



***"Our aim is not merely to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his innermost core." ~ Maria Montessori***

MSMV is many things. MSMV is a child-centered community; it is a carefully-prepared environment; it is a place where children learn to become their best selves. In addition to these wonderful descriptors, MSMV has two very important characteristics.

In order of importance:

1. MSMV is a Montessori School above all else. We are committed to adhering to the scientifically-proven method of education developed by Dr. Montessori, and sharing that method with as many children and families as our situation allows.
2. MSMV is a Cooperative. Our parents and families offer time and support in order to keep our costs low and quality of education high, all while modeling respect and responsibility for our children.

When you enroll at MSMV, you're committing to much more than just a school. You're committing to the Montessori Philosophy, which reaches far beyond the classroom walls. You're committing to a cooperative in which your talents, involvement, and contributions are absolutely vital. You're committing to your child's educational journey – a journey on which consistency is so important. You're committing to the future – for your child, for the school, and for the world.

We're committed, too. We're committed to your children. We're committed to providing a quality, Montessori education. We're committed to preparing environments, in the classroom or online, that facilitate freedom within boundaries and promote independent learning.

For these reasons, we've prepared this Remote Learning Quick Guide to serve as a basic framework for parents who may be wondering what online learning will entail, should we need to utilize any of the following methods.

***\*\*Please note:*** *Our hope is that we will be able to return to the classroom with as much normalcy as possible. However, our ever-changing circumstances dictate that we be prepared for multiple situations. This document will serve as basic framework in the event that any blended or remote learning is necessary. Families should be aware that these plans are subject to change at any time and*

*are contingent on guidelines from Governor DeWine and the Department of Education. We will continue to update our families as we receive information and direction.*

## **Potential Remote Learning Scenarios:**

### **Blended Learning:**

Students in the Lower and Upper Elementary and Adolescent classrooms will participate in a blended learning curriculum. Students will be separated into 2 groups according to developmental/education needs.

- Group 1 will attend class on campus on Monday and Tuesday, and participate in remote learning on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
- Group 2 will participate in remote learning on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and attend class on campus on Thursday and Friday.
- Note: Campus will be closed on Wednesdays for cleaning, planning, and recording lessons.

The online portion of the curriculum is being carefully planned and in the same manner that the classroom environment is prepared. A vast difference from Remote Learning will be students spending 2 days on campus and having the ability to see their teacher, receive in-person lessons, and create a plan for their online days.

Google Classroom for blended learning will be set up and conducted as though the student were present in the classroom.

- An attendance question will be assigned daily. Students must check in each day in order to be counted present.
- Lessons will be recorded and/or made available as needed for each child.
- Weekly communication between the parent and teacher will be required.
- Online tutorials for parents will be available via Transparent Classroom

\*\*Primary classes will be split according to proper ratios and will utilize available classroom space in Children's House. Primary children will attend Monday-Friday.

### **Remote Learning:**

We understand that for some families, it may be in the best interest of the child/family to continue remote learning rather than returning to the classroom (compromised child or family member, family member traveling outside the state/country, etc.). For this reason, we plan to offer a remote learning curriculum for students not physically in the classroom. Please note the following points:

- If you are interested in Remote Learning for the 2020-2021 school year for your child(ren), you must submit a written request to the office. Please include the reason(s) you are requesting

Remote Learning rather than returning to campus. Remote Learning access will be decided on a case-by-case basis unless health departments dictate that all schools remain closed.

- Tuition will remain the same, including Phys Ed fees. All Phys Ed will be on site this year. Instruction will be recorded and made available so that students can participate at home. This activity must be recorded in order to fulfill state Phys-Ed requirements.
- The online curriculum is being carefully planned and in the same manner that the classroom environment is prepared. All coursework must be completed as it is assigned. While teachers may choose to offer extra work or suggested activities, this curriculum and coursework is required as it would be in the physical classroom. Any additional work, apps, activities, etc. that parents may choose for their children are to be supplemental to MSMV's program and will not replace required work. It is important for students' work methods and cycles and teacher evaluations to remain consistent if they are to return to campus later.
- Those choosing the Remote Learning option will be required to commit to this method for the entire 2020-2021 school year. In the event that circumstances change and you'd like your child to return to campus, you will need to contact the office. This transition will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- Remote learning will also be utilized in the event that students, family members, or staff are exposed or contract COVID-19. Isolation/quarantine and classroom/school closure policies will be released soon.

