DENVER MONTCLAIR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

ECE PARENT HANDBOOK 2010-2011

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MISSION STATEMENT & PHILOSOPHY

Children of all abilities, from three-year-old through pre-kindergarten are welcome to play, explore, and expand their repertoire of skills. Together, children, family members, and teachers create an environment that fosters all aspects of development in a holistic manner to enhance the opportunities for learning. Play provides the stepping-stones children need to master new skills and expand their horizons. Family and community partnership will open new ways to increase, expand, and enhance the potential of each child.

Denver Montclair International School is an independent, not-for-profit school that offers full-immersion, bilingual education in French, Mandarin Chinese and Spanish to children 3 years old through 5th grade. DMIS promotes global awareness and academic excellence through a rigorous and well-rounded curriculum that prepares students to thrive in a competitive global society. DMIS fulfills the highest educational standards of the United States, France, Spain and China.

ECE VISION STATEMENT

The Early Childhood Education program at DMIS encourages children to:

- Respect their environment
- Become autonomous
- Gain self-confidence
- Express their emotions properly.

The ECE program wants children to feel safe and secure in their classroom and school first, so they can feel empowered and motivated to learn, and become aware of their new language acquisition.

COMPREHENSIVE GOALS

Self Concept

Goals:

1. To provide the child with a positive first school experience.
2. To promote high self-esteem and confidence.

The Teacher will:

1. Provide a warm, loving and positive classroom.
2. Maintain attitudes that are encouraging and supportive.
3. Introduce and foster creativity.
4. Arrange the class to encourage exploration.
5. Encourage early successes which will allow the child to feel confident with new challenges.

Social/Emotional Development

Children's goals:

1. Learn to put their feelings into words.
2. Learn to work together.
3. Become familiar with and follow the routine rules of school.

The Teacher will:

1. Act as role models providing a warm, loving and consistent daily routine.
2. Encourage a sense of individuality through choice activities and a sense of group at circle time.

Physical Development

The Teacher will:

1. Provide the children with activities that promote small muscle development and hand-eye coordination.
2. Provide the children with activities that promote large muscle development and coordination.
3. Teach body- and space-awareness.
4. Foster group cooperation, turn-taking, and good sportsmanship.
5. Promote development of physical skills and body control in an environment of accomplishment and fun.

Cognitive Development

Children's goals:

1. Be able to recognize colors and shapes.
2. Become familiar with counting, recognizing, enumerating, and writing numerals.
3. Become familiar with the alphabet through recitation, recognition, sound association, and the tracing and copying of letters.
4. Become familiar with simple concepts involving opposites, spatial relationships, reasoning, sequencing, and cause and effect.
5. Learn basic concepts of weight and measurement.
6. Become familiar with basic comparative attributes such as: big/small; small/smaller/smallest; rough/smooth; short/tall; more/less; etc.
7. Become familiar with the calendar and it's components of the days of the week and months of the year.

SPECIFIC CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES

Art

The Children will:

1. Be introduced to, and experiment with a wide variety of materials that exhibit different physical and sensory qualities (form, texture, aroma, etc.).
2. Be encouraged to use imagination and free expression.
3. Develop the ability to follow instructions.
4. Continue the development of hand-eye coordination.
5. Become aware of others' interpretations and self-expression through art.

Cooking

The Children will:

1. Be introduced to the basics of nutrition.
2. Taste many different foods.
3. Identify the food groups.
4. Listen to, understand and follow directions.
5. Do simple cooking activities.
6. Develop vocabulary.

Music

The Children will:

1. Be exposed to various types of musical experiences.
2. Learn simple songs to sing together.
3. Gain a basic understanding of melody and rhythm.
4. Interpret music through rhythm and movement.

Science & Nature

The Children will:

1. Be exposed to science by exploring nature and the world around them.
2. Develop an awareness of the seasons.
3. Discover and develop their five senses.
4. Participate in simple science experiments relating to the physical and natural world.

Group Time & Story time

Participation in group and story times will:

1. Introduce new learning experiences.
2. Foster group participation.
3. Stimulate imagery and imagination.
4. Develop comprehension skills.
5. Stimulate an interest in words and broaden vocabulary.
6. Sharpen listening skills.

