



Mulberry School Philosophy, History, General Information, and Parent Handbook

Updated: 12/2018

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PHILOSOPHY & HISTORY

Statement of Philosophy

The Mulberry School is a parent cooperative school for children 3 years old to 2nd grade. The students, parents and teachers of Mulberry School are guided by three important principles.

1. *Open Discussion:* The Mulberry School advocates open discussion. If a child introduces questions or expresses concern, we feel it must be dealt with on an immediate basis in an honest, sensitive manner. The School gives the teachers permission to use their professional discretion in guiding discussion appropriately.

2. *The Value of Individual Differences:* The Mulberry School values individual differences and welcomes parents and students from a variety of backgrounds. We view diversity of religions, ethnic heritage, racial heritage, and social and economic situations as enrichment for our children.

3. *Stereotype-Free Atmosphere:* The Mulberry School believes in an atmosphere free from traditional stereotyping so that each child will be able to pursue his or her own interests as an individual.

The Mulberry School is proud of its excellent teachers and their teaching methods. One of the reasons for this high standard is the School's ability to keep the number of students in each classroom small. The ratio of teacher per students in each class is approximately 1:12. This enables teachers to give each student the personal instruction they need to comprehend ideas and understand concepts.

The Mulberry School mission is further described in the Bylaws and Policy Statements.

Mission Statement

Mulberry School is a parent cooperative in which students, teachers, and parents work together to ensure that children grow and learn at their own pace while encouraging exploration, creativity, and self-confidence.

We provide children with the following opportunities:

- Small class size to ensure that individual needs are met.
- Develop a healthy, strong self-image in a nurturing environment and be accepted for who they are.

- Repeated opportunities to discover, explore, and problem-solve through direct experiences.
- Make choices that can lead to independence, self-confidence, self-control, a sense of responsibility, and a respect for those around them.
- Function in a diverse, stimulating environment that considers their social development as well as each one's individual needs, interests, and abilities.
- Balanced Education - structured and unstructured activities, active and quiet activities, individual and group activities, indoor and outdoor activities, and informative and creative activities.
- Pass through developmental stages at their own pace.
- Parent participation in all aspects of both their education and their school.

Goals

At Mulberry School, our goal is for each child to:

- Acquire the basic academic skills in reading, mathematics, and technology to ensure their success in further learning.
- Develop a positive self-concept and strong feeling of emotional security.
- Become socially competent, able to interact productively with others and to value all people.
- Mature and grow physically and experience a healthy and fit body.
- Become a lifelong learner and problem-solver, able to adapt creatively to change.

History

Mulberry School has endured nearly 30 years of social change and has, without interruption, provided meaningful child-centered education to a diverse student body of four- through eight-year-olds.

1971 - Founded as the Bloomington-Normal New School by a group of parents and students who were interested in establishing an alternative school which would offer an individualized, open program modeled after the British Infant School concept. The school was originally housed in a church basement in Bloomington-Normal.

1973 - Bob and Barb Hathway signed a \$20,000 bank note to finance a house on Mulberry Street in Bloomington.

1974 - 320 Mulberry Street became the school's first permanent home with one kindergarten and one multi-age class.

- 1974 - The school moved into a two-story house at 320 East Mulberry Street. Numerous children ranging in age from five years old to eight years old were enrolled. The 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. school offered a Kindergarten class on the first floor and a Multi-age class on the second floor.
- 1979 - A four year old pre-Kindergarten class was added.
- 1992 - The basement was renovated into a multi-purpose room to provide additional indoor recreational and fine arts space.
- 1994 - Due to record enrollments, the basement was converted into rooms for the Kindergarten class allowing a second story of the building to house the Multi-age group and computer lab.
- 1997 A long-range vision committee formulated a plan for the future goals of the school; this plan was ratified by the parent body. These goals were:
- larger campus in a nicer area
 - enrollment growth (limited)
 - physical accessibility
 - music, art, and physical education programs
 - respectable pay and benefits for the teachers
- 1998 - Much needed storage was created out of the last available space for renovation – the attic. In the fall of 1998, Mulberry School made the decision to move the school to a new site.
- 1999 - Capital Campaign formed to raise proceeds to facilitate purchase and renovation of 1101 Douglas.
- 2000 - The Mulberry School relocates to the the corner of Beech and Lincoln at the Illinois Soldiers' and Sailors' Children's School in northeast Normal. Approximately 8,500 square feet within the old cafeteria building and approximately 26,000 square feet of green space was purchased from the current owner to house the new campus. The location provided an opportunity to renovate an existing structurally sound building into spacious classrooms, a commons area, a library/learning center, an art center, and a beautiful green space for outdoor activities and learning.
- 2008 - Full Day 3 year old preschool class was added.

