

# Montezuma's Early Childhood Classrooms Parent & Student Handbook



Montezuma Elementary  
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## **Mission Statement**

Montezuma Community School District will provide a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of preschool aged children.

## **Philosophy**

The Montezuma Preschool and Early Childhood Center is founded on the philosophy that children, their families, and society benefit from high quality early childhood programs. We believe that early childhood education is critical to the success later in life.

The program is based on the belief that children need time to be children and time to experience their childhoods. Teaching is the art of providing young children with an environment that encourages active exploration and discovery. Projects are planned, yet the day can be responsive to individual needs and environmental happenings. Opportunities are provided for children to take responsibility, make decisions, and learn through play.

## **Classroom Description**

We believe that our preschool education program is second-to-none and that our students come to gain the skills necessary to be ready for kindergarten. The following are some traits that our parents have identified in our preschool:

- The students are truly excited to come to school each day.
- Our students are actively engaged learners.
- The classroom promotes a strong sense of belonging and ownership to and of the classroom.
- Our staff is caring and strives to provide a class curriculum as well as opportunities for individual attention.
- Students work collaboratively.
- The play opportunities are designed to promote exploration and develop social skills.
- All students leave with a solid foundation of which to build upon in later years.

## **Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment & Preschool Standards**

Montezuma Community School District has adopted research-based strategies based on Creative Curriculum to assist us in developing a quality preschool curriculum.

The Creative Curriculum: *The Creative Curriculum* balances teacher-planned and child-initiated learning, emphasizing responsiveness to children's strengths, interests, needs, and learning styles. Creative Curriculum focuses on five components: how children develop and learn, the learning environment, what children learn, caring and teaching, and partnering with families. [The Creative Curriculum for Classrooms]

Student Assessment: GOLD™ assessment system, a seamless, observation-based assessment system for children from birth through kindergarten that blends ongoing, authentic assessment in all areas of development and learning with intentional, focused performance assessment tasks for selected predictors of school readiness in the areas of literacy and numeracy. [Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment System, p. 1]

Children are assessed in the following ways:

- Observational data provides an ongoing anecdotal record of each child's progress during daily activities.
- Child portfolios are organized by the teaching staff and include the assessments, observational data, and child work samples collected on an on-going basis.
- Families are asked to contribute information about their child's progress. Young children often show different skills in different settings. Working together, the teaching staff and families can gather a complete picture of a child's growth and development.
- Our AEA speech pathologist screen and monitors progress throughout the school year.
- Hearing and Vision screenings are completed during our first semester.
- Teacher made parent survey. The survey is completed prior to home visits in the fall of the year. Discussion over the survey is completed at the time of the meeting.

The information from the above is used in the following ways:

- To provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan developmentally appropriate experiences;
- To provide information to parents about their children's developmental milestones;
- To indicate possible areas that requires additional assessment.

Reporting Assessment information will be shared formally with families during Parent Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring. The preschool teacher will communicate weekly regarding the class activities through a newsletter. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested by teacher or parent at any time.

If, through observation or information from district and GOLD assessments, the teacher feels that there is a possible issue related to a developmental delay or other special need, she/he will communicate this to the family during a conference, sharing documentation of the concern. Suggestions for next steps may include the following, with the knowledge and consent of the parents:

- The teacher requests assistance from the Individual Success Plan team as an early intervention process. This team engages in problem identification, plan interventions, provide support, and make outside resources available to those individuals requesting assistance. The Success Plan team is available and functional for all students and teachers in the building.
- A request may also be made to Central Rivers AEA for support and additional ideas or more formalized testing.

The preschool teacher would assist in arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated.

If a child is determined to need special accommodations, those accommodations are included in the materials, environment, and lesson plans for that child. Examples include sign language and visuals for children with hearing impairments or language delays and behavior plans for children whose behavior does not respond to the typical strategies used by teaching staff in the classroom.

Program Standards: Montezuma CSD aligns our program with the Quality Preschool Standards, QPPS. The QPPS standards are based on best practices for early childhood students, and ensure a highly qualified teacher provides the curriculum. This process will continue to help us evaluate our preschool program.

### **Outside Learning Activities**

We have daily opportunities for outdoor play as weather permits, and provided the air quality and environmental safety conditions do not pose a threat. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise, and be active. Sometimes we spend longer getting bundled up than we spend outside. We use the Child Care Weather Watch guidelines produced by Healthy Child Care Iowa to determine if the Wind Chill Factor or Heat Index is safe for outdoor play.

