meet the needs of the child and to better understand the philosophy and program.
- **Maturation Level:** The child must be able to participate and substantially benefit from this program without risk to self or other children and must also be emotionally capable of participating in the classroom activities. These assessments will be made by the Head Teacher.
- **Adult:Child Ratios:** We are required by law to follow the adult:child ratios for 3-6 year old children in our classroom under the variance given to us by DFS.

Parents and guardians (hereafter referred to as parents) interested in enrolling their children are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Montessori Method. The Montessori Method focuses on the whole child to best support your children's social, emotional, and academic development.

Laramie Montessori Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its educational programs or activities.

Laramie Montessori Charter School Preschool offers full day, school day and half-day learning, five days a week during the school year, excluding federal holidays and as per a set annual school calendar that follows the K-6th grade school year of LMCS. LMCS Preschool reserves the right to limit the number of half-day slots.

Times and days may not be split between children.

Enrollment times may be extended for half or school day students the discretion of Laramie Montessori Charter School. Extensions to enrollment times will be in 30 minute increments and are only available on a monthly basis (no daily or weekly schedules). Enrollment times may be extended for a student by ½ hour increments, for a maximum of 2 increments, at a monthly cost of \$40 per ½ hour. As with other changes to tuition packages, a 15 days' notice must be given when beginning or ending extended hours. All requests for extended hours will be approved in writing on a first come first served basis, dependent on staff availability. No extensions will be granted when they fall outside normal business hours (7:30 to 5:30).

Registration

Age Criteria

Kindergarten: As required by Wyoming state law, a Kindergartner must be 5 years old on or before August 1st of that school year. If a child turns 5 between August 1st and September 15th then a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment can be done to determine if enrollment can happen that year or the next year. A child who has completed a full year of kindergarten the preceding year in the public schools of another district may qualify for enrollment in grade one on a probationary basis, regardless of age.

Preschool: The Montessori Primary consists of three years: Pre-K 1 (3-4 years old), Pre-K 2 (4-5 years old), and Kindergarten (5-6 years old). Because the state requires that Kindergarteners be 5 on or before August 1st we are aligning our preschool program along similar lines to allow students to be prepared for Kindergarten while remaining flexible to parent's needs. Preference is given to siblings of current students and employee children. LMCS will have a wait list for alternate schedules and will have lotteries to fill spaces if there are more applicants for a preschool year than spaces

Pre-K 1: This is the first year children are eligible for Preschool, generally when they are 3 years. Preference is given to children who turn 3 years old on or before August 1st. Because of the variance that we have with DFS, 3 year olds are limited to half days only. We have a limited number of half day spaces both in the morning and afternoon.

Pre-K 2: This is the second year that children are eligible for Preschool, generally when they are 4 years old. Preference is given to children who turn 4 years old on or before August 1st. Because the variance we have with our DFS certification school/full day slots will be reserved for this age group to prepare them for their Capstone year (Kindergarten). We have a limited number of School/Full day spaces available.

On August 13th we will evaluate what our enrollment is and adjust full and half day openings. Depending on the number of openings available and interest we may offer half days to 4 year-olds or open more half days. If there are openings available during the year then children who turn four will be allowed to move to school/full day and children who turn 3 will be able to enroll in half day openings.

Variance

LMCS applied for a variance from DFS teacher:student ratio requirements based on our unique curriculum. We are allowed to have 30 students in our Primary classrooms with one Montessori Head Teacher and two trained assistant teachers, but 3 year-olds can only be half day schedule.

Potty Training

Children must be fully potty trained when they begin our preschool program. If they are not fully potty trained, then they will not be allowed to continue.

Required Paperwork

Laramie Montessori Charter School Preschool requires that the following paperwork be completed and turned in before Registration can be complete.

- _____ Registration Form
- _____ Copy of Birth Certificate
- _____ Copy of Proof of Immunization, Exemption or Immunization Release Form

A birth certificate or other legal documentary evidence of birth is required for enrollment and proof of immunizations or exemption are required under Wyoming State law.

Papers transferring guardianship are required for any child living with someone other than biological or adoptive parents. Custody agreements are also required for the student's permanent record.

We ask that parent(s) interested in sending their child(ren) to Laramie Montessori Charter School Preschool visit the school and classrooms for a tour and observation if no health restrictions are in place. The best times for an observation are between the hours of 9:00 AM and 10:45 AM. The best times for a tour are between 3:00 PM and 4:00 PM. Please call at least one day before and schedule a time with the office.

Summer Registration will have a separate registration form and will require a copy of the Birth Certificate and Immunization record or Immunization release form.

Tuition

School Year Tuition & Schedule

These tuition and schedule options are for Preschool students only. Kindergarten is full day, tuition free, and has State and Federal education and attendance requirements under law.

Tuition & Schedule for the School Year (August 26th - June 3rd)

Monday – Friday. Tuition is based on a 9 month lump sum then broken into monthly payments.

The school year will follow the Laramie Montessori Charter School 2021-2022 calendar which primarily follows Albany County School District #1's calendar. There will not be Preschool or Afterschool Care on the days that Laramie Montessori Charter School does not have school. Laramie Montessori Charter School will not prorate vacation periods, Professional Development days, half days, early pickup, snow days, or government-required childcare center closures (with possible exceptions).

On scheduled half days Laramie Montessori Charter School will dismiss all preschool students at, or before, 11:45am. There will not be Afternoon Half Day preschool or Afterschool Care on scheduled half days.

School Day	\$800/ month:	7:30 AM – 3:00 PM
Half Day	\$580/month:	Morning: 8:00 AM – 12:30 PM Afternoon: 12:30 PM – 3:00 PM

School Year Tuition

School Day:	\$7,200
Half Day:	\$5,220

After School Program

Laramie Montessori School offers an After School Program throughout the school year. At this time we charge a monthly fee. We are working on getting approved for a free afterschool program focusing on education and activities through Big Brother's Big Sister's which we will hopefully be able to have for the 2022-2023 school year.

After School Program \$180/month: 3:00 PM – 5:30 PM

Summer Program Tuition & Schedule

The LMCS Summer Program is open for all children aged 3-5 years old, though preference is given to currently enrolled students and siblings. It is Monday – Friday except for federal holidays.

Tuition is based on a 3 month tuition which is then broken into three monthly payments. Laramie Montessori Charter School will not prorate vacation periods, Professional Development days, half days, early pickup, snow days, or government-required childcare center closures (with possible exceptions).

Half Day	\$580/month:	Morning: 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM Afternoon: 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM
School Day	\$800/ month:	7:30 AM – 3:00 PM
Full Day	\$990/month:	7:30AM – 5:30PM

Payment amounts and tuition may change every year based on when our Summer Program begins and ends and what schedules are available.

Summer Tuition:

Half Day:	\$1,740
School Day:	\$2,400
Full Day:	\$2,970

Payment for tuition is due by the 15th of every month.

If your child is enrolled after the program begins then the tuition owed will be calculated based on the daily cost for the program and days in the month when started then continue with the regular monthly payments after.

Times and days may not be split between children.

Extended Days & Price

Enrollment times may be extended for half or school day students the discretion of Laramie Montessori Charter School during the school year. Extensions to enrollment times will be in 30 minute increments and are only available on a monthly basis (no daily or weekly schedules). Enrollment times may be extended for a student by ½ hour increments, for a maximum of 2 increments, at a monthly cost of \$40 per ½ hour. As with other changes to tuition packages, a 15 days' notice must be given when beginning or ending extended hours. All requests for extended hours will be approved in writing on a first come first served basis, dependent on staff availability. No extensions will be granted when they fall outside normal business hours (7:30 to 5:30).