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Location and Hours of Operation

The school is located at 1101 Douglas, Normal, Illinois, 61761. School Hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, during the academic school year. There is before and after school childcare from 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 - 5:30 p.m. Cost is \$3.00 per half hour or any portion thereof. If your child(ren) is/are not participating in before school care, then they should not arrive to school prior to 9:00 a.m. All children must be picked up promptly at 3:00 p.m. Parents are responsible for transportation of their child(ren) to and from the School. Please inform the School as to who will be delivering and picking up your child(ren) on a regular basis. If there is a change, a written notice is preferred, but a telephone call will suffice if plans change during the day.

Scholarships

Mulberry School provides need-based financial assistance and scholarships to eligible families. Financial assistance and scholarship applications can be obtained by contacting the Mulberry School Office or by going online at www.mulberryschool.org. Each application is considered on an individual basis with consideration given to expenses and family needs in addition to income. All complete applications submitted by the deadline will be considered.

Illness Procedures and Health Records

All new students entering Mulberry School must have a physical examination prior to admittance. If your child is transferring to Mulberry School, an up-to-date examination will be obtained from his or her former school. Illinois State Law requires the Mulberry School to have all student immunization forms completed and on file prior to admission. The State also requires that all four (4), five (5), and six (6) year olds new to the school must have a lead poisoning screening. Please be prompt in submitting all health forms/records so your child's admission is not unnecessarily delayed.

Parents are responsible for notifying the teacher if your child has contracted a contagious disease. If your child appears to be ill or has a fever or vomiting, keep him or her at home. Do not send your child back to school until he or she is fever and symptom free for at least 24 hours.

Please Note: SICK CHILDREN WILL BE SENT HOME. Children sent home, from school, with a fever will not be allowed at school the next day.

Emergency Information

An Emergency Information Form must be completed and returned to the Mulberry School for all new students prior to the first day of school. It is essential we have this information on file before you place your child in the care of the Mulberry School. If a returning student's form requires updating, please request a new form from the school.

Mulberry School Food Allergy Policy

All students entering Mulberry School must let the academic director, Administrative Assistant, and teacher know if a child has a food allergy (especially peanut). Please indicate on your child's emergency card of the allergy and severity, and we ask that you give us a copy of your child's "Food Allergy Action Plan" which will be attached to the emergency card.

For any child who has severe food allergies (especially peanut) and is enrolled all day and eating lunch at Mulberry will have the right to these following accommodations during their enrollment at Mulberry School.

- Lunch Time -
 - An allergen free table will be set aside at one of the lunch areas. During a year when a child has a severe peanut allergy, we will set aside a table for all children who have peanut products in their lunch. They will all wash their hands when they are finished with their lunch before they do any follow up activities.
 - Any utensils such as a knife, fork, spoon, scissors, etc. necessary for the child to eat his/her lunch will be supplied daily by parents of the child with the allergy.
 - The student will have separate books and any other items that may come in contact with peanuts available for his/her use.
 - Any student who sits at the table will be approved by the parent of the allergic child.
- During whole school functions where children are present, we will not offer peanut products. We will not hand out food items that were processed in plants that process peanuts unless approved by all parents with children who have peanut/nut allergies
- All school staff and the parent population will be notified of any children who have severe allergies. The parents of the children in the classroom with the severe allergy will be personally notified. The school will send three official notifications to the parents of all the children at the school. The notifications will be sent prior to the school year, the first week of school, and the first week after winter break.
- Parents of children with severe allergies will supply the school with an "Illinois Food Allergy Emergency Action Plan and Treatment Authorization" form, which must be completed by a licensed health care provider and signed by a parent/guardian of the student prior to the student attending Mulberry School. This form provides a variety of information including:

- Student's personal information and method of identifying the student (photo)
 - Offending allergens
 - Warning signs of reactions of offending allergens
 - Treatment for a food-allergic reaction
 - Permission to/or not to self-administer epinephrine
 - A licensed health care provider's medication authorization and dosing requirements
 - Parent's consent for the school to administer medication
 - A list of staff members trained on the administration of epinephrine
- Parents of children with severe allergies will also supply emergency medication to be kept at the school and used if/when needed.
 - Allergen products will be banned from the individual classroom in which the child is enrolled, and a sign that indicates a peanut/tree nut free or other allergen classroom will be posted near the room. (No snacks, cooking products, or birthday treats may contain peanut, tree nut or other allergen products).
 - In order to prevent potential contamination of common areas reasonable accommodations will be made to keep food confined to the lunch areas, classrooms, kitchen, and conference room. Exceptions may be made for special events.