It is important that your child can play comfortably outside. Please dress your child for the weather. When it is cold outside your child needs a warm coat, mittens or gloves, and a hat. For warmer days, dressing your child lightly is just as important. For in-between days, dressing your child in layers is a good idea.

In cases when we cannot go outside (due to weather conditions) children are given the opportunity to use indoor equipment for similar activities inside and are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment. For example, tumbling mats may be offered for upper body activities or rolling across the mat.

There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. We encourage you to bring a hat or other clothing for your child to wear as another protection from the sun. Sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher will be applied to your child's exposed skin (only with your written parental permission to do so). We will also use an insect repellent containing DEET (only with your written permission) no more than once a day to protect your child from insect bites when the public health authorities recommend its use.

Program staff will complete the National Program for Playground Safety's Suggested General Maintenance Checklist on a weekly basis.

### **Water Activities**

Montezuma Elementary has a water table in the classroom. This is used to students to stand by and play in with toys. During the water activities students with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate to ensure that no infectious diseases are spread. Children are also not

allowed to drink the water as well. When the activity is completed the water table is drained and prepared with fresh water before a new group of students participate.

Montezuma Elementary does not have an outdoor water area nor do we have a swimming area. Staff will supervise students by sight and sound during all activities.

## **Registration Information:**

### **Enrollment**

Requirements for admittance to the preschool or early childhood center are:

1. Students must be 4 years old by September 15 of that school year
2. Current physical
3. Immunization card (See the following heading for more information)
4. Registration forms completed to include emergency information
5. Permission form signed for emergency care
6. Authorization for pick up
7. \$30 school registration fee

### **Enrollment Guidelines**

Montezuma Community School has placed an emphasis on enrolling the students of Montezuma School District. We will prioritize enrollment in the following manner:

- Resident four-year-old students demonstrating financial need;
- Resident four-year-old students;
- Non-resident four-year old students demonstrating financial need;
- Non-resident four-year-old students
- Additional Guidelines:
  - A 4- year old student with a documented educational plan will receive priority. {Two preschool slots will be held for 3-year old students with educational needs.}
  - If Montezuma's Preschool is near capacity and two students of similar age enroll for the upcoming school year the decision will be brought to committee decision.
    - i. Names will not be provided to the committee, but the committee will determine entrance based on the following criteria:
      1. Educational Plan
      2. Access to preschool in a previous year.
      3. Academic Observations over the year. {Preschool or Kindergarten readiness}
      4. Physical needs
      5. Social
      6. Age {Young to Old}
- A 4-year old student receives priority over a student of 5-years of age, as 5-year old students are able to attend our Beginnergarten program.

- Names of students will not known by the selection committee allowing for objectivity.
- Montezuma Schools also must serve students turning 3–years of age on an IFSP. The building principal will keep in contact with the AEA for numbers.
- Changes to Preschool, Multi-age Classroom, and Kindergarten rosters can be made for the upcoming school year up until August 15th.

### **Multi-Age Classrooms:**

In the event that the Montezuma Early Childhood classroom has spaces available we will provide learning opportunities to students who are 5-years old. Our multi-age classroom will use the following criteria to evaluate entrance:

- 4-year old and 5-year old students will have access to our multi-age classroom.
- The multi-age classroom will be in session Monday through Thursday for one half day each afternoon.
- Our 5-year old students will also attend **ALL** day on Friday.
- Our schedule ensures the 5-year old attendees will have access to 20 hours of instruction per week.
- The multi-age classroom will allow for two certified classroom teachers to differentiate instruction based on the needs of the students.
- Instruction for 5-year old students will be based off of the kindergarten standards and instruction for 4-year old students will be based off of the Creative Curriculum and the GOLD Assessment.
- Our entrance criteria for 5-year old students entering the multi-age classroom will follow the guidelines as outlined below: [Upon nearing capacity of 20 students in the classroom.]
  - Educational Plan
  - Access to preschool in a previous year.
  - Academic Observations over the year. {Preschool or Kindergarten readiness}
  - Physical needs
  - Social
  - Age {Young to Old}
- The rubric used for entrance determination is at the end of the handbook.

### **Preschool & Multi-Age Classroom Fees**

Montezuma’s current pre-school and multi-age classrooms require no tuition to be paid by families. Our Preschool Program is part of the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP). Tuition for the morning and afternoon sessions is \$0 per month.