Financial Policies & Procedures

Payment Schedule

Payment Schedule for 2021-2022 School Year

	School Day	Half Day
August	\$0	\$0
September	\$800	\$580
October	\$800	\$580
November	\$800	\$580
December	\$800	\$580
January	\$800	\$580
February	\$800	\$580
March	\$800	\$580
April	\$800	\$580
May	\$800	\$580
June	\$0	\$0

For information on Payment Schedules for Summer Programs please request the information from the office.

Discounts & Scholarships

In order to offer our preschool education to as many people who want it Laramie Montessori Charter School will offer a range of help for families as well as partner with employers and DFS for childcare reimbursement and assistance.

Discounts:

- ACSD#1 and UW Employee discount 10%
- Multi-child discount 10%

Each family can only have a maximum of 20% discount on their accounts.

Scholarships:

Friends of Laramie Montessori offers scholarships for families for the period of the school year to help with tuition. The amount given is based on the family's needs and the schedule chosen by the family. The scholarship is not through Laramie Montessori Charter School and must be applied for separately.

Employer Childcare Reimbursement:

Several Laramie employers offer childcare reimbursement plans. At your request we will complete the paperwork they require for your participation in the program.

DFS Certified:

Laramie Montessori Charter School will be certified by DFS so that families that qualify for their Childcare Assistance program can receive tuition help. Many families qualify for DFS Child Care Assistance who may not qualify for other assistance. If you are interested in seeing the sliding scale or have questions about whether your family qualifies talk to our Business Manager, Norman Frost, or go to <https://dfs.wyo.gov/services/family-services/child-care/>.

Payment Policies

Tuition is due by the 5th day of each month.

Parents enrolling their new student to begin preschool for the school year are required pay the first months tuition on or before September 5th. Parents enrolling their new student to begin preschool with a partial month will have the first month's tuition calculated based on how many school days their child will be present for then continuing with the

standard monthly payment moving forward. Contact Norman Frost, our Business Manager, to make payment arrangements regarding your tuition if needed, or to arrange payment through the WY Department of Family Services. If you are counting on childcare assistance from another agency for part of your payment, please consult with us in advance. You remain responsible for the entire account balance.

Tuition is a lump sum amount, payable at the specified rate in monthly installments. Parents/Guardians remain obligated to pay the monthly installments regardless of vacation periods, sick days, conference days, early withdrawal from scheduled day, government-required childcare center closures (with possible exceptions) or a decision to withdraw their child prior to the last scheduled day. Parents/Guardians must give Laramie Montessori Charter School 15 days written notice of intent to remove their child from the school, add extended hours or to lower their tuition package, or they may be financially responsible for any tuition due from the previous schedule.

If two children of the same household are enrolled in the same school year at LMCS, a 10% discount in tuition is available for a maximum of 20% discount on each child's account.

If the one or both of the parents/guardians of a child or children are employed by ACSD#1 and affiliate charter schools or employed by the University of Wyoming then a 10% discount in tuition is available for a maximum of 20% discount on each child's account.

Parents/Guardians are required to sign a tuition agreement to register their child.

If you need to discuss payment plans please contact Norman Frost at nfrost@acsd1.org.

Penalties

Payments not received by the 10th of the month will be assessed a 10% late fee (finance charge). Any checks returned for insufficient funds will be assessed the banking charges incurred by Laramie Montessori Charter School. Laramie Montessori Charter School may charge 20% interest for any tuition that remains unpaid after the end of the month for which it was due and for each month thereafter. Families are obligated to pay all reasonable costs of collection and/or enforcement of the tuition policy, including costs and reasonable attorney's fees. Any student whose tuition is not paid after 60 days will not be allowed to continue in the LMCS Preschool program until the account is paid in full or payment arrangements have been made with the Business Manager or designated administrator. 60 days past due accounts without payment arrangements will be submitted to the collection agency and will be subject to their finance charges.

If Half Day and School Day Schedule students are not picked up in the 15 minute grace time then a late charge may be assessed a late fee. If we need to pay for another adult to stay with the student because our required Adult:Child ratio cannot be met with our Primary staff, then the late fee will include the hourly wages for that adult with a minimum charge of one hour's wage.

Full Day Schedule or Half Day with Afterschool Care students need to be picked up no later than our closing time of 5:30 PM or a late charge may be assessed that will include the overtime wages of anyone who needs to stay with them. Please be respectful of our staff members who are required to stay beyond closing time. Repeated violations of closing time may negatively affect your child's enrollment.

Childcare Tax Credit

Childcare tuition payments qualify for a federal tax credit for many families. We will be happy to furnish you with a statement of payments made for the previous year.

Attendance

Laramie Montessori Charter School Primary Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is critical for a quality education

Kindergarten:

For good educational reasons and because it is the law, students must attend school every day that classes are in session unless excused for justifiable reasons. Therefore, students will be required to be regular and punctual in school attendance. They will be excused for personal illness, death in the family or other reasons the director considers justified.

An unexcused absence means an absence other than illness or death in the family that the director does not consider justified, even though the parent, guardian or other person having control of the child may have tendered an excuse.

Preschool:

Laramie Montessori Charter School offers a preschool for 3-5 year old students. Our primary mission is to provide a certified quality Montessori education for Preschool students as well as school aged children. Your voluntary attendance is important for your preschooler's education experience. The more they attend, the greater their learning experience.

Parents/Guardians remain obligated to pay the monthly installments regardless of vacation periods, sick days, conference days, early withdrawal from their scheduled day, government-required childcare center closures (with possible exceptions) or a decision to withdraw their child prior to the last scheduled day. Parents/Guardians must give Laramie Montessori Charter School 15 days written notice of intent to remove their child from the school, add extended hours or to lower their tuition package, or they may be financially responsible for any tuition due.

Absences**Kindergarten:**

If a student is absent or tardy, a call is required to the school's office on the day of the absence. A written note or a telephone call from home at the time of absence stating the nature of the absence may excuse the absence. If we do not receive the written note or telephone call by 3:00 PM stating the reason for the absence asking for the absence to be excused, the absence will be recorded as unexcused unless there are extenuating circumstances. When five (5) unexcused absences have been recorded for any student during any school year, the matter may be referred to the School Resource Officer.

Please notify the office if your child is sick or will be absent. The office will notify the teacher(s) of your child's absence. Laramie Montessori School requires a health care provider's note to excuse three or more consecutive absences that are not pre-arranged.

Preschool:

Please notify the office if your child is sick or will be absent. Please pre-arrange any absences or early pickup that you know of ahead of time.

Tardies**Kindergarten:**

All students coming to school 5 minutes after school has started will be considered tardy and must report to the office with an explanation before going to class. Every tardy may be excused by a written note or telephone call from home or personal visit from parent stating the nature of the tardy. If we do not receive a written note or telephone call stating the reason for the tardy, the tardy will be recorded as unexcused.

If a student is not in attendance before 9:30, the student will be marked absent for a half day. If a student comes before 9:30 am, the student will be counted as tardy. A tardy student must report to the office before going to class.

In the afternoon, if a child leaves before 2:00 p.m., that child will be marked absent for a half day. After 2:00 p.m. the absence is considered to be an early dismissal and not counted as an absence.

Preschool:

Please notify the office if your child will be tardy. Please pre-arrange any tardies or early pickup that you know of ahead of time.

Arrival and Departure Time

Arrival

Children should not arrive at school more than 15 minutes before school starts unless parent has signed up for Extended Hours or their schedule includes the Early Drop-Off Program which begins at 7:30 AM. If your child has signed up for Extended Hours or their schedule includes the 7:30 AM drop-off please do not drop your child off earlier than 7:30 AM.