Parent Participation

The survival of the Mulberry School is contingent upon the efforts of the school parents. Each family is *required* to devote a minimum of thirty (35) hours of work towards the School, or pay the set fee in lieu of contributing time to support the needs of the school.

Classroom involvement of the parents is extremely important, and parents are requested to share their talents in enrichment activities on a regular or one-time basis. Some parents in the past have contributed in the following activities: Crafts, Sports, Music, Games, Field Trip Supervisors/Drivers, Art, Languages, Science, Child Care, Teacher Aide, Gardening, Substitute Teaching, Playground Supervision, School Renovation, Building Maintenance, Janitorial Duties, School Repair, Lawn Care.

At least one parent from each family is *requested* to attend the parent meetings to not only keep informed, but to become involved in the direction and needs of the school to ensure our children are receiving the best overall education possible.

Fund raising is a very crucial aspect of our school's operation. The annual school budget is dependent on successful fund raising to cover our operational expenses. Please be aware that tuition represents only a portion of our operating budget, the remainder is derived through successful fundraising that requires the total involvement

of our parents. Fund raising projects have included survival kits for Illinois Wesleyan students during finals week, the Mulberry Gala and the annual art auction. Parents may be occasionally asked to sell raffle and event tickets to support the school.

Parents are highly encouraged to volunteer for the Mulberry School Board of Director positions that are available annually. The member parents elect their Board of Directors from the membership group as specified in the Mulberry School bylaws. Scheduled meetings for the Directors do count as parent participation hours.

PARENT HANDBOOK

Welcome

Welcome to Mulberry School! This handbook contains information about our school's daily procedures, guidelines and policies and school events. Mulberry School is an atmosphere where staff and parents work together to provide a successful school year for all children. We are a community of learners all working together to make a difference in all our lives! Please feel free to contact any of us with your questions.

Contact Information - Teachers and Staff

- Mulberry School, info@mulberryschool.org, 309-862-0510 phone
- Kim Walk (Academic Director and Preschool Teacher), kim@mulberryschool.org
- Shawna Stanley (Administrative Asst.) shawna@mulberryschool.org
- Sharon Sorensen (Preschool Teacher), sharon@mulberryschool.org
- Kathy Bihn (Preschool Teacher), kathy@mulberryschool.org
- Colette Brown (4K Teacher), colette@mulberryschool.org
- Brandi Winston, (Preschool Teacher), brandi@mulberryschool.org
- Teresa Klagae (Jr. Kindergarten/ Kindergarten Teacher), teresa@mulberryschool.org
- Zarina Plath (1st/2nd Grade Teacher), zarina@mulberryschool.org
- Karen Brinker (Art Teacher)
- Carolina Rodriguez (Spanish Teacher)
- Leah Young (Music Teacher)

Contact Information - Board of Directors 2018-2019

- Megan Carter, President of the Board of Directors, megan@mulberryschool.org
- Kim Walk, Academic Director, kim@mulberryschool.org
- Jeremy Kibler, Director of Facilities and Vice-President, jeremy@mulberryschool.org
- Jessica McConaughay, Director of Finance, jessica@mulberryschool.org
- Mary Moran, Director of Communications, mary@mulberryschool.org
- Jena Tarnowski, Cooperative Liaison, jena@mulberryschool.org
- Rachel Romba, Director of Marketing, rachel@mulberryschool.org
- Nick Keever, Director of Technology, nick@mulberryschool.org

Payment and Fees Policy

The following items are to clarify financial obligations of Mulberry Families:

Tuition Payment Policy

- Tuition is due on the **10th** of the month, **August 10 – May 10**. Per your contract, if full payment is not received by the **12th** of the month, a \$35.00 late fee will be assessed. **Please note: There are NO exceptions to this policy.**
- **If the 10th of the month falls on a non-school day or over a break, payment must be made the following day after the 10th in order to avoid assessment of the \$35.00 late fee.**
- If a balance remains on the account after 30 days, a finance charge of 18% will also be added to any past due amount.
- Any returned check will be assessed a \$35.00 fee. Furthermore, if the returned check is not replaced by another form of payment prior to the 12th of the month, the account will be considered past due and will be subject to the \$35.00 late fee mentioned above.
- Tuition Statements will be sent via email on a monthly basis.