A nonrefundable registration fee of \$30 is required of all students. This is to be paid at the time of registration in May or at the time of registration in August.

### **Late Registration**

Families who would like to register their child after the beginning of the school year are

welcome to, providing there are still openings available. If no openings are available the student will be placed on a waiting list and the family will be contacted as openings occur.

### **Immunization**

The Iowa State Department of Health requires the following immunization requirements to be met before attending a preschool. Health records must be provided to Montezuma Community School District within 30 days [6 weeks] of attendance.

If records are not provided by the end of 3 weeks, the school nurse will make contact to review health records with you. The school will assist in setting up appointments for completion of records, if necessary. We will default to state health guidelines regarding school attendance.

DTAP	4 doses
Polio	3 doses
MMR	1 dose. First dose on or after 1 year of age.
Hepatitis B	3 doses.
Varicella (Chicken Pox)	1 dose after age 1 or a reliable history of natural disease
Hib	3 doses with the final dose in the series on or after 12 months of age.
Pneumococcal	4 doses if the student received 3 doses before 12 months of age; or 3 doses if the student received 2 doses before 12 months of age; or 2 doses if the student received 1 dose before 12 months of age; or 1 dose if no doses had been received prior to 24 months of age.

### **Preschool Schedule**

Montezuma Community Preschool operates in alignment with the K-12 District calendar beginning in August and continuing through the month of May. The following table indicates the type programming available.

Service	Hours of Operation	Cost	Days of Service
AM Preschool	8:15 –11:20 AM	\$0/mo.	M - Th
PM Preschool	12:20 – 3:15 PM	\$0/mo.	M - Th

Our schedule allows our teaching staff to collaborate on Fridays. Staff uses this time to discuss student observations and plan for the upcoming week. Our staff also has time to clean rooms on this day, as well.

#### **Morning Schedule**

8:10 - 8:30	Arrival/Table Activity
8:30 - 9:00	Group Time /Story
9:00 - 9:45	Center Time
9:45 - 10:00	Recess
10:00 - 10:10	Bathroom/Wash Hands
10:10 - 10:25	Snack
10:25 - 10:30	Story Time
10:30 - 10:45	Art
10:45 - 11:05	Centers
11:-05 - 11:25	Small Groups
11:25 - 11:30	Sharing/Dismissal

Afternoon Schedule

12:15 - 12:30	Arrival/Table Activity
12:30 - 1:00	Group Time/Story
1:00 - 1:40	Center Time
1:40 - 2:05	Bathroom/Snack
2:05 - 2:10	Story Time
2:10 - 2:25	Art
2:25 - 2:40	Centers



2:40 - 3:00	Small Groups
3:00 - 3:15	Recess
3:20	Dismissal

## **School Calendar, Arrival, and Dismissal**

Preschool will follow the regular school calendar days for the majority of the year. If there is a late start for weather or other circumstances, students who attend the morning session will not have school. The afternoon preschool sessions learning will begin at the regular time. If we are to dismiss early for weather or other circumstances, the afternoon pre-school will not meet. Please listen to the area radio and TV stations for weather information.

Arrival Time: Students attending the morning session should arrive after 8:00 AM unless they are riding the bus or eating breakfast. Afternoon students should arrive after 12:15 PM. Parents should make sure that they see their child into the classroom. Make sure the teacher or paraprofessional knows your child has arrived.

Dismissal: Parents are encouraged to come into the building to pick your student up at the end of either the morning or afternoon sessions. We only ask that you wait in the office area and we ask you enter the building through the main entrance by the circle drive. If your student is riding the bus in the afternoon, school personnel will escort him/her to the bus.

While arrival and dismissal time is not the best time for a lengthy discussion, it is a good time to share with the teacher important information concerning your child.

## **Parent Permission**

There may be days when you need to have your student go a different direction after school. If your student needs to ride a different bus or will be picked up by someone different please send a note. This will help us keep your child as safe as possible. If you are unable to send a note, please call the school at least one-half hour before dismissal.

## **Montezuma Preschool Staffing & Support Services**

Staff Member	Position
Mrs. Kelsey Sheets-Schechinger	Montezuma Preschool Instructor
Mrs. Holly DeJong	Montezuma Preschool Associate
Mr. Kurt Hanna	Montezuma Preschool Administrator
Ms. Andrea McGeogh	AEA Preschool Special Education Consultant

Mrs. Marta Miller	AEA Early Childhood Consultant
Mrs. Kara Petersen	AEA Speech and Language Consultant
Ms. Linda Rosenboom	AEA Occupational Services

## **Class Size**

The Montezuma Community School District values a proper student:adult ratio. Our school district has a teacher who is certified in Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education. Montezuma CSD also employs an adult para-educator to aide in the education process. Our associate is has completed the para-educator early childhood training for associates. We maintain a 10:1 student:adult ratio to best educate our preschool aged (4-year old) students.