Dramatic Play

The Children will:

1. Practice problem solving skills through role play.
2. Gain communication skills.
3. Be encouraged to use conflict resolution skills.
4. Fosters imagination and creativity using puppetry, acting out familiar stories and poetry, and through role-play.
5. Provides an opportunity for expression of feelings and attitudes.

Building Blocks and Manipulatives

Manipulating a variety of blocks and construction toys (Duplos, Lincoln Logs, etc.):

1. Helps in gaining mastery of small and large motor skills.
2. Fosters cooperation through group projects.
3. Teaches appreciation and respect for another's endeavors
4. Introduces basic understanding of size and weight relationships, balance, and the physical properties of various shapes and materials.

Books

Teacher's will:

1. Reinforce an appreciation of and respect for books; introduce books as a resource tool, and as a form of relaxation.
2. Teach the concepts of caring for other's property.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Sign-in & Sign-out
It is required by DMIS and the Department of Human Services that only authorized persons sign their children in and out daily. Be prepared to show identification. Your child will be released only to the individuals authorized to pick-up on the application or written in on the sign-in/out book. DMIS cannot legally deny the release of any child to a natural parent unless we have a written court order, although we cannot allow a child to leave with any inebriated person, including a parent. Authorized persons who are unknown to the teacher will be asked for identification before the child is allowed to leave with them. If we are suspicious about any person attempting to pick up a child, or if any aggression is used, the police will be called. If you need to make changes in the list of people authorized to pick up your child, please do so in writing. These changes can be noted on the sign-in/out book. Always communicate special pick-up information with the teacher. If there is an emergency, please call DMIS and we will make special arrangements.

Arrival and Dismissal
Please be punctual when bringing or picking up your child. The teachers cannot be responsible for children who arrive early for their class, nor can we care for children who are picked up late. The doors do not open before 8:15am. We need the time before and after each session for preparation and clean-up. Please park in the parking lot and walk your child to class.

Bring your child on time so he/she does not feel uncomfortable and so that tardiness does not disrupt an activity already underway. Parents send a negative message to their child about the importance of school and respect for teachers when they are chronically tardy. If your child comes to school late, we ask that you go to the office and get a pass from the receptionist *before* taking your child to class. Please note that late children may not be accepted on days when a field trip is scheduled, as staff will be on the field trip.

Call us at 303 -340-3647 if you will be late at pick-up time so we can assure your child that someone is on their way. There is a late charge of $15.00 flat fee, and $5.00 per minute for any time after 6:00pm that a child is picked up. If children are not picked up by 6:00pm, staff will attempt to contact both parents at all numbers listed on their emergency contact form. If neither parent can be reached, staff will attempt to reach all persons listed by parents as emergency contacts. If staff is unable to reach anyone listed on the emergency contact form, the local police will be contacted.

Meal Times
We want mealtimes to be a pleasant experience for the children. Nutritious and well-balanced snacks and lunches are to be provided by the parents. We expect that these lunches are filling and nutritious in nature, meeting one third of your child's daily nutritional needs. If you need suggestions for what to put in your child's lunch, please speak with the Director. No child will be forced to eat. Please make sure the teachers are aware of any food allergies your child may have. **Our Three-year-old and Pre-K classrooms are nut free and we appreciate your cooperation in making sure that any nuts and nut products be kept at home.**

Discipline
Our discipline policy is based on the principles of respect for each child and respect for the rights of all members of the classroom. A significant portion of the DMIS curricula at all grade levels involves the development of personal responsibility for actions and a respect for others as

members of a common and shared environment. The school's philosophy of using discipline is a continuous, daily process of love and logic during which:

- Children are encouraged at all times.
- Responsible behavior will be recognized.
- Self-esteem will be built through positive interactions.

Denver Montclair International School has set ground rules that are positive and that place the responsibility on the participants of the program to:

- Accept others.
- Speak for yourself.
- Be responsible for your own learning.
- Avoid put-downs.