Before and After Care Payment Policy – (B&A)

- Before and after care payments are due on the **10th** of the month, along with your tuition payment. If payment is not received by the **12th** of the month, a late fee of 18% (or a minimum of \$5.00) will be assessed. **Again, there are NO exceptions to this policy.**
- **If the 10th of the month falls on a non-school day or over a break, payment must be made PRIOR to the 10th in order to avoid the 18% finance charge.**
- If before and after care payments are 2 (two) month in arrears, before and after care usage will be suspended until the entire account is paid in full (including any outstanding tuition balance).
- After 30 days an additional finance charge of 18% will be added to any unpaid account balance.
- Before and After Care charges will be included on your monthly tuition statement.

General Payment Policy

- If a family has 2 (two) returned checks in any given school year, personal checks will no longer be accepted as payment on their account for the remainder of the school year. Future payments will need to be in the form of cash, cashier's check or money order.
- In situations where two families are paying tuition, both families will be notified when all or part of the tuition is late or there is a returned check; furthermore, both families will be responsible for any outstanding balance on a monthly basis.
- If tuition, parent participation, before/after care, or any other accounts become past due, and collections efforts become necessary, the Parent (s) will be held responsible for all collection fees, court fees, attorney fees and other applicable fees as may result from any collection efforts.

Before and After School Care

Mission Statement

The Mulberry School Before and After School Care Program ("B and A") is in place for students whose parents elect for them to attend. Care is provided for Mulberry students who range in age from 3-9 years, on a daily basis from 7:30 am – 9:00 am and from 3:00 pm – 5:30 pm. The program provides affordable childcare solely for Mulberry families. Time spent in the B and A program will be structured to be relaxed and comfortable with the opportunity to participate in activities that are productive and engaging. *B and A is not a pre-cursor to the school day nor an extension of it.* Activities will be open-ended enough to allow for the staggered arrival and departure schedules of the students.

Costs and Obligations

The fee to use B and A is **\$3.00 per half hour (or any portion thereof)**. Parents will be billed on a per use basis at the end of each month. There is a 20% discount for the 2nd child enrolled in Before/After Care. Parents are required to sign the children in and out of the program by logging the time in in the morning and the time out in the afternoon, and initialing each procedure. Children may not be dropped off before 7:30 am and must be picked up by 5:30 pm. Late charges will be added to your monthly total at the rate of **\$5 for every 5 minute (or any portion thereof)** increment that you are late picking up your child. Children will only be released to parents or specifically designated "others." When releasing children to anyone other than a parent, we may require identification until we get to know all designees. If you have a last minute change of plans, a telephone call to inform us is acceptable.

Behavioral Expectations and Consequences

Children participating in the B and A program will be expected to exhibit the same behaviors that are appropriate during the school day. We cherish our differences and our uniqueness as individuals, but we are also a community. It takes time to form relationships of trust and leadership with children. We assume that the child is reasonable and will exert self-control if he or she understands what is expected and the reasons why these expectations exist. All children participating in the B and A program will be expected to: Work cooperatively with the supervisor and the other children; Play quietly and safely; Respect him/herself and others at all times.

The supervisor will keep anecdotal records of any behaviors that are not in compliance with these expectations. If the supervisor feels that a student's behavior warrants it, she will speak with the parents in an effort to alleviate the behavior. If the behavior does not subside, it will be her prerogative, after careful consideration and consultation with the director, to suspend the student for anywhere from one day to the remainder of the semester, depending on the number

of times the behavior has been addressed. This will be done only after all other avenues have been exhausted.

The Academic Director will be the person who will support this program and to whom the supervisor, as well as parents, will communicate any concerns, needs, or other pertinent information.