Drop Off Times by Schedule:

- Half Day Morning: 7:45 AM - 8:00 AM
- Half Day Afternoon: 12:15 AM – 12:30 AM
- School Day: 7:30 AM – 8:00 AM

Departure

Half Day and School Day Schedule students should be picked up from school by 15 minutes after their schedule ends whether it is a standard schedule or an extended hours schedule. If students are not picked up on time then a late charge may be assessed. If we need to pay for another adult to attend your child because our required Adult:Child ratio cannot be met with our Primary staff, then the late fee will include the hourly wages for that adult with a minimum charge of one hour's wage.

Care need to be picked up no later than our closing time of 5:30 PM or a late charge may be assessed that will include the overtime wages of anyone who needs to stay with them. Please be respectful of our staff members who are required to stay beyond closing time. Repeated violations of closing time may negatively affect your child's enrollment.

Students may be picked up anytime during their schedule by signing them out of the office, but please remember that missed time will not be refunded. Attendance is necessary for a quality education.

Pick Up Times by School Year Schedule:

- Half Day Morning: 12:00 PM – 12:15 PM
- Half Day Afternoon: 3:00 PM – 3:15 PM
- School Day: 3:00 PM – 3:15 PM

Release from School

A child shall not be released from the school premises unless a parent, guardian or a person designated by the parents personally picks him/her up. Parents designate approved people on the Consent to Release portion of the Registration Form. Parents may call or let the office know of a temporary designee before pickup. If there is a change to the permanent designated people for pickup parents must add/change the information with the office. At no time shall a child be allowed to leave unless accompanied by a school-approved adult.

What to Bring to School

School Supplies

- Non-marking outside/gym shoes: These can be the shoes that your child wears to school every day.
- Backpack to contain items and papers to be sent to and from school
- Inside shoes: These shoes need to be a set of comfortable and flexible shoes (like slippers) that are worn for classroom work. They stay at school in the classrooms.
- An extra set of clothing for Primary students with their name or a distinguishing mark on the tag.
- Nap Items (preschool only): blanket, fitted crib sheet, and pillow to be brought on Monday and taken home on Friday to be washed.
- Sunscreen & bug spray if wanted
- Water bottle
- Twice a month donate a healthy snack to your classroom
- Donate one or more school supplies item from our donation list per student

Donation List

Please donate at least one item per student of these most-used school supplies!

- package of #2 pencils
- package of black fine point dry erase markers
- package of colored dry erase markers
- package of erasers
- package of glue sticks
- package of black fine point sharpies
- package of markers
- package of colored pencils

- package of college ruled paper
- package of wide ruled paper

Clothing

Children should be dressed neatly, cleanly, and appropriately for the weather and for learning. Please have your child wear clothing that is seasonally appropriate and that they can manipulate themselves. We do have recess, nature walks, and field trips so expect your child's clothing to get dirty.

Extra Clothing

Please provide an extra set of clothing for your Primary class student in a sealable plastic bag in case they have an accident or need to replace clothing at school.

Outside Clothing

Recess is important for the development of minds and bodies. We will have recess every day unless the weather is too cold, wet or windy to be safe. Send a coat, snow pants, hats, gloves/mittens, and appropriate shoes for your child to enjoy their outside time.

Food Service

Lunch

Lunch is an important time of day, and we pay attention to how it is conducted. Our school offers lunch and breakfast through ACSD#1 for Preschool and Elementary. We ask all parents to fill out the reduced/free lunch form at the beginning of the year for Title 1 funding purposes for our school whether you will use or qualify for the Free or Reduced option or not. If you do pack your lunch for your child then we encourage a well-balanced lunch with proteins, vegetables, fruit, and whole grains with milk, juice, or water to drink.

School lunch menus are found on www.acsd1.org under the parent portal, school lunch program. They are also available on www.laramiemontessori.org on the school lunch page. If payment for school lunch is required then it is explained at www.laramiemontessori.org on the hot lunch page found below the school lunch calendar. If you have any questions, please call our office at 742-9964.

Snack

Laramie Montessori School believes that snack is an important part of the school day. Every classroom offers morning snack for their students while Preschool will offer both morning and afternoon snack. Therefore, we ask that parents help us provide snack by donating snack to their classrooms twice a month.

If your child has a food allergy or food restrictions, please make sure both the office and the Head Teacher know. LMCS will provide different snacks to classrooms throughout the year. We ask parents to contribute snack to their classroom twice a month to defray some of the costs and so our students can have more variety than we are able to provide on a regular basis. We try to provide low sugar, healthy snacks for our students. If you have any questions about what to bring for snack talk to the classroom teacher or the office.

Items to donate for snack:

- Crackers
- Dried fruit
- Granola bars
- Granola Trail mix
- Bread
- Cheese
- Cheese sticks
- Carrots
- Celery
- Pretzels
- Popped popcorn (not microwavable kind)
- Yogurt cups

- Fruit cups (no sugar added)
- Applesauce (no sugar added)

Please stay away from:

- Cakes
- Cookies
- Chips
- Go-gurts
- Nuts (peanuts, cashews, walnuts, etc.)
- Any high-sugar item

Food Allergies and Restrictions

If your child has a food allergy or food restrictions, please make sure both the office and the classroom teacher know before your child begins preschool. There is a section for allergies on the Emergency Form in your Registration Packet. If your student has food allergies, then the classroom may restrict that food item after a consultation between parents and staff. If your child has food restrictions, you may be asked to provide individual snacks for your child if food restrictions will cause them to miss snack on a regular basis.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

For all other FNS nutrition assistance programs, State or local agencies, and their subrecipients, must post the following Nondiscrimination Statement:

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Personal Property & Toys

All personal property should have the name of the owner written on it. This is especially important for student clothing. It is also recommended that students not bring valuable items that may be lost or damaged at the school.

Items that distract or disturb the learning process are not to be brought to class. Such items include: cell phones, gaming or entertainment devices, toys or any other personal items that may be a disruption to learning. Teachers may confiscate any nuisance items; these items will be returned to the student at the end of the day or given to parents.

The exception to this is “Show and Share” which allows students to bring in an item to show their classmates. Students

will be asked not to play with the items they bring in.

Lost or Stolen Items

Laramie Montessori School and its staff are not responsible for items lost on school grounds or at school functions not on school grounds. We do maintain a Lost and Found, and if you or your student has lost an item please call or come into the office to see if it was recovered.

We encourage students to not bring articles of value that can be lost or stolen such as jewelry or small electronic items. If students need to bring in lunch money, they can bring it to the office where we will present them with a receipt and make sure the lunch personnel receive it.

Parties, Gift Exchanges & Invitations

Class parties may be permitted as a part of observing special seasonal events and birthdays. Students are permitted to bring birthday treats to share during the school day with permission from the Head Teacher. Because these are items that will be shared with the entire class, please contact your student's teacher for guidelines on what to bring in the case of food allergies or dietary restrictions. Presents and invitations to outside parties are not allowed to be distributed at school, unless they are for the entire classroom and permission of the Head Teacher has been given.

LMCS celebrates Montessori birthdays which celebrate each year of our students' life with stories of what they accomplished during that time. Talk with the Head Teacher about the presentation.

Recess

Laramie Montessori Charter School believes strongly in outdoor experiences for children, staff and families. To this end, daily recess and outside time is an important part of every school day. Montessori philosophy and curriculum emphasizes the importance of outside time for children.