## **Supervision**

Before children arrive at school, the preschool teacher will complete the following daily safety checklist indoor and outdoor:

- All safety plugs and electric outlets are covered, heat/AC, water temperature, and toilets, etc. in working order.
- All cleaning supplies/poisons out of children reach and stored properly.
- Classroom and materials checked for cleanliness/broken parts, etc. including playground.
- Supplies checked - first aid kit, latex gloves, soap, paper towels, etc.
- Daily monitoring of environment - spills, sand, etc. Other serious problems reported to head custodian.
- Upon arrival, each child is observed by the teacher for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate in the daily activities.

No child will be left unsupervised while attending preschool. Staff will supervise primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible as long as teachers check every two to three minutes on children who are out-of-sight (e.g. those who can use the toilet independently, who are in the library area, etc.)

## **Student Behaviors**

The teaching staff in the preschool is highly trained, responsive, respectful, and purposeful. The teachers anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. When children have challenging behaviors teachers promote pro-social behavior by:

- interacting in a respectful manner with all children.
- modeling turn taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors
- helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials.

- engaging children in the care of their classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group.
- encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed

Teaching staff will guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationship to peers and adults. Children will be taught social, communication, and emotional regulation skills. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff, parents, and AEA support staff will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child become physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior.

Permissible Methods of Discipline:

*For acts of aggression and fighting* (biting, scratching, hitting) staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may: (1) Separate the children involved; (2) Immediately comfort the individual who was injured; (3) Care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident; (4) Notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident; (5) Review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action is there is a recurrence.

*Prohibited Practices*

The program does not, and will not, employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

1. harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children nor make threats or derogatory remarks.
2. physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing.
3. any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect.
4. withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

## **Educational Services**

Montezuma Community Schools will provide a high quality education to each of the students attending. Our school district is also able to provide services in conjunction with our local Area Education Agency. The available services are in the area of Special Education and Speech and Language. For both areas, Central Rivers AEA has a specialist come to our building two days per week. The list of persons providing services to our preschool aged students is as follows:

## **Transition to Kindergarten**

Montezuma Community School District and the staff feel it is important to transition students to kindergarten in an efficient manner. We use the following methods to transition families and students:

1. Meet with pre-school parents at a Pre-Kindergarten - Kindergarten Round-up parent meeting.
2. Allow students to attend kindergarten for a portion of the day in late April or early May. Our kindergarten students will be in attendance and will visit Mrs. Schechinger's classroom during round-up.
3. Allow students to visit the kindergarten classroom during the last week of school

## **Communication Procedures:**

### **Children's Records**

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest are allowed to access student records without parent permission. Parents may access, request amendments to and copy their child's records during regular office hours. Parents may also file a complaint with United States Department of Education if they feel their rights regarding their child's records have been violated.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form should they or the school request information to be shared with another agency, stating whom the information is to be released, the reason for the release, when it expires, and ways the parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

### **Communication**

Communication between teacher and parent and parent to teacher is vital to the educational process. If both parties are excited about what they are doing in school then their experience will be that much better. For this reason we have developed many avenues for that communication to take place.

- Newsletters – Classroom newsletters are sent home weekly. You will be able to find them in your students folder. The newsletter will provide a summary of the weeks activities and provides a great discussion starter with your student.
- Conferences – Conferences are scheduled to occur twice a year. The first opportunity is in late October to early November and the second opportunity is in the middle of March with each session beginning at 3:30 PM and lasting until 7:30 PM. At each time a letter will come to you via e-mail or with your student, so that you may identify a time that works for you. We will then do our best to accommodate your time schedule. Conferences are a great time for you to meet with your son/daughters teacher to discuss the academic progress of your student. Please understand that you do not need to wait for conferences to meet with the classroom teacher. You may request a conference at any time.

However, pick up or drop off times are not the best time to discuss your son/daughter's progress. Our staff needs to prepare for the next session.