School Daily Schedule

- 7:30 Before Care is until 9:00 a.m. Please walk your child to the supervisor and sign your child in.
- 9:00 Teachers in the classroom ready to greet your child!
- 9:00 School begins at 9:00. It is important for your child to be ready at 9:00 so we can begin our day ALL together. Kindergarten and 1st/2nd classes do have a tardiness policy. If a Kindergarten or 1st/2nd student arrives after 9:00 they are considered tardy and tardiness and absences are recorded on his/her permanent record.
- 11:30 Half Day Student Dismissal
- 11:20 Kindergarten/Multiage Lunch followed by recess**
- 11:45 Full Day Pre-K Lunch followed by recess**
- 12:30 School begins for Half Day Afternoon Students
- 3:00 Dismissal for Full Day students. The teachers will walk their students to the front of the building. We ask that you park and come and get your child. The parking lot is a busy place at this time and we do not want any children walking to a car without adult supervision. Once your child says "goodbye" to his/her teacher, the parent or guardian is responsible for the child.

After Care: If your child goes to after care on an occasional basis, please inform your child's teacher upon arrival at school or you can email your child's teacher prior to 2:30. You may call the school and leave a message time as well.

- 3:10 We will walk any child NOT picked up to Aftercare.
- 3:00 After Care is until 5:30 p.m. You will need to come in to the school to sign your child out of aftercare. *

*Please see B & A Parent Information Section in this Handbook

** All classes try to go outside every day, barring extreme cold and rain. Please send children in clothes, coats, and shoes that are made for outside play. We do have pea gravel and sand so we suggest closed toe shoes to allow your child to have maximum fun safety. As it begins to get cold, please send snow pants, mittens, hats, boots and etc. Every student should have an extra set of clothing marked in a bag with his/her name.

Snow Days/Inclement Weather

Mulberry School cancellations due to weather are at the discretion of the Academic Director. We do not want you to risk your safety, so if traveling to school is risky, please stay home, and call in your child's absence. If we are opened we will stay open until 3:00 (no after care). We do not do early dismissals. Once again, you may always pick up your child early.

Illnesses and Absences

- **Absences:** Absences should be called into the school prior to 8:30 in the morning. It is suggested that you email your child's teacher prior to 8:30. We only have one phone line and there are times where the phone is not answered. The Illinois Department of Public Health has required that we register children with highly contagious illness such as strep throat, chickenpox, mumps, measles, to name a few. Please let Mulberry School know immediately about your child's illness. **Your child is to be temperature/symptom free for 24 hours before he/she returns to school. If your child gets sick at school or has a fever of 100 degrees or more, we will ask you to pick up your child.**
- **Medicine:** With the exception of self-carry asthma medication(s) and epi-pens, all medicines will be administered by Administrative Assistant, Academic Director, or your child's teacher. ALL medicines (except asthma medicine[s] and epi-pens) should be turned into the front desk; clearly labeled with your child's name, the dosage and time to administer. If the medications need to be refrigerated, we have a plastic container clearly marked "medications." No medicine (except asthma medicine and epi-pens) should be kept in a child's lunchbox or backpack. Please include a signed letter giving us authorization to administer the medications. NO medicine will be administered without this information. Self-administered asthma medications and epi-pens may be administered by your child as needed and with your approval. All medical needs should be addressed by the completion of a Medication Authorization Form.

Student Property

- **Share:** Children love to share! We encourage your child to share books, science discoveries, etc. Please keep toys and electronics at home. However, items are welcomed if it is related to what your child is studying in the classroom or a special "share time" the teacher has requested.
- **Lost & Found:** We encourage you to label your child's name on all personal belongings; backpacks, lunchboxes, jackets, snow boots, etc. We do have a "lost and found" container by the front desk.

Backpacks Share Important Information

- **Papers:** Please see that your child brings a backpack to and from school every day. Take time to check your child's backpack nightly and go over your child's papers together. This is a great way to reinforce what your child did that day. Each class has a homework folder. Please check it nightly to see if there is any work for your child to complete as well as notes from your child's teacher.

Celebrations

- **Birthdays:** Birthdays are very important in the life of children. If you want to send special treats for your child's birthday please make arrangements with your child's teacher. We ask that you are considerate of dietary needs in your child's class. If your child is having a party outside of school and inviting the entire class, invitations may be distributed at school. Be sure you include the guest's name on the envelope and on the invitation. Please give invitations to your child's teacher and she will put them in folders. If only selected students are being invited, please email or handout the invitations, at dismissal, as not to exclude others in the class.
- **Holidays:** Room Parent Coordinators will have an active role in planning all school celebrations. The success of these events relies heavily on parent volunteers.