With the three-year-old program and pre-kindergarten, redirection is most commonly used when a conflict arises. Often changing just a single element in the environment will solve the problem. We also use simple words to develop understanding in the children, such as "be gentle" or "take turns." We use conflict resolution appropriate to the child's stage of development. Children are taught to listen to one another and to solve their relationship conflicts in a "win-win" atmosphere.

If an ongoing behavior problem occurs, such as hitting, kicking, or biting, parents will be notified, and we will work together to resolve the problem. It is necessary for parents to work cooperatively and closely with the teachers so that peaceful behavior becomes an expectation both at home and at school.

Sample Daily Schedule

8:15 – 8:45	Greeting Children and Parents; Choice Play; Clean-up
8:45 – 9:15	Circle Time (Helpers, Weather, Daily Activity Schedule, Show-N-Tell, Songs, Stories)
9:15 – 9:45	Small Group Activities (crafts, writing, math, science with the instruction of the teacher)
9: 45 – 10: 00	Snack Time & Potty Party
10:00 – 10:30	Outside Play
10:30 – 11:00	Learning Centers (Art, Housekeeping, Writing Center, Blocks, Books, Listening Center, Manipulatives)or Specialist**
11:00 – 11:15	Story Time
11:15 – 11:45	Lunch Time & Quiet Activities
11:45 – 1:45	Rest Time
1:45 – 2:15	Wake-up & Quiet Activities
2:15 – 2:30	Snack Time & Potty Party
2:30 – 3:00	Outside Play
3:00 – 3:30	Story Time & Closing Circle
3:30 – 3:45	Dismissal

**Half Day hours (3 year olds) are from 8:15a.m. – 11:30a.m. Pick up is at 11:30a.m.
**Formalized instruction in P.E, English, Art, Music and a Library time are scheduled weekly.

Ratios of Programs:

Denver Montclair International School maintains a staff to child ratio below State requirements.

Important Dates:
DMIS is closed eight days in observance of legal holidays and three days for Teacher-In-Services where no additional care will be provided. DMIS is closed for several weeklong breaks where camp is provided for those families who need it.

Children with Special Needs
Denver Montclair International School will provide children and parents with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in our child care center's programs and services. DMIS must make an *individualized assessment* about whether it can meet the particular needs of the child without fundamentally altering its program.

HEALTH

General Health Appraisal & Immunizations

All children are to have a general health appraisal form from a physician prior to starting in the three-year-old program. These must be updated annually when you complete your reenrollment contract.

The state of Colorado requires a certificate of immunization signed by the physician for every child. Your doctor may complete the shot record on the physician's report, or you may provide us with a copy of your child's immunization card. This must be on file before your child may begin the program as mandated by the state. If your child is not immunized for religious or medical reasons, please see the Admissions Coordinator.

Medication

The state of Colorado also requires a signed note from the physician for *any medication* (both prescription and non-prescription). Please give all medication directly to the Front Office to review medication and paperwork. All medication will be locked in a cabinet unless it requires refrigeration. The medicine must be in its original container accompanied by a completed DMIS Medication Administration form signed by both a parent and the child's physician. Only those authorized to administer medicine will do so. Orders are valid for one year from the date they are signed by a physician.

Children will not be allowed to attend school if emergency medication is expired or if the medication administration paperwork has expired. If your child no longer requires emergency medication, parents must provide a signed physician's statement confirming such.

Under no circumstances will any staff member administer medication that is not provided and authorized by a student's parents and physician. The school does not stock any type of medication for dispensing to students.

Allergies

In order for our staff to better serve your child, it is imperative that parents inform staff of any allergies that the child may have or had, for example, food, medication, sunscreen or other substances. If your child has an allergy or a special diet, it *must* be documented by your child's doctor, unless it is for religious reasons.

If your child's allergies require emergency medication (e.g. Epi Pen, Benedryl, etc.) parents must turn in a Severe Allergy Emergency Treatment Plan, which must be signed by a physician as well.

Our 3 Year-Old and Pre-Kindergarten classrooms are nut free and we appreciate your cooperation in making sure that ANY NUTS and NUT PRODUCTS be kept at home. Older children with nut allergies will be accommodated with a nut-free table in the cafeteria.