The daily recess time is after lunch from approximately 11:15-11:40. We will go outside as long as it is considered safe. We take into consideration the wind chill and air quality. If students get cold, they will have the option of coming inside to warm up. Please make sure that your student has the weather gear appropriate for winter temperatures including winter coat, snow pants, gloves and hat. We advise that all hats, gloves and coats have their name or initials clearly written on each clothing item.

Reporting of Student Progress

Montessori is unique in that children do not get regular homework assignments or grades. This can make it difficult to know your child's progress in the classroom.

Adaptation Checks and Reports will be sent home to parents on a quarterly basis during the school year and at the end of the summer for the Summer program. The quarterly divides in the school year will match the ACS#1 report schedule. Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first and third reporting period of the school year to discuss student progress. More conferences are always encouraged if you have questions about your child's progress. These can be scheduled through your child's teacher or through the administrative assistant in the office. In addition, teachers may contact parents as needed throughout the year. Please arrange for conferences at least two days prior to the desired time in order that the Head Teacher may properly arrange their schedule.

Video Taping

As part of the effort to improve instruction, Albany County School District teachers and student teachers may video tape lessons with students. Permission for pictures and videotaping is part of the School Permission Slip found in the Enrollment Packet. Please contact the Director/Principal if you have any concerns with your child being videotaped for instructional purposes.

Changes to the Parent-Student Handbook

On occasion, school experiences may result in policy changes to this handbook. If our policies are adjusted, we will notify parents in writing of the new policy. We ask that you bring any errors in this handbook to our attention.

At times during the school year we may include certain sections of this handbook in your child's send-home papers. Unless otherwise contacted by school officials, this is for your information only or because we have had questions about a specific policy from multiple sources.



Section 2

SAFETY

Supervision

Laramie Montessori Charter School provides for the supervision of students before school from 7:30 AM-8:00 AM, during all recesses, and after school from 3:00 PM – 5:30 PM. Supervision for preschool aged children is primarily by both sight and sound, although supervision by sound only is acceptable for short periods of time. For example, this allows a child to attend to their own toileting needs.

STAFF: CHILD RATIO REQUIREMENTS

Age Group	Ratio Adult:Children	Maximum Classroom Size
3-year-olds (Variance)	1:10, 2:20, 3:30	30
4- and 5-year-olds	1:12, 2:24, 3:30	30

Security

Personnel within the building have been trained in first aid procedures and can respond to the needs of injured students. Parents will be contacted if their child is injured or gets sick while at school.

Drills

Fire, lock down, and other drills are held monthly to enable students to practice responding to emergency situations, and instruction is provided on safety procedures in case of emergencies.

Emergency Plan

Crisis intervention plans have been developed at the building and district levels to cover natural disasters and other emergencies.

In the unlikely event that the center should ever be severely damaged or declared unsafe, the children will be evacuated to the following location, where they will await your arrival:

- St. Laurance O’Toole Parish Office at 617 S 4th Street

Parents will be notified by an all-school email and by phone that we have evacuated and to what location. Cell phones of certain members of staff will be used to contact parents in the event of an emergency and will be available in the all-school email for parents to call during that emergency. Children must be release to their parents/guardians and a staff member will stay with children until they can be picked up following the Rule of Three guidelines with staff and other authorized personnel.

Secure Entry Procedures

Laramie Montessori Charter School adheres to a single-entry system where visitors to the school must enter school via one secure entrance. Visitors are then required to enter the school office to sign in and may be required to gain a visitor pass to attend to a specific function or activity in the building. The school buildings are secured always for the safety of our students and personnel.

Visitors

For the safety of our students and school personnel, ALL visitors to Laramie Montessori School are required to check in at the school's office before proceeding to any other areas. Visitors may also be asked to sign in and/or out at the school's office. Visitors may be required to wear an identification badge while in the school.

We recognize that the children often model their behavior on the actions they have observed in adults, and as such we expect the utmost in grace and courtesy from adults on campus. All community members, children, and adults should be treated respectfully and in a way that reflects the peaceful environment of our school.

Loading and Parking Areas & Pedestrian Safety

The parent loading and unloading area is the curb along 4th street in front of the doors. The bus loading zone is on the curb on Sheridan Street. There is no parking, loading or unloading on the 3rd Street side of the building. Please be courteous of the limited parking that is found around the school. DO NOT park in the bus loading zone on Sheridan from 7:30AM-8:15AM or 2:30PM-3:15PM!

Students and parents are expected to use sidewalks and to cross intersections at marked crosswalks. Parents are asked to utilize the designated student pick-up/drop-off areas when dropping off or picking up their children for the safety of themselves and others.

Student Pick Up

A child shall not be released from the school premises unless a parent, guardian or a person designated by the parents personally picks him/her up. Parents designate approved people or organizations on the Consent to Release portion of the Registration Form. Parents may call or let the office know of a temporary designee before pickup. If there is a change to the permanent designated people/organization for pickup parents must add/change the information with the office. At no time shall a child be allowed to leave unless accompanied by a school-approved adult.

All Preschool students must be signed out of the office by parent/guardian or designated person or organization. LMCS uses the Brightwheel program with electronic sign in and out. Please use the ipad at the front desk to sign in and out.

Inclement Weather

During inclement weather, students will be permitted to go to a designated, supervised area in the building upon arriving at school. Students may also be directed to and required to remain in a designated area at other times during severe weather conditions.

Monitors and teachers will bring children inside during recesses when threatening weather appears. If the temperature with wind chill drops below safe levels then students are kept inside.

Children are encouraged to dress warmly and to wear overshoes or boots. Clothing should be marked clearly on the inside of the item (for safety reasons) with the child's name or initials.

School Closure

In the event of a serious storm, listen to our local radio stations for the announcement of school closure. Our director, Head Teacher or other designated staff will call to confirm the closure. The LMCS Preschool will not be open on days that Laramie Montessori Charter School is closed.

Safety on Field Trips

This policy shall institute the “Rule of Three” in all LMCS staff-student interactions on school sponsored trips, which specifies that there should always be at least three people present in any interaction, specifically, one employee and two or more children, or two staff (which may include one volunteer) and one child. The “rule of three” is intended to prevent the isolation of one adult and one child, a situation that elevates the risk for inappropriate conduct and potential abuse.

LMCS staff shall always know the whereabouts of students in their care by utilizing face counts or head counts, attendance, roster lists and the “rule of three,” while maintaining at least minimum ratios.

When a one-on-one interaction between a child and an adult becomes necessary (as in the case of, but not limited to, an emergency, an injury, an illness, or a disciplinary situation), the “rule of three” can be satisfied by having that interaction occur, for its entire duration, in full view of at least one other adult and/or in a public area. If isolation is warranted, the staff member shall inform others that s/he is alone with one child, maintain visual lines of sight, and request that another staff member or members monitor the situation.

Weapons, Alcohol, Tobacco, Illegal Substances

No weapons, alcohol, tobacco or illegal substances or references to them are allowed in or on the property of Laramie Montessori Charter School or Preschool. We are a public school and are therefore a zero-tolerance zone.

Section 3

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

We make every effort to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment throughout the school. If we are concerned about your child's health, or if a child has a complaint about his/her own health, we will attempt to resolve that concern and contact you if necessary.

Relevant Information About Home

Should a significant change occur in your home, please inform the school as soon as possible. Changes in home life are a common cause of stress and can disrupt your child's daily routine and academic well-being. To continually meet your child's needs, this information is critical for the teacher to know in the event that your child's behavior changes. All information can be confidential between the school director and the child's teacher if you would like.

Child Find

For Parents Who...