* See Room Parent Coordinator in Parent Volunteer Section.

Field Trips

Mulberry school believes in exposing children in a variety of ways to learn about his/her community and sharing the arts with young children. We will attend performances at BCPA, outdoor field trips, the museum, planetarium to just name a few. Field trips are chaperoned by your child's teacher, and parents/guardians. Children are expected to cooperate with his/her chaperone and be responsible and safe at all times. We suggest that your child wears a Mulberry t-shirt on field trips. It is an easy way for us to identify a Mulberry child. The chaperone is responsible for the children they transport in his/her car. We choose trips to coincide with the curriculum your child is learning. Please follow the guidelines for field trips:

- All drivers will need a proof of driver's license, car insurance and a recommended MVR. The school will need a copy of these on file prior to your first time to drive on a field trip.
- Drivers/Parents will be informed prior to the field trip with information as to who you are transporting in your car. It is the responsibility of the parent of the child being transported to install his/her child's car seat or give the driver of your child's permission to install car seat.
- Chaperone/driver is responsible for the children they are transporting on the field trip.
- Siblings are not allowed on field trips (unless a nursing infant). This may sound harsh, but this is your time as a parent to share with your Mulberry child and his/her peers.

- Chaperones will cover his/her cost of ticket or other expenses that the trip may accrue.
- Parent Participation hours will be assessed by chaperoning children other than your own child on field trips.
- Drivers whose background check indicate a vehicle or alcohol related police record may be excluded from transporting children other than their own for field trips.

Assessments

- **P/T Conferences:** There will be 2 parent/teacher conferences. The first conference is in the fall and the second one is in mid spring. Samples of children's work will be shared at conferences. If the need arises, conferences may be scheduled at any time throughout the year.
- **Evaluations:** Your child's teacher will be doing individual evaluations throughout the school year to track progress and areas for improvement. You will receive an end of the year written evaluation.

Healthy Food Choices

- **Go Green:** Mulberry has gone green! We do streamline recycling. We encourage children to bring reusable containers, silverware, drink containers in his/her lunchbox. We ask that you refrain from sending glass for safety concerns.
- **What to pack?** We encourage healthy food choices. Children are given 30 minutes to eat. Children will keep lunchboxes in their cubbies until lunch, so please pack their drinks and meal with a cold pack if they need to stay cool. Please send foods already prepared so it is an easy heat and eat. We do have microwaves for heating purposes.
- **Snacks:** Think healthy! Snacks are welcome. Birthday treats can be "treats". Your child may also be involved in preparing a variety of foods with his/her classroom teacher or parent. Please let your child's teacher and Mulberry School aware of any dietary restrictions. Please see our **Food Allergy Policy** in the handbook.
- **Who helps at lunch?** We have parents and teacher assistants who assist children during lunch time. This is a great opportunity for you to interact with your child's classmates and earn parent hours. Consistency is important in a child's life so we hope to have commitments from the same person each day of the week. We hope to have a semester long commitment for volunteering. Lunch rules are posted in lunch areas and we will have lunch supervisor trainings at the beginning of each semester.

Lunch Guidelines

1. Children sit while they are eating their lunch. Adults should make every effort to sit with the children, too. Feel free to bring your lunch and eat **with** the children and carry on a conversation. If you are the only adult, rotate to all tables. This is a behavior management tool and works very well. When you are engaged in conversation with the

children, they are focused and engaged and are less likely to engage in disruptive behavior. Talk about things that the children are interested in.

2. Children can use the lunch scissors to try and open items independently. However, items that have a tendency to explode while pushing on them (Go-Gurts) should be opened by an adult.
3. When children are finished eating, encourage them to clean up their lunch packages. Throw away needed items, place recycles in bin, place returnable items in lunch box. Keep half-eaten sandwiches and leftovers in the lunch box. This helps parents to gauge their child's eating patterns.
4. When a child has finished packing up their lunch box, books are available to read. Feel free to read to a small group of children – especially if there are 2 adults supervising lunch.
5. Pre-k children are dismissed to the teachers. Kindergarten and Multi-age can line up and be taken outside by the playground supervisor.
6. Please clean the tables by using the spray bottle and paper towels or the disinfecting cloths. Chairs may need to be wiped down, too. After 2nd lunch period, please sweep the floors of leftover food.
7. Please inform the classroom teacher if any child is not quite themselves or complain of not feeling well.