Illness

Please notify the teachers when your child is ill. Watch your child for signs of illness and **DO NOT** send him/her to school if he/she appears to be sick. According to state licensing requirements and for the protection of all children, DMIS cannot accept children with any of the following symptoms:

- Elevated temperature (fever of 101.0 or higher)
- Severe diarrhea or vomiting (twice within one hour or three times within 24 hours)
- Undiagnosed rash
- Sore or discharging eyes or ears, or a profuse nasal discharge
- Diagnosed contagious disease such as Strep throat or Chicken pox

If a child becomes sick during the day, he/she will be provided a comfortable place to rest until he/she goes home. Parents will be notified to come and pick up their child within the hour. Your child may return to school when they have been symptom free for 24 hours without medication (or on antibiotics for 24 hours) or with a physician's note. It is appreciated when parents call to let us know when their child will miss school and why.

Please notify DMIS if your child contacts a contagious disease, such as whooping cough, strep throat, measles, or chicken pox. It is a licensing requirement that an anonymous sign be posted to notify other families that their child has been exposed. The health department may also be notified in the case of communicable diseases.

ACCIDENTS & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All teachers are First Aid and CPR certified. We will call you or your emergency contact person to notify of an accident or injury. When there is no question that your child must be taken to the doctor or the hospital, we will call you to inform you of our course of action as soon as possible. **It is vital that you keep our staff updated on changes in your phone numbers (e.g. Home, Work and Cell).**

Emergency

In case of a fire, all children will evacuate to the lawn between the Elementary building and the gym and remain there until the fire department has completed an inspection of the building and determined that it is safe to return to the building. Fire drills are practiced regularly.

In case of a tornado warning, children will take cover in the hallway of the building.

Lost Child

Every effort is made to keep all children safe. In the event that a child is missing, a search will be started immediately. If necessary, the parents and the authorities will be called to assist in the search. Parents, please make sure to close the classroom door behind you upon entering and leaving the classroom and assist us in educating your child of the importance of staying with the teachers.

In the attempt of an unauthorized person attempting to pick-up your child, you and the authorities will be notified immediately. We will attempt to detain the culprit.

Reporting of Child Abuse

Denver Montclair International School's Early Childhood Program is a licensed childcare facility. All staff have a legal and moral obligation to report suspected abuse or neglect. If you, as a parent, feel there is a suspicion of abuse occurring, you can seek assistance by calling the Child Abuse hotline at (720) 944-3000. If you have a concern about the Early Childhood Program not following Social Service Regulations, you can seek assistance by calling the Division of Child care at (303) 866-5958.

WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

Personal Belongings
DMIS wants to make children as responsible for their belongings as possible. We believe that a child learning to care for one's own belongings is an important life skill that we want to foster. You can help by labeling your child's belongings for easy identification. At this age, things become easily misplaced; reuniting your child with their "stuff" becomes possible when labeled properly. Each child will have a space to store any personal items.

What to Bring/Not Bring
If your child has a special "lovie" they are welcome to bring it and leave it in their cubby. We hope that you will send your child's special security item to school. These "lovies" are helpful in making transitions easier. They are able to leave them in their cubbies when they are ready. Books, tapes and CD's are easily shared and welcomed; however, make sure they are clearly labeled.

Do not allow your child to bring expensive clothing, propellant toys, toy guns or knives, toys from home unless asked, pocket radios, game boys, pets of any kind, or money. If any of these items are brought in, they will be confiscated by the teacher and returned at the end of the day.

Clothing
Each child must have a seasonally appropriate "emergency" change of clothes (underwear, socks, pants, shirt, shoes) which will be kept is his/her own cubby and will be used in case of an "accident," etc. Reminders will be published in the newsletter as the time comes to move from the warm weather set of back-up clothing to a cool weather set, and vice versa.

Dress your child in comfortable clothing which he or she can easily fasten. Do not send your child in dressy clothes or clothes which hinder active participation. Provide clothing that is easily washable, because children will participate in art, cooking, and other activities that may get dirty. Rubber soled sneakers or sandals (washable is even better) are an excellent choice of footwear. Make sure to label these with a permanent marker.

