



Elementary Handbook

Khalsa Montessori School

Mission Statement

The mission of Khalsa Montessori School (KMS) is to:

- Integrate a challenging Montessori education and a caring, responsible community to provide for the academic, social, physical and emotional growth of students in central Phoenix;
- Offer children a holistic education in which teachers see the children as unique individuals, understand their multiple intelligences, respect their ideas, and encourage their enthusiasm for learning.
- Create an environment that offers young people opportunities to reach their highest potentials:
 - **Academically**, through appropriately high expectations, and a rich, self-paced learning environment that provides the cognitive tools to achieve mastery and build confidence;
 - **Creatively**, through the integration of a variety of avenues for creative expression such as visual arts, creative writing, drama, music and public speaking.
 - **Physically**, through the integration of fine and gross motor movement within the curriculum, and through activities to encourage physical fitness, cooperation, nutritional awareness, mind/body discipline, and yoga;
 - **Socially**, through an environment where children may develop independence, personal meaning, and responsibility for themselves, others, and our world;
- Build a partnership of students, families, teachers and administrators who create an environment that lays the foundation for those habits of mind that support happiness and success both in school and in life.

Goals

The goals of Khalsa Montessori School are to:

- Establish in each child a mastery of fundamental skills utilizing concrete Montessori materials that help students gain a complete understanding of basic concepts

- Increase the ability of each child to think critically with reasoning and creative problem solving tasks given throughout the curriculum
- Develop the ability of each child to learn quickly and easily and to effectively apply that knowledge in other situations
- Allow a wide variety of avenues for creative expression for each child within the classroom and special activity classes in all areas of the arts
- Encourage physical development of each child through a wide variety of activities in class and playground, physical education classes, and team training
- Encourage every child to develop independence and a sense of personal meaning and responsibility for themselves, others and our world;
- Develop in each child a deep love of learning and enthusiastic self-motivation
- Build in each child a foundation of self-confidence, and inspire students to realize their highest potential.

School History

Khalsa Montessori School was founded in 1971 by the American Sikh community with the inspiration of Yogi Bhajan. The school began as a subunit of 3HO Arizona, Inc., a non-profit 501-(c)-(3) educational corporation that was founded in 1969 by Yogi Bhajan and dedicated to the development of the individual through the techniques of yoga, meditation, healthy diet and service. In 50 years, the school has grown from a small Sikh community pre-school to a non-denominational Montessori school for approximately 200 toddler to middle school students.

In 1973, the Khalsa School moved into its present primary school building on Coronado Road. Several cozy toddler schools in renovated homes were created in the 1980's and 1990's and, for a period of time, were utilized as small toddler day care group homes.

In 1996, the school was granted a school charter by the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and the Khalsa Montessori Elementary School (KMES) opened at 2536 N. 3rd Street as a public charter school. With a carefully designed growth plan, the school on 3rd Street has gradually grown to its current size of 114 students in three lower elementary and two upper elementary classrooms. The Khalsa preschool at 346 E. Coronado Road, incorporated in 2008 as the Khalsa Montessori Primary School (KMPS), continues to offer private primary and charter kindergarten Montessori education. Expansion in 2019 included the purchase of a building at 303 E Palm Lane where you will find three toddler classrooms and the middle school environment. This space includes a large classroom, computer labs, and break out rooms for creative extension such as wood working, music, and art.

Parent involvement and education have been important factors in the strong sense of community that has developed at Khalsa Montessori School. The school has grown as a partnership between parents, teachers and administrators. The holistic philosophy extends to all aspects of school life and is reflected in our administrative style, parent and staff relations, and classrooms.

From its early years, Khalsa Montessori School has maintained a reputation for academic excellence in a challenging and caring environment; a dedicated and experienced teaching staff; providing children a holistic educational environment with many opportunities for creative, social, and physical growth; and serving a community from a variety of religious, cultural, and economic backgrounds.

Khalsa Montessori School (charter K-8) is a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation that is under contract with the State of Arizona, and run by the KMS administration in partnership with staff and parents. The Board of Directors includes parents, teachers, community representatives and the schools' administrator. The site council, consisting of the school administrative and teaching staff, meets weekly and may be joined by a parent association representative whenever necessary.

The private preschool of Khalsa Montessori School (Toddler and Primary) is a non-profit 501-(c)-(3) educational corporation. Historically, KMPS was part of the 3HO (Healthy, Happy, Holy Organization) founded in 1969 by Yogi Bajan and dedicated to the development of the individual through the techniques of yoga, meditation, healthy diet and service. In 2008, Khalsa Montessori Primary School, which always operated independently of its former parent organization, became an independent corporation. The KMS Primary/Toddler Team consists of the School Director, the Primary Director, Front Office Receptionist, and teaching staff.

KMS is a community of families, teachers and administrators working together to create a positive and nurturing environment that supports academic excellence and personal growth. Each of the three bodies of KMS has areas of **responsibility, input and support**.

The **KMS Parent-Teacher Organization** has taken responsibility for school fund-raising. It brings parental input regarding the overall running of the school to the school administration. It brings input regarding school programs to the staff. It supports the educational programs of the staff through its fund-raising dollars and its involvement in classroom projects and events.

The **KMS teachers** are responsible for the development and operation of the educational programs. Each lead teacher is responsible for all developmental aspects of the children within his/her program. The KMS staff has direct input into the overall running of the school through regular communication with the school administration. The staff has input into the fund-raising projects planned by the Parent-Teacher Organization through the staff participation in the Parent-Teacher Organization meetings. The staff supports the Parent-Teacher Organization's efforts through their own involvement with them.