- Are concerned about their preschooler's development
- Would like to know how to help their preschool child succeed in school
- Have questions whether their child has a disability
- Know their child has a disability and are looking for appropriate educational services

What is Child Find?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires school districts to locate and evaluate children between the ages of birth and 21, who may have a disability. This process for locating and evaluating children with these issues is referred to as "Child Find."

Preschool and School Age

Laramie Montessori Charter School may pair with Developmental Preschool to provide free Developmental Screenings to preschool children aged 3-5 years old to help identify children who may have a suspected disability. A parent, staff member or outside person may refer a student by contacting the Director at 307-742-9964.

Children 5-13 years old and in Kindergarten-6th grade at LMCS can be referred by contacting the Director at 307-742-9964 and will be evaluated by Laramie Montessori Charter School and ACSD#1.

Accident or Injury

When a student is injured our trained staff evaluate and document the injury. If the injury meets certain criteria then an injury report is filled out by whoever witnessed the injury or by who cared for the injury and sent home. Parents will be called if the injury is serious enough to require it.

If the student does not report the injury and no one witnesses it then parents cannot be notified nor can the injury be cared for.

In the event of a serious accident and/or injury, personnel at your school will attempt to contact you or your designated emergency contact person or people as soon as possible. If we believe your child needs immediate emergency care, we will call 911 for an ambulance to transport your child. We will act in the best interests of your child and consider the time factor in deciding to call 911 and waiting to hear from parents or emergency contacts. In the event we are unable to contact you or your emergency contact person, school personnel will accompany or follow your child to the hospital.

Injury Procedure:

All staff at LMCS are CPR/First Aid Certified. If a student is injured at school, we will follow the below procedures:

Minor Injury: an injury that does not require special action

Examples:

- Nosebleed that lasts for under 5 minutes
- Splinter

- Scratch or scrape that does not require pressure to stop bleeding if it bleeds at all
- Contusions that do not swell or bruise within 15 minutes or less

Procedures:

- Wash the area with soap and water Do clean up if required
- Apply band aid if needed
- Apply ice pack if needed

No Injury Report needed

Medium Injury: an injury that may require some special action or monitoring

Examples:

- All head injuries
- Nosebleed that lasts for 5 to 15 minutes
- Scratch or cut that requires 5 or more minutes of pressure to stop bleeding
- Bruising or swelling that is obvious and painful

Procedures:

- Take all proper first aid procedures to control and monitor injury
- Give First Aid treatment as needed
- Contact parents if head injury or other wound that parents need to watch

Injury report filled out, reviewed and sent home

Severe Injury: an injury that cannot be treated at school or that requires greater action than we can provide.

Examples:

- Unconsciousness, especially after a head injury
- Nosebleed that lasts for more than 15 minutes before stopping or won't stop
- Cut or scrape that requires 10 or more minutes of pressure to stop bleeding or one that won't stop bleeding
- Severe swelling, bruising, or pain that indicates a severe injury or break

Procedures:

- Take any and all first aid procedures to control or monitor the injury
- Depending on the severity of the injury:
 - Contact Emergency Services
 - Contact parents or designated emergency contacts if parents cannot be reached
 - Student is sent home or to the hospital, depending on the severity of the injury and parent choice

Injury Report filled out, reviewed and sent home

Counseling

Counseling interventions by Laramie Montessori Charter School's school counselor may be scheduled during the school day. Please contact our school director if you would like to schedule a counseling appointment for your child. If parents wish for their children to have counseling by a non-School District counselor, they must schedule those appointments themselves.

If you would like your student's non-District counselor to share information with and work with Laramie Montessori Charter School to better fulfill your child's needs, then please fill out and return a release of confidential information sheet. This allows the school and your child's counselor to communicate with each other since both are bound by confidentiality laws and cannot talk to each other without your permission.

Food Allergies

There are some students in our school who have significant food allergies, especially to peanuts and products containing peanut oil. If these students come in contact with the foods to which they are allergic, they can suffer significant health problems. In order to protect these students, we ask that you comply with our request for restricting the types of foods brought by students on a daily basis. For foods brought for special occasions, we ask that they not contain nuts or peanut oil.

If you have a child with food allergies, please ensure that director and teacher are notified immediately.

Health Policy

Laramie Montessori Charter School's policy for health issues is below. We have enacted this policy for the health and safety of our students and staff. Parents will be notified as quickly as possible if the situations listed below happen. If your child is sent home because of a health issue the absence is marked excused automatically for the rest of that day.

If your child is sent home with a fever of more than 100 degrees then they are required to stay home for 24 hours after the fever goes away without the use of medicine.

LMCS office is generally the place students who are feeling ill come to wait. LMCS office staff has been trained in CPR, First Aid, and Administration of Medicine. LMCS is unable to administer medicine to students without parental consent and medicine left at the office with the proper forms filled out. The office has a cot that students can use to lay down if they are not feeling well or are injured.

Any child who cannot participate in a regular childcare program due to discomfort, injury or other symptoms of illness may be refused care. A facility serving well children may not admit a child who has any of the illnesses/symptoms of illness specified below:

- Severe diarrhea
- Severe pain or discomfort
- Two or more episodes of acute vomiting within a period of twenty-four (24) hours.
- Difficult or rapid breathing.
- Yellowish eyes or skin.
- Sore throat with a fever over 101° F or severe coughing.
- Untreated head lice or nits.
- Untreated scabies.
- Children suspected of being in contagious stages of chicken pox, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella or diphtheria
- Purulent conjunctivitis

Children with the following symptoms should be excluded from childcare unless they are under the care of a physician and the physician has approved in writing their return to childcare:

- Skin rashes, excluding diaper rash, lasting more than one (1) day.
- Swollen joints or visibly enlarged lymph nodes.
- Elevated oral temperature of 101° F or over.
- Blood in urine.
- Mouth sores associated with drooling; or
- Having a communicable disease or being a carrier of such, that is listed on the Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) Reportable Disease and Condition List

The parent shall be notified immediately when a child has symptoms requiring exclusion from care. The child will be kept isolated from other children until the child is removed from the facility.

For highly contagious diseases such as, but not limited to, Covid, strep, pink eye, chicken pox (varicella) or impetigo students should return to school 24 hours after beginning antibiotics or when a doctor advises that they are safe to return.

*This health policy is subject to change on the orders of the Albany County Health Department or ACSD#1 mandated COVID restrictions. *

Immunization Requirements

All school children are required by state law to be immunized against certain vaccine-preventable diseases. These diseases include diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), polio, measles, mumps and rubella (German or three-day measles). The law further provides that children can be exempt from this regulation due to religious or medical reasons. Proof of adequate immunization on a form provided by the state health officer, or a valid medical or religious exemption, must be presented to the individual school within 30 calendar days of the student's first date of attendance. Any questions regarding this regulation should be directed to the Director/Principal.

Medication Policy

We will be glad to administer either over-the-counter medications or medicine prescribed by your physician to your child. To do this, we ask that you fill out the Permission to Administer Medication Form from the office. The medicine must be submitted to the office in its original container and all prescription medication must clearly state the prescribed dosage, the child's name, date, and doctor's name. We keep all medicines in a secure place out of reach of the children and will refrigerate them as necessary. No medications are stored in the classroom unless their immediate use is required in case of emergency, such as Epi-Pens. Only LMCS staff members who are certified by the Wyoming Department of Family Services are allowed to administer medication.

Toilet Training & Accidents

It is required that all preschoolers attending LMCS be toilet trained and able to use the bathroom by themselves. We understand that accidents happen, which is one of the reasons we require an extra set of clothing for each student. If your child begins to have frequent accidents the Head Teacher or Director will schedule a meeting with parents to discuss the best course of action.