## *Remote Learning Quick Guide: Definitions and Expectations*

### **Culture of Learning**

Our Remote Learning structure is based on Montessori framework – not classroom replication. The “culture of learning” supports the child and their connection to their learning, rather than just “completing assignments.” Our intent is to work in collaboration with families to keep alive the culture of learning that is unique to the Montessori Method of Education, and provide families with support and activities that match the developmental needs and characteristics of each child. We want children to feel connected to their learning. Learning together with a sense of exploration, curiosity, and discovery results in deeper and more meaningful experiences for children. This instills a great sense of ownership and responsibility for the child. It is important to us that we maintain a feeling of connectedness throughout this process. Our main goal remains to foster independence. The parent should always respond to a child in a way that empowers them to find their own answer, through additional resources, critical thinking, or working together.

The Montessori Method is all about the process. While completion of work is important, it is our approach that makes all the difference. Learning is most effective when it is within a greater context. When we connect subjects and concepts, we establish meaning which fuels motivation in students.

## The Prepared Environment

The Prepared Environment is a key tenant of Montessori Education. Just as the classroom is a prepared environment at school, your home and surroundings will serve as a prepared environment during Blended or Remote Learning. This means finding ways to support independence, engage in meaningful tasks and supplement learning through various activities suggested by guides. While setting up your home environment:

- Dream up together/ personalize your learning spaces (lighting, seating, comfort) make sure your child has a few possible spaces for their work. One of these spaces should be in the visual range of your own workspace so you are able to feel comfortable working near each other, but not together.
- Make a daily schedule that works for your family, engaging your child where appropriate.
- Gather materials from around your house to support your child's work, i.e. scissors, paper, craft supplies, eraser, pencil, etc. You can approach this as an opportunity to be creative and collaborative — we are here to support you through this process.

## Predictable Environment

Feelings of responsibility and contribution to the community are often described by Montessori students as being a part of a family. The predictable environment lends to these feelings of belonging. We learn that there is a responsibility to ourselves, to others and to the environment. This helps children understand that they are a valued part of the community and family.

These constants can help your child continue to feel centered, productive, and connected:

- Schedule
- Work Plan
- Organized resources
- Productive struggle
- Effortful problem solving
- Practical Life lessons and experiences
- Ability for independence
- Mindfulness, Peace Education, community relations, grace and courtesy

## The Uninterrupted Work Cycle

Establishing a routine that works for your family is an essential first step to creating a successful learning environment at home. Children are very familiar with this framework from school. In a Montessori classroom, children are given large blocks of time in order to explore their work deeply. This

contributes directly to the development of concentration and provides opportunities to collaborate and problem-solve. It is the framework that fosters child-centered, as opposed to guide-directed, learning. Ownership of Tasks and Sharing of Learning

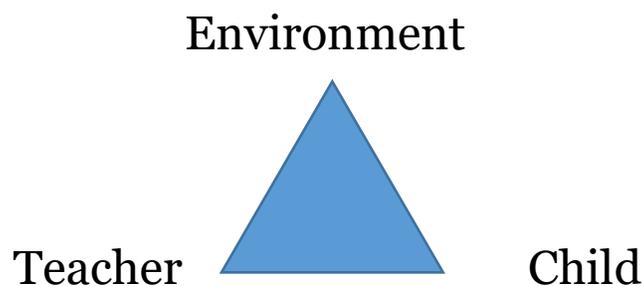
Montessori learning environments are often referred to as “optimal learning environments” because of the inherent skills and outcomes that result from being in a rich and interesting classroom, coupled with the dynamic of interactions amongst peers and guides. In order to foster a deep sense of ownership in their learning, we focus on two things: the developmental needs and characteristics of the child and their interests. Here are a few key points that aid in cultivating a child’s self-direction and attention to their work:

- Choice
- Participation in planning and organizing tasks
- Conversation
- Finding good resources
- Sharing knowledge.