- Home Visits: Montezuma CSD hopes to develop a positive home to school and school to home relationship by meeting with you in your home at your convenience. The meetings will focus mainly on student performance, any questions you may have, health related topics, and school ready skills. This is a no pressure meeting and requires no preparation on your part.
- Family Night: Montezuma's preschool holds an annual Family Fun Night. The activities developed revolved around the subject of literacy. This past year the theme for our Preschool Family Night was Nursery Rhymes or Dr. Seuss. The students and parents participated in many activities. A good time was had by all.

### **Open Door Policy**

Parents and legal guardians are always welcome to visit the preschool classroom. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors will check in at the elementary school office. Visitors are asked to please use discretion with regard to bringing babies and toddlers to school as young children may disrupt class sessions. Photo identification will be required for any unknown visitor to the classroom. We would appreciate this visit to be arranged prior to coming in to help limit possible disruptions to the academic day.

### **Transportation**

Transportation will be available on our regular bus routes. However, Montezuma Community Schools does not offer transportation during the mid-day. Parents/Guardians will need to arrange for this time period. Please send a note to school or call with any changes to your normal routine. This information will be passed on to the classroom teacher prior to dismissal.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips can be important learning experiences for our students. The trips help to reinforce the learning experiences from the classroom. Some of our trips will be within our community. During registration, parents will sign a release form for students to attend our local field trips. Our preschool teacher will communicate such trips in weekly newsletters. In the case of an out of town field trip, Montezuma CSD will use district school buses to transport students to and from the learning experience. In this case, the classroom teacher will send home a permission slip requesting parent signature to acknowledge and provide permission for the student to attend.

Montezuma Community School District will bring contact information along in case of emergency. We will also bring a first aid kit and emergency transport information along. Students will be split into smaller groups and the supervisors will count students every 15 minutes. Children will also be accompanied to restroom ensuring that students not be left alone unsupervised.

### **Concern Procedures**

If parents have a concern regarding a classroom and/or teacher situation in school, they are urged

to first contact the teacher involved to discuss the problem and possible solutions. If the concern cannot be resolved at this level, the parents should then request a conference with the principal.

If parents have a concern regarding a bus situation, they are urged to first contact the bus driver involved. If the concern cannot be solved at this level, the parent should then contact the transportation director, Paul Hawkins. If the concern is still not resolved, the building principal should be contacted.

If the parent still feels a concern has not received proper consideration, further recourse is available through the office of the superintendent. Concerns still not resolved may then be taken through the Montezuma Board of Education.

### **Preschool Advisory Committee**

The Montezuma Elementary staff feels it is important to develop a cooperative partnership with our parents and the community to ensure continued development and expansion of our Pre-school program. Through this committee, we hope to develop recommendations to the board of education and provide information to the public and prospective parents regarding the rules, regulations, and expectations of an Iowa pre-school. It is my belief that through group discussions and gathering input from all interested parties this organization will collaboratively improve the education process.

The following statements are goals of the Preschool Advisory Committee:

- Develop ideas on how to expand our existing pre-school program;
- Design surveys to send to district patrons;
- Review data and form recommendations for program decisions;
- Present recommendations to the Montezuma Community School Board.

### **Health Information:**

#### **Absences & Health Related Information**

Parents are asked to notify the elementary office whenever a child will not be in attendance by 9 AM if in the morning class or by 1 PM if in the afternoon class. You may contact Montezuma Elementary by phone at 623-5121 or by e-mail at [elem.office@montezuma.k12.ia.us](mailto:elem.office@montezuma.k12.ia.us). If notification is not received by that time, a phone call will be made to your home or cell phone.

If the absence is due to illness, we ask that you inform us of the sickness. This will help us monitor any contagious sicknesses our students may have been exposed to. If an extended absence is necessary or if absences become frequent, we ask that you provide a doctor's note.

We encourage families to make appointments for their students on school vacation days or on in-service days. This is important as students will begin to build a consistent routine and they will miss important information when they are absent.

**\*\*Health Information:** All health information will only be released to the parents unless a hand written request is provided to the school by the parent.

### **Health Services**

Montezuma Community Schools employs a certified nurse. She is here on a full-time basis and works to evaluate student health. Our nurse also views each person's immunization record and will work with you to ensure compliance. If at any time you have questions regarding the health of your child, feel free to contact us at 623-5129.

### **Illnesses**

Montezuma Schools is committed to promoting the health and general well being of all students. In order to assist us with that goal, I would like to explain the district's illness policy.

Children will feel more comfortable when they are ill if they do not have to leave home or can be home soon after becoming ill. If your child gets sick at school, you will be called and required to pick up your child.