“We cannot know the consequences of suppressing a child's spontaneity when he is just beginning to be active. We may even suffocate life itself. That humanity which is revealed in all its intellectual splendor during the sweet and tender age of childhood should be respected with a kind of religious veneration. It is like the sun which appears at dawn or a flower just beginning to bloom. Education cannot be effective unless it helps a child to open up himself to life.”

— Maria Montessori



Section 4

EXPECTATIONS AND CONDUCT

Laramie Montessori School believes in meeting children's psychological as well as academic needs. We believe that the administration, staff, and parents work together to support the healthy, natural development of children. One of the most important jobs of the School Director/ Principal is to ensure a safe and orderly environment has been created and maintained during school hours.

Classroom agreements and non-negotiables rules: To facilitate a safe and orderly environment, teachers lead their students in a process to establish agreements. This helps to build a school family and a healthy community. In addition, there are non-negotiable rules (i.e. - fighting and harassment) that if violated can represent serious offenses. These student conduct agreements and rules integrated with our peace curriculum form a wholistic approach. As a final aspect of this approach, there must be an opportunity for the staff to apply natural consequences when appropriate.

Peace Curriculum: The ideal process is when students can independently resolve conflicts. Montessori principal Judy Dempsey profoundly states, "When we learn how to calm ourselves and make choices based on our tranquil inner nature and what we know is right, then we are less prone to react in emotional and irrational ways." (Turning Education Inside Out, pg. 175) Calm, spiritually prepared adults can help students take responsibility for their behavior while redirecting undesirable behavior and reinforcing desired behavior. At LMCS we always emphasize conflict resolution over punitive action, and we believe that prevention and resolution are the most important goals in any situation. Discipline in an authentic Montessori environment is a noun and not a verb.

"Let us always remember that inner discipline is something to come and not something already present. Our task is to show the way to discipline. Discipline is born when the child concentrates his attention on some object that attracts him, and which provides him not only with a useful exercise but with a control of error. Thanks to these exercises, a wonderful integration takes place in the infant soul, as a result of which the child becomes calm, radiantly happy, busy, forgetful of himself and, in consequence, indifferent to prizes or material rewards."

-Maria Montessori - The Absorbent Mind, pg. 236

Student Conduct

When a child becomes disruptive, we will stop the child, speak to him/her and seek their input when and if they can become calm and able to process the event. We always try to avoid discussing these matters if the student's emotions and/or behavior are elevated or highly obstinate. Only when the child has calmed themselves and is compliant to kind requests can mediation be successfully attempted in a Montessori tone. As part of the prevention goal we will, if necessary, temporarily limit a child's freedom by asking him/her to stay close to an adult, provide a table at which to work, and/or provide a different location. However, if the teacher deems the behavior to be dangerous, overtly anti-social, or if a repeated offense occurs and the classroom peace corner protocols are not successful, a trip to the office to visit with will be necessary. Students sent to the Director/Principal will be carefully and respectfully allowed to calm. Sending a child home will be used sparingly unless it is an extreme or repetitive case.

Expectations

Laramie Montessori Charter School Expectations:

1. Respect yourself: Treat yourself with kindness.
2. Respect others: Follow the leaders' instructions. Respect each other by keeping hands, feet, and objects to yourself. Use kind language. Do not interfere with each other's work and each other's opportunity to learn.
3. Respect the environment: Treat materials and the learning environment appropriately and with care.

Guidance Methods

Laramie Montessori Charter School does not use external rewards and motivation (such as stickers, awards, and treats), but rather, we strive to tap into the child's internal motivation to learn and behave appropriately.

We do not utilize punishment in our classroom. We prefer methods that prioritize respect for the child, which might include:

- calm, gentle reminders about classroom expectations and behavior
- calm, respectful redirection of the behavior to another, positive behavior
- a series of choices so the child may play a part in his/her redirection
- distraction from the source of the problem
- ignoring the behavior, if and when appropriate
- guided, peaceful conflict resolution with other children
- natural or logical consequences of behavior

At no time will the following occur:

- Punishment associated with food, rest or toilet learning.
- Corporal punishment, including hitting spanking, beating, shaking, pinching and other measures that produce physical pain.
- Abusive or profane language.
- Any form of humiliation including threats of physical punishment; and
- Any form of emotional abuse including rejecting, terrorizing, corrupting, isolating or ignoring a child

The following is a list of unacceptable behaviors in Laramie Montessori Charter School:

- Intentional physical harm or injury to another person
- Intentional damage to school property or property of others
- Persistent interference with the ability of children to learn and play
- Intentional disregard of our Expectations

If any of these behaviors become extreme or repeatedly occur in students, we will follow with these actions:

1. The teacher will work closely with parents and available community resources to establish a behavior plan tailored for the individual child to decide what steps can be taken to resolve the behavior.
2. If the extreme behavior continues, the child will be asked to leave for the remainder of the day and may return the next day.
3. If the extreme behavior continues despite every attempt to help the child, work with parents, and engaging available community resources then the child will be asked to leave the LMCS Preschool program.

Laramie Montessori Charter School will strive to work with families to address behavior issues before the above three actions occur. If the behavior escalates or becomes violent at any time the Director or his/her designee will call parents.

Parent/Guardian Conduct

When parents enter the school, please keep these grace and courtesy guidelines in mind:

- Speak in a calm and quiet voice;
- Stow cell phones away, on silent mode. Phone calls should be taken outside of the facility;
- Allow children to participate in their preparations for arrival and departure at their own pace;
- Engage in socialization with other parents quietly, away from learning area.

The following is a list of unacceptable behaviors in Laramie Montessori Charter School:

- Intentional physical harm or injury to another person
- Intentional damage to school property or property of others
- Persistent interference with the ability of children to learn and play
- Intentional disregard of our Expectations

If any of the unacceptable behaviors listed above become extreme or repeatedly occur in parents or guardians, we will follow with these actions:

1. The Head Teacher and/or school Director will work reasonably and in good faith with the parent to resolve the problem.
2. If extreme behavior continues, the parent will be asked to leave the premises and may return when the issue is resolved.
3. The Head Teacher and/or school Director will request a meeting with all parents and guardians of the child.
4. We reserve the right to discontinue services if the behavior continues.

Harassment/Bullying

Our students should expect to be in a school environment that promotes positive interactions between and among students and adults throughout our schools. In addition to being a reasonable expectation, an environment free of harassment, hazing and bullying is the law. We expect our students to follow the law and to be sensitive to the feelings of both children and adults.

*"I hear, I forget;
I see, I remember;
I experience, I understand."*

Dr. Maria Montessori



Section 5

PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS

In accordance with Wyoming Child Care Licensing Regulations, we are obligated to provide you the following informational statements. Parent/Guardian(s) shall have:

- Unrestricted and immediate access to his/her child(ren) and any area of the facility where childcare is located
- The right to view to inspection reports
- The right to view all records, assessments and evaluations on their child
- Weekly menus for lunch and breakfast
- All known and/or treated injuries that occur to his/her child while in care
- Any situation that occurred during childcare that caused concerns for the child's health or safety

To make a complaint or obtain a compliance history of this facility, please contact DFS Licenser Michelle Tucker at 307-777-5151

Parents' Right to Know (No Child Left Behind)

The federal law, commonly called "No Child Left Behind," requires that schools which receive Title I money notify parents that they may request certain information about their child(rens) teachers' qualifications. The specific information about which parents may inquire includes:

1. Whether the teacher has met Wyoming's licensing criteria for the grade level and/or subject s/he teaches.
2. Whether or not the teacher is teaching on emergency licensure or had had licensing criteria waived; and
3. The teacher's college major, any graduate degrees or certifications, and the field of discipline for those degrees and certifications.