Since the weather at school might not be the same as at home, provide a sweater or a sweatshirt. Dress your child in layers so he or she can go from the classroom to the playground and be comfortable in different environments. A backpack, always packed with a "school" sweater and/or sweatshirt, is a good idea and will prove especially useful on spontaneous on-campus explorations and "gathering" expeditions, as well as on planned field trips.

Lost and Found
Denver Montclair International School keeps its lost and found in the storage unit in the Kimak building hallway.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Adjustment to School
Each child will adjust to his/her new routine in a different way. A child entering school for the first time is similar to an adult starting a new job. It is a time of anticipation, fear of the unknown, new beginnings, changes in sleep patterns, mild fatigue, and mostly positive stress. The experience can be somewhat overwhelming.

Like starting a new job, these experiences will result in positive growth; however, the age of the children and the overall new exposure in their young lives makes three-year-old different. In the three-year-old program, is the time when we will work on social skills, but it will take time for all the children to adjust.
You may see the some of the following changes in your child:

1. Sleeping difficulties such as changes in nap schedules, wakefulness or very deep sleep, occasionally nightmares. Sometimes this may cause or increase bedwetting.
2. Irritability due to mild fatigue.
3. Acting out other children's behaviors (not always positive ones).
4. Testing and redefining limits. Your children will begin to feel more autonomous and more grown up which will cause them to want more responsibility and control over their choices.

Most of the changes listed above are only temporary. If you have further concerns, please talk to a teacher or the ECE Director.

Birthdays
If your child wishes to celebrate a birthday at school, you may send a special treat for snack time. Children with summer birthdays may schedule an "unbirthday" celebration (usually around their half birthday). Please notify the teachers in advance so that we are not celebrating an "unbirthday" on someone else's birthday. If a birthday is to be celebrated away from the classroom and the entire class is not invited, please be considerate of the children's feelings and mail the invitation and thank you notes. <u>You may distribute invitations at school ONLY if the entire class is invited.</u>

Class Calendars
At the beginning of each month, you will receive a calendar summarizing future class activities. We suggest that the calendar be posted in a prominent place so you can consult it regularly. By doing so, you will have advance notice of any activities that require special attention or planning by you and your child.

Creative Castoffs
Before you throw things out, consider if the school might be able to use them. Items that can be used again include: washed Nylon stockings, washed Styrofoam meat trays, Dad's out-of-date neckties, any size plastic soda or water bottle, toilet paper rolls, paper towel rolls, etc.

Cubbies and Friday Folders to Parents
The cubbies, the bulletin boards above the cubbies, and the Friday Folders consist of our information and delivery system. Each child has an assigned and labeled cubby where lunches, sweaters, objects for sharing, and "lovies" may be stored. Each child has a Friday Folder labeled with their name that is handed out every Friday and returned to school the following Monday. The Friday Folder is an electric newsletter distributed via e-mail every Friday afternoon. In addition to Friday Folders, in your child's cubby you will find parent information, newsletters, calendars, field trip registration forms and announcements. Be sure you <u>check your child's cubby everyday</u>. Better yet, check the cubby with your child everyday; it's one more way to help them become responsible and organized.

Field Trips
There are planned field trips throughout the year. We will notify you in advance regarding these special outings. Some trips invite all parents; some need only a few parents to volunteer as chaperones. Permission slips for these trips should be completed and returned to the teacher. DMIS provides transportation via the school bus on field trips.

Lunches
Children need to bring a bag lunch every day unless they have ordered one from the school. In their bag lunch, they should have nutritious food. Have your child practice opening the containers that their lunches are in because many are difficult to open. We discourage Lunchables because they do not provide a balanced meal. Remember to send your child with a napkin or two and utensils, if needed. **Our Three-year-old and Pre-K classrooms are nut free and we appreciate your cooperation in making sure that any nuts and nut products be kept at home.**

Parent Involvement
Parent involvement in DMIS activities helps reinforce the importance of school to your child. There are opportunities to volunteer in the classroom, as well as "behind the scenes." Since we are a full immersion program, we welcome volunteers on field trips, and other various activities, and encourage native language speakers to volunteer in the classroom. Express your willingness to volunteer by enrolling on one of the Parent Volunteer sheets. Volunteers start in October, after the teachers and students are able to get to know each other better. We also have numerous family events scheduled throughout the year. We hope that your family will take the opportunity to visit with the staff at that time. Parents will be asked to fill out an evaluation each year. Your input on the survey is important feedback for us to use in improving our program. We encourage asking questions and giving praise on a regular basis, as well as offering suggestions since we are here to meet the needs of our community.