The following conditions are indicators as to whether or not your child should be at school:

1. A contagious disease within the last 24 hours
2. A temperature over 100 degrees within the last 24 hours
3. Diarrhea and /or vomiting within the last 24 hours.
4. Discharge from the nose that is not clear.
5. Untreated pinkeye.

All students will be expected to participate in outdoor activities unless a doctor's note is provided to the school.

### **Illness Prevention**

Frequent hand washing is key to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Teachers teach children how to wash their hands effectively. Posters of children using proper hand washing procedures are placed by each sink. The program follows these practices regarding hand washing:

- Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand-washing procedures and are periodically monitored.

- Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children when hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.
- Staff assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.

Children and adults wash their hands:

- upon arrival for the day;
- after diapering or using the toilet (use of wet wipes is acceptable for infants);
- after handling body fluids (e.g., blowing or wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, or any touching of mucus, blood or vomit);
- before meals and snacks, preparing or serving food, or handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry);
- after playing in water that that is shared by two or more people;
- after handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals.

### **Administration of Medication**

The school will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent and an order from a health provider for a specific child. Because administration of medication in the school is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside preschool hours cannot be made. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

Medicine must be provided to the school in the original bottle with instructions. Medications will be kept in the nurses' station or school office in a locked environment.

### **Student Supplies:**

#### **Supplies**

- 2 - standard size pencils
- 1 - set of Fiskars scissors with metal blades
- 1 - small Spacemaker box for supplies
- 1 - box of facial tissues
- 3 - large glue sticks
- 4 - boxes of 8 small crayons (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, black, brown)
- 1 - school bag (Regular size - big enough for notebook)
- 1 - set of watercolor paints
- 2 - pocket folders

#### **Clothing**

Children are asked to dress in play clothes. Taking part in all activities is part of the fun and no child should have to worry about “getting dirty”. Since many activities take place outdoors, please dress your child for the weather.

In cold weather, please send warm coats, mittens, hats, boots, snow pants, etc., as they will be



going outside.

**It is also a good idea to mark all of your child's items with his/her name or initials.**

For the warmer days, dressing your child lightly is just as important. For those in-between days dressing your child in layers is a practical idea.

## **Toileting**

We understand that accidents occur, especially when a child is highly engaged in an activity. Therefore, we do ask that a clean set of clothes be stored at the school, just in case. A child will never be punished for wetting, soiling, or not using the toilet.

Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area, i.e., the bathroom adjacent to the classroom with a mat to prevent students from lying directly on the floor. Food handling will not be permitted in this diapering area.

Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool Programs Standards: Standard 5, Criteria 7:

- Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
- Staff observe children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
- Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
- At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child if being changed on an elevated surface.
- Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
- Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use. [i.e. Nurse's Office]
- Diapering and Gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program administrator to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.

## **Healthy Snacks & Milk**

Breakfast will be served as part of the school lunch program for those who want it. Students will pay the regular district breakfast prices. Milk will be available at snack time each semester for \$30.00\*. You may pay for the entire year in the fall and that cost is \$60.00\*. Water is always available for drinking if milk is not purchased. *Qualifying for free and reduced lunch does not affect the payment for milk. (\* - Prices may change due to milk bids.)*

If a student is allergic to cow's milk the kitchen will provide a milk alternate. The alternate may include but is not limited to soy milk or rice milk. Staff needs to be knowledgeable of any allergies. (Please submit a note from the doctor acknowledging the allergy to our school nurse.)

Montezuma Community Schools and the cafeteria staff will develop snack calendars for the year. You may reference our lunch menu on-line to see what the snacks will be for the week or day. Our snack calendar consists of fruits and vegetables. Snacks provided by our food service program are refrigerated until time of serving. If hot snacks would be served, staff would keep foods hotter than 110 degrees out of children's reach.

Classroom Treats: We ask that all snacks be healthy snacks or pre-packaged. This is important to protect students with allergies and health concerns. [We need to be able to identify the ingredients of each snack brought in.]

### **Drink**

All foods and beverages brought from need to be labeled with a child's name and date.

### **School to Home Requests:**

#### **Objects from Home**

Students enjoy bringing items from home to show and share with their friends. However, Montezuma Community School District has ample amount of activities and toys to play with, so we discourage students from bringing items from home. There may be a time when students are able to bring items in the sharing box and we encourage students to bring items at that time. Montezuma Schools cannot responsible for items that may be lost or broken at school.