In addition, if a child receives services from a paraprofessional, parents may request information about the paraprofessional's qualifications.

If you have questions or desire to obtain this information, you may contact the LMCS school Director.

Please rest assured that Laramie Montessori Charter School takes pride in the quality of teachers and paraprofessionals it employs to serve your children.

Child Find

For Parents Who...

- Are concerned about their preschooler's development
- Would like to know how to help their preschool child succeed in school
- Have questions whether their child has a disability
- Know their child has a disability and are looking for appropriate educational services

What is Child Find?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires school districts to locate and evaluate children between the ages of birth and 21, who may have a disability. This process for locating and evaluating children with these issues is referred to as "Child Find."

Preschool and School Age

Laramie Montessori Charter School pairs with Developmental Preschool to provide free Developmental Screenings to children aged 3-5 years old in preschool to help identify children who may have a suspected disability. A parent, staff member or outside person may refer a student by contacting the Director at 307-742-9964.

Children 5-13 years old and in Kindergarten-6th grade at LMCS can be referred by contacting the Director at 307-742-9964 and will be evaluated by Laramie Montessori Charter School and ACSD#1.

Section 6

COMMUNICATION

Communication is very important to our school. Laramie Montessori Charter School believes that communication between parents, teachers, and staff promotes a healthy, safe, and community-oriented environment.

Parent to School Communication

Parents are encouraged to contact LMCS with any questions or concerns. Teachers and staff can be contacted at their respective emails or the school phone. Please communicate with us about absences, tardies, appointments, concerns and other questions. We also encourage parents to bring any concerns to our attention as soon as possible so that they can be addressed. It can't be fixed if we are unaware that it is a problem.

Parent Communication with LMS:

- Phone: Call our school number. Leave a message if necessary.
- Email: Email our staff and teachers with questions or email or call office with absence/tardy excuses or transportation changes.
- Notes: Send a note with your child if there is a change in their bus routine or if they will be absent the next day.
- Contact and RSVP forms online: RSVP for events and activities.
- Volunteer: Volunteer for snack, PTO events, or sign up for scheduled times.

School to Parent Communication

Laramie Montessori School has many methods of communicating important news and events to parents. In the 2015-2016 school year LMS decided to go paperless for environmental as well as communication concerns. We know it can be hard for students to give parents flyers and important information, therefore we wanted to foster better communication.

School Communication with Parents:

- Parent Memo: From director with all the latest news.
- Parent e-Newsletter: From administrative assistant with flyers and paperwork.
- Classroom Newsletter: Weekly classroom news from your classroom teacher.
- Website: www.laramiemontessori.org, our school website with our Event Calendar and more!
- Email: We may email you with individualized information.
- Phone: We may call for some items of information or to give updates on student progress.
- Facebook: Laramie Montessori Charter School, Laramie Montessori School PTO

Personal & Directory Information

Student personal information, including directory information, cannot be given to anyone without proper authorization. Laramie Montessori Charter School may develop a school directory for distribution to the parents of children who attend our school. This is a voluntary directory.

For your child's protection, and for administrative purposes, it is essential that our school has on record the correct home and mailing address, as well as the telephone number and email of each parent. It is also suggested that as parents you provide the same information of another individual who may be contacted in an emergency. This information will be asked of you on the Registration Form. Please update this information immediately if there is a change.

Some medical facilities refuse to render services if parental consent cannot be obtained.

Problems & Concerns

Parents with problems or concerns are asked to direct their questions to the person closest to the situation, which in most cases is their child's teacher. In the event that a satisfactory resolution is not reached, the director should be contacted. If the person closest to the situation is the director, then contact her/him first.

We desire to provide a healthy and safe school experience for all our students. When questions or areas of concern are addressed quickly, collaboratively, and with care then we will all be able to support your student and your family in developing appropriate solutions.

Parent Teacher Organization

Laramie Montessori School has a Parent-Teacher Organization! It was founded in 2014 and is meant to be a way for parents, teachers, and staff to work together to improve our school. The PTO is in charge of helping with most school functions, teacher appreciation, and some forms of fund-raising. We also address trends in our school district and education in general and see if there are ways to improve community support for education.

The PTO sign-up sheet is sent home at the beginning of every year, but you can decide to join and sign up at any time of the year.

Check them out on Facebook at Laramie Montessori PTO for information, events, and ways to support our school.

Questions

If you ever have any questions or concerns about policies or their implementation, or any aspect of your experience at Laramie Montessori Charter School, we ask that you address them with us promptly. Even concerns that are seemingly small can be addressed quickly to avoid any unnecessary stress for you or your child. We value your input and support to the LMCS community, and we welcome your participation in our program.

Please follow these steps to resolve any questions:

- If you have questions regarding your child, ask the teacher. Please leave a message at school for the teacher to contact you or email them. Teachers are your first resource to answer your questions and resolve your concerns.
- If the communication with the teacher by telephone or email does not answer your questions or resolve your concerns, please request a parent conference.
- If the communication with the teacher by other means does not resolve the issue, please address your question to school administration and, if appropriate, request another conference.

We desire to provide a healthy and safe school experience for all our students. When questions or areas of concern are addressed quickly, collaboratively, and with care then we will all be able to support your student and your family in developing appropriate solutions.

Section 7

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

At Laramie Montessori, our Primary teacher is a certified teacher through the State of Wyoming with her bachelor's in education to teach Kindergarten – 6th grade with an American Montessori Society Certification from the Montessori Center of the Rockies to teach Montessori Primary curriculum ensuring your child will be prepared when they enter Kindergarten.

Both assistant teachers for the Primary class have gone through a multi-level interview process to obtain the highest qualified and most suitable candidate possible. Assistants then attend training at the Montessori Center of the Rockies to prepare them to teach the Montessori curriculum with the Head Teacher throughout the year.

All teachers, assistants, office staff, counselors, and other adult staff at Laramie Montessori Charter School involved with the preschool students are also required to have:

- First aid and infant/child CPR certification must be completed biennially and always kept current
- 16 or more hours of continuing education annually
- TB risk assessment or current TB test results if applicable
- A child abuse/neglect Central Registry screen done annually
- Full fingerprint based national criminal history record background check completed every 5 years
- National sex offender check results

Section 8

SERVICES

Family Assistance

There are programs that Laramie Montessori School, Albany County School District #1, and the Laramie Community provide to help families that need assistance. Some information or sign-up sheets may be sent home at different times during the year for families to fill out if they need the assistance.

All entries for assistance programs are confidential. For more information visit our Family Assistance page at our website, www.laramiemontessori.org.

Free or Reduced Lunch & Breakfast Program

Our breakfast and lunch are provided by Albany County School District #1 Food Service. We participate in the federal Free and Reduced Lunch program as a public charter school. We ask that all families fill out the Free and Reduced Lunch Form whether they plan to participate as this helps all our students with federal

Lost and Found

We encourage children and adults to turn articles in to the office where they will be stored until claimed or until the end of the grading periods. Unclaimed items will be disposed of or donated to a non-profit agency.

You may call the school office if you have questions about lost articles or you may go to the office to check the Lost and Found. Each classroom may also have its own Lost and Found area. We also have a Lost and Found for school hosted events. There will always be an announcement in the Parent Memo if we find anything at a school-hosted event.