You will be receiving regular communications from your child’s classroom teachers. We encourage parents to follow the guides’ suggestions and guidance when completing work at home. The more children are involved in developing and detailing their activities, the more they can achieve. Planning a presentation or sharing time at the end of the day is very exciting for children. It is an essential part of the learning process as it requires synthesis of learning to describe, explain and express yourself clearly.

## *Comparing Google Classroom to a Montessori Environment*

### The Montessori Learning Triangle



A Virtual Montessori environment requires a shift from:

Concrete- Our School  
to

## Abstract- Virtual (home)

Online learning is not ideal or what is expected, but for some of us, it may be a new normal for a little while.

Goal: Just like our Montessori class environment, our Google Classroom becomes a Montessori-driven, purposeful environment (much more in depth than our recent emergency plan last spring).

## Prepared (Online) Environment

Just like the school classroom, the Google classroom becomes our thoughtful and prepared environment where students and teachers can observe, reflect, and adapt.

- a) Personalized for each class and student. Following the Child and allowing freedom within limits.
- b) Include specials (Phys Ed, Music, Art), Peace Education, mindfulness, service learning and grace and courtesy which develop the WHOLE CHILD.

Assignments = Works

Materials = Documents, charts and videos

Continue to lead children to find the answers themselves by asking the right questions

## Communication Platforms

1. Google Stream - discussions up daily from classroom community. Independent work, materials, continued resources, fostering independence
2. Google Classwork - organized by topic or personal for class and individual student
3. Google Calendar - check upcoming project dates, teacher office hours and lessons
4. Google Apps - comparisons, new ways to collaborate, receive lessons
5. Google Meet - small group lessons with teachers or collaboration led by teachers
6. Google Drive - Your work Mat
7. Google Chat - chat with other students for questions and collaboration as in class, this is where students can help each other and will need to model patience just as in the typical classroom
8. Zoom—Large community meetings (only teachers may use zoom)

## How Do I Plan My Day?

Make a Work Plan!

1. Login in Daily and check Stream and answer attendance questions
2. Check the Classroom Tab for daily priorities/works
3. Check the calendar for projects due and office hour availability
4. Google Drive becomes your work mat; organize your shelves in your drive where you do your works

5. Filling out digital or paper planner with assignments
6. Engage in Practical Life throughout each day. Take photos or videos and share your ideas and experiences with your class!

## **Individualized learning lessons and student collaboration, and continuing the connection to school community**

1. As in the classroom, each student will have assignments that pertain to their own small groups or individual lessons.
2. Connecting students at school and at home through lessons and group collaboration.

## **Inspiring Global Citizens who are Independent, Life-Long Learners**

At MSMV, our students learn how to learn. They learn to ask the right questions, and they learn to find the answers to their own questions with gentle guidance from teachers when necessary. Remote and Blended Learning classes may take place in a different location, but the goal is still the same. While students may need some assistance with technology or resources at home, they are ultimately working to become independent learners.

For this reason, the school day at home should be treated similarly to the school day on campus. Students will have individual lessons, works and projects to complete and should spend time working as though they were in the classroom under the teacher's watchful eye.

In addition to usual classroom works, we will also continue projects geared toward whole-child development. Care for the environment, community outreach, and other projects will be incorporated into the remote or blended learning platforms. Older students will give lessons to younger students; children will be asked to recycle or reuse household items; appropriate community outreach projects will be assigned.

The goal of Remote or Blended Learning is provide an extension of the Montessori Classroom. Assignments should not be viewed as busywork; students should not rush to get everything done in a short time to maximize free time; students and parents should not feel overwhelmed by this experience. Your child is prepared for this. Their educational journal has equipped them with the means necessary to continue discovering, to think critically, and to make learning a meaningful experience, no matter the setting.