#### **Parties**

Classroom Parties will be held in relationship to calendar events. The classroom teacher may also develop special days for the students to participate in. In each case, parents may be requested to provide a snack, plates, etc... Please watch newsletters for updates as to when the events are held.

Birthday treats: We ask that all snacks be healthy snacks or pre-packaged. This is important to protect students with allergies and health concerns. [We need to be able to identify the ingredients of each snack brought in.]

Birthday Invitations: A birthday is a great time and needs to be celebrated, however if you are holding a party at home we ask that you mail the invitations.

#### **Pets & Animals**

At times students enjoy bringing animals into the school for sharing. We understand this is fun and can be a learning situation, however, we will need to have a certification of health from a veterinarian before the visit can occur. If classmates have animal allergies, we will not be able to allow the visit either.

With the above reasoning in mind, Montezuma Schools does not allow pets and animals into the building.

## **Calendar Information:**

### **Web-site Calendar**

Montezuma CSD will provide a calendar with all school activities, but this may become outdated as the year progresses. I encourage you to view our district's website at [www.montezuma-schools.org](http://www.montezuma-schools.org) and click on the 'Activities Calendar' button under 'District Links'. There you will see the most up-to-date information. The website will allow you to sign up for automatic updates to our calendar.

### **Weather Related Information**

In case of weather related or situational school closings we will provide official announcements on our school website, through School Alerts at <https://schoolalerts.iowa.gov>, KGRN -1410 AM radio station, KBOE- 740 AM/104.9 FM radio station, WHO TV – Channel 13, WOI TV – Channel 5, KCCI TV - Channel 8.

If we delay school or have an early out the AM or PM sessions of preschool will not meet on that day.

School Alerts will also be made through our student information system via e-mail or text message.

### **Miscellaneous**

Please read the Montezuma Elementary Handbook, provided to you at the home visit, for further information. All other situations not covered, in either handbook, are covered under board policy or administrative decision

### **Classroom Volunteers**

Classroom volunteers are welcome in our building. However, Montezuma Community School District requests that all volunteers complete the application process and allow the district to complete a background check before working with students. This is done for the safety our students.

### **Montezuma Community Schools Annual Notices & Board Policies**

#### **Non-Smoking Environment:**

Montezuma Community School District in accordance with state law is a tobacco free environment.

#### **Multicultural, Nonsexist Approach to Education:**

The Montezuma Community School and all its employees will strive to provide educational programs which are multicultural and nonsexist in manner and free from discrimination practices. Questions in regard to these policies shall be directed to John Gallagher at 623-5121 or 623-5129.

### **Equal Employment Opportunities:**

Montezuma Community Schools and its governing body assures the public and all agencies that said school will comply with the requirement of the Civil Rights Act and that no person, on the basis of race, gender, religion, age, marital status, national origin, or disability will be denied the benefits or, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the conduct of its programs and the operation of its facilities. (Inquiries and or grievances may be directed to the Supt. of Schools, 504 N. Fourth St., Box 580, Montezuma, Iowa 50171, Director Iowa Dept. of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa, or to the Director of the Regional VII Office of Civil Rights, Dept. of Education, Kansas City, Mo.)

### **Open Enrollment:**

Parents/guardians considering the use of the open enrollment option to enroll their children in another public school district in the state of Iowa should be aware of the following dates:

September 1, 2018 --Last date for open enrollment request for entering pre-kindergarten or kindergarten students and those students falling under the “good cause” definition for the 2018-2019 school year.

March 1, 2019--Last date for regular open enrollment requests for the 2019-2020 school year for grades 1-12.

September 1, 2019 --Last date for open enrollment request for students entering pre-kindergarten or kindergarten students and those students falling under the “good cause” definition for the 2019-2020 school year.

Parents/guardians of open enrolled students whose income falls below 160% of the federal poverty guidelines are eligible for transportation assistance. This may be in the form of actual transportation or in the form of a cash stipend.

### **Wellness Policy: (QPPS: 10.6)**

The board promotes healthy students by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as a part of the total learning environment. The school district supports a healthy environment where students learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity, schools contribute to the basic health status of students. Improved health optimizes student performance potential. (Board Policy: 507.9)

### **Fire:**

The Montezuma Community School District in compliance with state fire laws has the fire alarm system tested on a regular basis.