Classroom Observations

Parents are welcome and encouraged to observe their child's class after the first six weeks of the school year. Please schedule your visits through the office and be certain to sign in upon your arrival and exit from the school. Arrangements should be made in advance with your child's teacher. The parent's role while in the classroom should be that of an observer of the children and their activities. The parent is asked to remain seated and not become involved in what the children are doing (by talking to them) and enjoy the children at work.

If you are more interested in seeing your child's experience, you may observe in your child's own classroom. If you are interested in understanding Montessori, you may benefit from observing in another classroom, so that you may watch the children at work without drawing the attention of your own child. Please ask for more information about observations and how they may increase your understanding of our school and the Montessori Method.

The Montessori classroom is often described as a "child-directed" classroom. This is a different kind of classroom than most of us knew when we went to school. In a "child-directed" classroom, teachers work with students rather than do things to or for them. The approach is to provide an environment for the whole child – development of social skills, emotional growth, physical coordination and cognitive preparation.

Observation may seem easy; however, objective observation is difficult to accomplish as we bring to the observation our past experiences, values, beliefs, personal issues and hang-ups. We should continually work on controlling our projections to develop our objectivity. To observe well, one must give their full attention to the natural responses of the children to the environment. Be aware that one's actions can and will interfere with the normal routine of the class, the focus of the children and at times the natural responses to the environment, the teacher and the classmates.

We are glad that you have made the effort to observe a classroom. This shows commitment to understanding how things work here. We appreciate your time.

As you observe, please follow these guidelines:

- Plan to observe for about 45 minutes. (If you have decided to observe for longer, then please plan on your arranged time.)
- Remain seated. Your movement through the room creates a distraction to the children.
- Try not to make eye contact or initiate conversation with the children. If you engage a child in casual conversation, the natural curiosity of the other children may result in their gathering around you. This interferes with your observation and affects the normal routines of the class.
- Refrain from initiating conversations. If a child asks a question, answer briefly and then state that you are here to watch the class work.
- If you are observing your own child's classroom, you may talk briefly with your child and explain that you are here to watch everyone work.
- If a child approaches you and asks your name, answer politely, but do not encourage further conversation.
- Use a quiet voice.
- Write down your observations and questions on the feedback sheet.
- Please do not initiate conversation with the teacher. He/she is responsible for the education of every child in the room. If you would like to speak later, please leave a note on the second sheet and how you would like to be contacted. If a teacher has the time, they might initiate conversation with you. Please talk in a quiet voice and understand that they might be pulled away to work with students.

Thank you for your cooperation with our observation policy. We have discovered (the hard way) that following these procedures minimizes the distractions for your child and his/her classmates and supports the classroom procedures.

Developmental Screenings & Assessments

Laramie Montessori Charter School will provide free developmental, behavioral, and academic assessments as needed throughout our Primary program. Developmental assessments may be contracted through Developmental Preschool and Daycare who provides them for free. Behavioral and academic assessments will be done through LMCS during the school year or summer program. If your child will turn 5 between August 1st and September 15th the Laramie Montessori charter School can provide a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment if requested by the parents which can allow them to proceed into Kindergarten that year if they are ready.



Section 9

PARENT / STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Donations

Laramie Montessori School is a non-profit organization for public education. All non-compensated donations are tax deductible by the giver. If you wish to have a receipt for any donations given to our organization, please ask the office. Donations can consist of school supplies, snack for classrooms, money, donations of clothing or winter gear, and donation of a service or teaching materials. They cannot include treats for birthdays or special days, teacher appreciation, volunteered time, or personal gifts. Donations cannot include the cost of any compensation received for the donation.

Fund Raising

Laramie Montessori School does not participate in many fundraisers throughout the year. We try to do at least one food drive, Teton Science School fundraiser, and Box Tops for Education.

There may be more that we send home, but please understand that you and your family are under no obligation to participate in any fundraising activities.

Box Tops

Laramie Montessori school collects Box Tops. The money collected from Box Tops provides some funding for the PTO. All Box Tops are collected online by scanning your receipts with their phone app. We do appreciate our families taking the time to collect these for us!

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

Laramie Montessori Charter School PTO does at least one fundraiser a year for aspects of school needs, such as playground modification, P.E. equipment, or field trips. This event and its content will be announced each year and parents and staff are asked to volunteer at times.

Parent/Community Involvement

Laramie is fortunate to have an active parent support group in each of the schools. Laramie Montessori Charter School is no different. At Laramie Montessori Charter School, we believe that fostering community through parent involvement is something to build and strive for. Often throughout the year our school is involved in various fund-raising and community events and we ask parents and family who wish to be involved to help with these events. We also appreciate the support of parents on field trips as well as school events.

Many Laramie businesses and Community Partners both donate and help us during the year and we are thankful for everything they do. If your business or employer is interested in donating, helping or funding a project please let us know.

Volunteers

Parents and non-parent volunteers provide welcome support to teachers and students in the schools. Information about volunteering in the schools can be obtained from each school office. Volunteers are required to keep all confidential information confidential and a consent to submit to a background check, paid for by the school, if volunteering on a frequent basis.

Parent Nights

Laramie Montessori Charter School has at least two Parent Nights a year that all families and students are invited to. Please check our yearly calendar and our website at www.laramiemontessori.org to learn more about what events we will be having.

Field Trips

Field Trips and non-LMCS staff volunteers: Parents are encouraged to volunteer and attend field trips when possible. All field trip volunteers will be asked to sign a simple trip itinerary and agreement. This document will explain their supervisory role and boundaries. These guidelines in general will include:

- An explanation of their role and guidelines in helping make each field trip a safe and orderly event.
- The need to stay in communication and in sight of an employee that will be like their "buddy" as the children each will have a buddy. In most cases this will be the Head Teacher for which they are assisting.
- Bathroom protocols will be explained to the entire student body prior to the field trip by the Director/Principal and/or his/her designee. Different field trips may have slightly different bathroom guidelines based on the available facilities. All adults must know these guidelines. If an adult on the trip (parent, staff member or volunteer does not know the protocol they should not assist in any way.)
- All volunteers can help make sure the students in their group are accounted for.

Off Campus outings/trips: Extra-curricular activities and field trips present unique risks for the safety of children. Large groups are difficult to monitor, and children and adults may be more likely to act out sexually in a less structured environment. An ill-intentioned adult may try to arrange to meet with a child. It is important to be aware of these risks and take measures to minimize the risk. The LMCS Director and/or his/her designee is responsible for clear guidelines for each trip; however, general safety guidelines will apply for every trip. The "rule of three" is one example of a rule that must be understood and followed on all trips:

- Prior to each field trip all parents and/or volunteers will be provided with an explanation and written information stating details regarding how the "rule of three" will be kept.
- Students and staff will remain visible during off-site field trips, except during their own personal bathroom use.

In the event of a field trip, parents will be notified through the weekly Parent e-Newsletter and through classroom newsletters and emails explaining the field trip. Permission for such field trips will be obtained through the School-wide Permission Slip form filled out at the beginning of the year. Parents are welcome to attend field trips with their students, and younger siblings are usually allowed with the parent. Please call or email the teacher, office or administration before attending a field trip. At any time you have a question about field trips, please contact the teacher or office.

On some field trips Laramie Montessori Charter School might cover entrance fees for some or all of parents who attend. LMCS will not cover fees for younger siblings or unplanned guests.

If at the location of the field trip food is available for sale, we would ask that parents who are with us do NOT buy food for children other than their own. If you have any questions about this policy, then please speak to your child's teacher or the director.

School Pictures

Individual student pictures are taken in the fall and group class pictures are taken in the spring of each school year. Purchase of pictures is voluntary. Information about the packet options available and the cost of the pictures is sent home with students at least a week before the picture day.