Kindergarten/Multi-age 11:20-11:40		Pre-K 11:45– 12:15	
11:20	lunch starts	11:45	lunch starts
11:35	remind children to begin cleanup/read	12:05	remind children to begin cleaning up/read
11:38	lunch boxes packed up	12:13	lunch boxes packed up
11:40	line up for outside and clean tables	12:15	dismiss to teacher – clean tables/floor

Safety

The safety of Mulberry School's students and staff is of extreme importance. All Mulberry Staff will have a Crisis Management Plan in their classroom at all times. The students will participate in occasional tornado drills, fire and code red (lockdown) drills. You are welcome to stop by the front desk to review our plan.

Background Checks: All parents, staff, student workers, student teachers, practicum students and volunteers submit to a background check every year.

Playground Guidelines

Below are guidelines for supervision on the playground. Please note that your responsibilities are for supervising the children, not socializing with other adults on the playground. **Cell**

phones should be carried for emergencies **ONLY**. Please **do not** text or talk on your cell phones while supervising the children. They need your utmost attention. **Please be aware of all aspects of the playground.**

For all equipment, children use their own skills to climb. Placing children on the equipment denies them the opportunity to develop their gross motor skills.

- **Swings:** Children may swing on their bottoms or their stomachs. Help children by reminding them to grasp the links tightly to avoid falling. It's ok to encourage children to pump their legs instead of relying on you to push them the entire outdoor time! Just remember, children may not understand the word "pump" but might better understand "legs out and legs back" or to copy a child swinging next to them. This is a skill that is very complicated and takes much practice to master. Another way to help a child develop this skill is to stand in front of the swing and ask them to "touch your hand" in order to get the feeling of kicking. Or, you can teach a child to "kick the sky" to move forward and to "hide" her legs while going back.
- **Slides:** Preschool children slide down the slide feet first and on their bottoms. Kindergarten and multi-age children may go up the slide. Please check with the teachers to see if it's an "up" day on the slide. Supervision is important at all times when children are learning this gross motor skill.
- **Gravel, sand and wood chips:** Encourage children who are throwing gravel, sand or wood chips to use shovels and buckets instead. Children may need reminders but please do so in a kind and firm voice, not in a harsh tone. Children often forget and it's up to us as adults to provide the guidance. Children may use the small brooms to sweep sand and gravel off the sidewalks.
- **Wagons and bikes:** Children are seated while riding on wagons or bikes. While in the wagon, children need to be encouraged to hold on to the sides of the wagon and sit with legs crossed or extended. Either direction for riding is fine but please be sure everyone is going the same direction.
- **Problem Solving:** Rather than being punitive when play gets rambunctious and taking toys away, lead the children in ways they can be safe with the toys and with each other. Instead of saying, "you can't play this because you are being rough" say, "I'll hold the ball (or any item) while we talk about this. The play looks like it's getting rough. How can we make it safer so no one gets hurt?" Encourage the children to solve the problem, not the adult.
- **Using the bathroom or getting a drink:** During outdoor time, children may use the bathroom or get a drink of water. A child must inform an adult that they are doing so before they enter the building. Please keep track of how long a child has been inside.
- **Clean up:** Teachers and children participate in clean up. Bikes and wagons are parked along the building. Sand toys are put in the bin. Sidewalk chalk is picked up and not left lying on the playground.

How Parents Can Help Their Children

- **How can you help your child have a great school year?** Parent involvement is the key to success for your child! Volunteer in your child's classroom, at lunch, field trips, social events are just a few ways parents get involved at Mulberry School. We will be using "signup genius" as well as teachers may post sign ups on the outside of their classroom. You may even notice general sign ups on the parent board between the double doors and on the doors as you walk in.
- **Parents make a difference:**
 - **P - Present (be present when your child talks about school)**
 - **A - Ask questions to your child, to the teacher**
 - **R - Reinforce what your child is learning**
 - **E - Encourage your child's efforts and progress**
 - **N - Notice your child's work and school information**
 - **T - Take Time to talk to your child daily about school, what they did and who they played with.**
- **Keep your child healthy:** Good nutrition, and good healthy habits are essential to good health.
- **Have a consistent bedtime:** Children have more energy for school if they are well rested.
- **Spend time with your child:** Talk and listen to your children. Do activities together, even if it is as simple as taking a walk or making a puzzle.
- **Encourage your children:** Recognize and reinforce your child's learning. Learning is hard work. Children need support and encouragement.
- **Read with your child:** Read to your child and have your child read to you.
- **Know what your child is doing in school:** Stop and visit your child's classroom, look at the children's work on the walls, share information with your child's teacher that may be helpful. If you have a concern, contact the teacher, director, or administrative assistant. We are here to make Mulberry School the best learning environment for all!
- **The Importance of Parent Meetings:** Parent meetings are a great way to stay informed on current news/events at Mulberry School. Parent meetings also give parents the opportunity to become involved in the direction and needs of the school. It is requested that at least one parent from each family attends the Parent Meeting. Please refer to the calendar as to dates and time for these meetings. **Attendance at a meeting equals one (1) Parent Participation Hour/Family.** Childcare is offered at \$2.00/child/hour.