### **Environmental Hazards (QPPS: 10.7)**

The Montezuma Community School has small amounts of asbestos containing materials in the tunnels and in the floor tile. The district follow the rules and regulations of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) related to encapsulation and maintenance of the materials. Personnel have been trained and appointed. District management plan is located in the Central Office, 504 N. 4th St. Inspections are in Jan. and July. Persons interested in reviewing the plan can contact the superintendent’s office at 623-5185.

### **Disaster Policies: (QPPS: 10.13)**

Students will be informed of the appropriate action to take in an emergency. Emergency drills for fire, weather, and other disasters are conducted each school year. Fire drills are conducted monthly during the academic school year.

Tornado and other emergency drills are completed in conjunction with the K-12 drills.

Each attendance center will develop and maintain a written plan containing emergency and disaster procedures. The plan will be communicated to and reviewed with employees. Employees will participate in emergency drills. Licensed employees are responsible for instructing the proper techniques to be followed in the drill. (Board Policy: 507.5)

District Emergency Plans can be viewed in the Elementary Office.

### **Staff Training:**

Our preschool teachers are full-time teachers licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners that hold an early childhood endorsement. Our educational associates all have level one associate training and several are working on obtaining level two certification. Level two certification includes more extensive study in the area of early childhood education. All preschool staff are certified as Mandatory Reporters, certified in Blood Borne Pathogens, Child and Adult CPR, and First Aid.

### **Student Records (Board Policy: 506.1)**

The board recognizes the importance of maintaining student records and preserving their confidentiality. Student records containing personally identifiable information are kept confidential at collection, storage, disclosure and destruction stages. The board secretary is the custodian of student records. Student records may be maintained in the central administration office or administrative office of the student's attendance center.

Parents and eligible students will have access to the student's records during the regular business hours of the school district. An eligible student is a student who has reached eighteen years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education at the post high school level. Parents of an eligible student are provided access to the student records only with the written permission of the eligible student unless the eligible student is defined as a dependent by the Internal Revenue Code. In that case, the parents may be provided access without the written permission of the student. A representative of the parents or eligible student, who has received written permission from the parents or eligible student, may inspect and review a special education student's records. Parents, other than parents of an eligible student, may be denied access to a student's records if the school district has a court order stating such or when the district has been advised under the appropriate laws that the parents may not access the student records. Parents may inspect an instrument used for the purpose of collection of student personal information prior to the instrument's use.

### **Release of Student Information (Board Policy 506.2)**

Student directory information is designed to be used internally within the school district. Directory information is defined in the annual notice. It may include the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, e-mail address, grade level, enrollment status, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, photograph and other likeness, and other similar information.

Prior to developing a student directory or to giving general information to the public, parents will be

given notice annually of the intent to develop a directory or to give out general information and have the opportunity to deny the inclusion of their child's information in the directory or in the general information about the students.

The form requesting to keep student directory information will be provided with registration material. The request can also be found on the school website under Board Policy 506.2r1.

### **Homeless Students: (Board Policy 501.17)**

In accordance with Chapter 33, Iowa Administrative Code, the Montezuma Community School District encourages homeless children and youth to enroll in school. For information, please contact the school superintendent at (641) 623-5129.

### **Child Protection: (QPPS: 10.8 – 10.9)**

Board Policy 402.2 outlines the procedures to follow in the event there is a report of alleged physical or sexual abuse of a child. This policy includes provisions of Chapter 102.2 of the Iowa Administrative Code 281. The following names and telephone numbers identify the district's designated persons who should be contacted in the event of suspected child abuse. The policy also mandates that all licensed personnel are mandatory reporters.

Level One Investigator Karie Foster (Elementary Counselor), 641-623-5121 or 623-5129

Level Two Sheriff's Office Tom Kriegel, 641-623-5679

### **ABUSE OF STUDENTS BY SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES REGULATION (Board Policy 402.3r1)**

An individual who has knowledge an employee has physically or sexually abused a student may immediately report it to the high school counselor, who is the school district's Level I investigator. "Employee" means one who works for pay or as a volunteer under the direction and control of the school district. The report is written, signed and witnessed by a person of majority age. The witness may be the Level I investigator. The reporter is the individual filing the report will contain the following:

- Full name, address, and telephone number of the person filing.
- Full name, age, address, and telephone number, and attendance center of the student.
- Name and place of employment of the employee who allegedly committed the abuse.
- A concise statement of the facts surrounding the incident, including date, time, and place of occurrence, if known.
- A list of possible witnesses by name, if known.
- Names of location of persons who examined, counseled or treated the student for the alleged abuse, including the dates on which those services were provided, if known.