Parent/Teacher Conferences
The Three-year-old program, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten classes will have formal conferences biannually: one in the fall regarding parent expectations for their child that year, and one in the spring is regarding the child's progress. An additional conference will be offered in June for families of three-year-old children who request it. In the conference, the child's development and growth will be discussed with the teachers. Conferences may also be scheduled on an as-needed basis if something of concern arises. Conferences should provide feedback for both parents and teachers on how to best serve the child.

Parties
Throughout the school year we celebrate several holidays. We ask that you speak with your child's teacher about parties that he or she would like to host throughout the year.

Play Dates
We encourage friendships outside of school between classmates, but playtime arrangements by parents should be made away from school. Classmates' feelings can get hurt when arrangements that do not include them are made within their earshot. They listen and understand more than we realize at times.

Postcards
We have a map of both the United States and the world in our hallway for this geography project. When you go on a vacation, take a couple minutes to send the school a postcard. We will chart where our friends go.

Snacks
A good, nutritious diet not only helps keep your child healthy, but can affect his/her disposition in a positive way. You will be responsible for bringing a snack once a month for your child's class. Please plan a nutritious "unsweetened" snack. One of the favorites is fruit - fruit kabobs, fruit and cheese, or fruit fixed almost any way. Other favorites are mini-muffins, Chex Mix, Ritz Bits, and cookies and milk. Be creative, but please do not bring gum or candy. All food needs to be prepared, and necessary utensils provided, but ***MUST*** be in the original packaging, according to licensing. Students who remain in the after-school program should bring an additional snack or two, depending on the time parents anticipate picking them up. **Our Three-year-old and Pre-K classrooms are nut free and we appreciate your cooperation in making sure that any nuts and nut products be kept at home. Double check ingredient labels before bringing snacks to school.**

Sunscreen
Each family must provide sunscreen for their child. All bottles *must be labeled* with the child's first & last name, and an expiration date. Staff will supervise the application of sunscreen, but please make sure your child comes with sunscreen on when applicable. We strive to prevent sunburns and we appreciate the parent or guardian for sending the child prepared.

Toileting
All children entering our program ***must*** be potty trained. Do not send your child in diapers or pull-ups. Our school is not equipped to change pull-ups or diapers. We do however, understand that accidents do happen. For this reason, please make sure that your child has a complete change of clothes in his/her cubby. If a child is having daily accidents, it is a sign that they are not potty trained yet.

Volunteering
Adult visits to the school are arranged by appointment and monitored when they take place. As a security measure, DMIS requires that parents and visitors sign-in at the front office and obtain a visitor's badge before entering the classroom area. They must wear these badges for the duration of their stay and sign-out at the office when they leave. Even regular visitors need to follow these procedures, as it is our way of ensuring everyone's safety while at DMIS.

Weather
We want children to have the opportunity to experience changing seasons. All children will need to be prepared to go outside on a daily basis. This gives children a chance to get fresh air, run, climb, and roll in a large natural setting. We are aware of temperature and natural weather changes. Please send appropriate clothing for your child, including snow boots, gloves, mittens, hats, jackets, sunscreen, etc. During hot weather, water is available at all times. Some activities are planned in the shade or indoors. However, in extreme heat, (over 100°), cold (approximately 30° or less), rain, snow or sleet, DMIS will utilize the gym area in lieu of outdoor playtime. If there is ever any question about going outside, we will consult the Child Care Weather Watch.

Denver Montclair International School
Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

I have received a copy of the ECE Parent Handbook, and understand I am responsible for becoming familiar with its contents.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

****Parent Handbook Acknowledgements MUST be turned into the Front Office BEFORE the first day of school.**