Parent Volunteers

- **Room Parent Coordinator:** All classroom teachers will be seeking for 1 or 2 Room Parent Coordinators.
 - **Duties of a Room Parent Coordinator:** This person will be the liaison between the classroom teacher and the parents in your class. You will be responsible for,

but not limited to, coordinating classroom celebrations, or any other activity that the teacher deems specific to your class. (Ex. Valentine's Day Party)

- As a group (the classroom coordinators from each class collectively), will be responsible for meeting with the academic director to plan, coordinate, and implement school wide activities such as the Halloween Party, Cultural Diversity Celebration and Field Day. You will be responsible to follow up with parents from your classroom to implement these plans. We will meet 4-6 weeks prior to the event to begin making plans.
- **Calendar:** Please refer to the yearly calendar online to keep yourself informed with the happenings at Mulberry School that will allow you to plan for the future. You will also receive reminders from your child's teacher and school-wide emails.

Fundraising

Fundraising is a necessity at Mulberry School. The money raised covers our operating expenses, teacher salaries and allows us to maintain an affordable tuition for a private school. This year we will be hosting the following fundraisers:

- **Mulberry Gala** is typically scheduled in the spring.

It is extremely important that we have involvement from **many** families for the fundraisers. Together, we can make this happen. We are a small school but have a mighty group of parents who can make these events successful. Be on the lookout for emails from Cooperative Liaison or signs posted at the school's entrance/exit.

Other Fundraisers Possibilities: Box Tops, Book Fair, State Farm Good Neighbor Grants, Country Financial Company, Employee matching grants, Market Day. We are also open to new ideas and suggestions!

Publicity and Promotions

Parents are our greatest source of publicity. Word of mouth from other Mulberry School families is the best way to share the wonderful things about Mulberry School. So, bring the whole family out for promotion events such as the Worldwide Day of Play Uptown Block Party, ISU Homecoming Parade, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Christmas Parade or the Lake Run Club Kids Run for Fun. The time you spend at the table contributes to your parent participation hours. It's important that we have lots of parents and kids at these events so please try to participate in at least one promotion event throughout the school year. And, please share posts with your friends from Facebook.

Why Mulberry?

Here is what our parents had to say:

- Close-knit community for students and parents

- Experiential, play-based learning
- Individualized Teaching
- Parent Cooperative – Parents are welcomed and encouraged to be in the classroom
- Small class sizes
- Curriculum integrates the arts into instruction
- Experienced, caring, certificated teachers
- Children experience meaningful and multiple Field Trips
- Multiage Classroom allows for peer to peer teaching and a variety of group learning opportunities
- Before and After Care Services available
- Warm feeling – My child loves school!
- Structured interaction between classes and grade levels

“It’s been the best decision we’ve made regarding our children”

ASBESTOS STATEMENT

DATE: August 10, 2018

TO: Parents and Staff

RE: Annual Asbestos Management Plan Notice

FROM: Academic Director

This is to inform you of the status of Mulberry School’s asbestos management plan. It has been determined by the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Federal Environmental Protection Agency that asbestos is a potential health hazard, and precautions should be taken to avoid disturbing any asbestos containing materials.

As required, our building was inspected for asbestos in June 2018 for the 3 year inspection. The AHERA law requires that a visual surveillance of asbestos containing areas be completed every six months, and a re-inspection conducted every three years. Any evidence of disturbance or change in condition will be documented in the Management Plan as required.

The Inspection/Management Plan is available for public review in the Mulberry School administrative office. Should you wish to review the plans, please call to make an appointment during school hours.

Any concerns relative to asbestos containing material should be directed to info@mulberryschool.org