The **KMS administration** is responsible for the policies and operational decisions including staffing, admissions, finances, property, and special program development. The director is responsible for fulfilling all state and federal requirements of the schools' Charter and reporting monthly to the KMS Board of Directors. The administration has input into teachers' curriculum development and Parent-Teacher Organization fund-raising activities. The administration supports the teachers and classroom development through its role as facilitator. It supports the Parent-Teacher Organization fund-raising through its participation. The administration includes a director and an assistant administrator and/or receptionist.

KMS Board of Directors meets monthly. Meeting announcements, agendas, and minutes are posted on the bulletin board in the office hallway. The board was designed to approve major decisions such as contractors, budgets, bank accounts, policy decisions, and staff. It is not involved in day-to-day management.

The board may also provide a final review of issues that parents feel are not being resolved by the school administrations. To put an item on the board agenda, discuss your item with a board member at least 72 hours before the next board meeting.

Advisory Boards may be established at any time by the Board or the school administration.

KMS Parent-Teacher Organization Mission Statement

The Parent-Teacher Organization is comprised of parents of enrolled students, and teachers who are committed to making a difference in their children's educations. As one entity in a three-way partnership with the administration and staff, it exists for the following purposes:

- To act as a sounding board and support group for the administration by over-seeing development of the school and facilitating the achievement of its long and short term goals
- To support the teachers' delivery of excellence in education through receptiveness to classroom and professional concerns, needs and desires
- To plan and execute fund-raisers; to allocate funds in a manner most beneficial to the enhancement of KMS and its students, such as grounds and building improvements, professional development of staff, classroom materials and equipment, and other such purposes viewed as worthwhile by the Association
- To cultivate participation in the Association through verbal and written contact with parents
- To discuss parental suggestions and concerns, bringing them to the attention of the director when appropriate

Every member is keenly aware of the crucial role of parental involvement in the quality and success of teaching a child. In this era of educational awakening, it is our privilege to serve the individuality of our children who are developing a love of learning, self-direction and respect for the world around them.

Admissions

The Khalsa Montessori charter school is open to all students within the kindergarten through eighth grade levels who will benefit from a Montessori educational environment. Admission is not limited by ethnicity, national origin, gender, religion, income level, disability, proficiency in the English language, or athletic ability. There are no tuition or fees charged for attending KMES.

KMES seeks students who will increase their achievement within the self-directed Montessori environment. The profile of the student who will excel in this Montessori environment is one who can work independently, who can take responsibility for his/her work, who demonstrates internal control and who respects him/herself and others. Children who do not benefit from this type of education are children who are not able to work independently or who do not demonstrate the other characteristics listed above.

KMES is for families who care deeply about their children's education and are willing to be partners in the school. We encourage every parent to make a commitment to understand the school's procedures, educational method, and philosophy. We encourage parents to volunteer to participate in the school in areas of their choice including field trips, classroom events, aiding in the classroom, work days, making materials, participating on parent evenings and within the Parent-Teacher Organization.

All parents who enroll their children at KMES should consider the advantage of a long-term commitment to Montessori education, as it is a cumulative program that builds on previous years' experiences and exposure to Montessori materials. A single year of Montessori education is not an effective educational plan. Children should be given the opportunity to complete the educational cycles of the lower elementary, upper elementary, and middle school programs.

Application Process

The goal of the KMES admissions process is for parents to receive a complete understanding of the educational philosophy and operating procedures of the school.

1. KMS Information Packet

Those who inquire about the school will be given the KMS Information Packet.

2. School Tours

Parents may meet with the school's admissions director for a tour of the school and an opportunity to learn more about the school and the Montessori Method. As a note, **school tours are intended for parents only**. Upon completion of a tour, parents are encouraged to make an appointment spending at least a full morning observing one or more of our classrooms.

*Tours are currently virtual and classroom observation are not available due to COVID restrictions.

3. Application and Wait List

To apply for enrollment at Khalsa Montessori Elementary School, parents should fill out the KMES K-8 Waitlist Application and return it to the school office. Acceptance is first come first served. Applicants are placed in order according to the date and time the application is received, except for previously enrolled students who will be given priority over new students.

If no positions are currently available, receipt of the application places the child on the current year or coming year wait list based on year listed on the application. Parents will be contacted as soon as an opening becomes available. Wait lists are kept by grade according to the age of the child, using September 1st as the cut-off date (age 5 before September 1st for kindergarten, for example). The wait list opens the third Wednesday of July and does not roll over from year to year.

4. Enrollment

Once a position becomes available, parents will be given an Enrollment Form. This form offers the family a position for their student in KMES. In addition to the Enrollment Form, families must complete and return the Arizona Proof of Residency Form. These forms must be returned within the time period defined upon the position being offered (typically within 7 days unless the first day of school is in less than 7 days).

Completion of the Student Records Request is requested at this time.

5. Additional Required Documents

Within 30 days of submission of the Enrollment Form one of the following documents must be submitted to provide Proof of Age and Identity to complete enrollment:

- A certified copy of the student's birth certificate; or
- Other reliable proof of the student's identity, including a baptismal certificate, an application for a social security number, or original school registration records. If documentation other than a certified copy of a birth certificate is provided, such documentation must be accompanied by an affidavit explaining the inability to provide a copy of the birth certificate;
- If a student is in the custody of the Department of Child Safety ("DCS"), a letter from the authorized representative of the agency certifying that the student has been legally placed in custody of the agency. This

information will be carefully safeguarded and confidentiality maintained regarding the status of children in DCS custody.

Additional forms required prior to the first day of school:

- The PHLOTE (Primary Home Language Other Than English) Form
- An immunization record for the student. This document is required for attendance.

6. Placement

After the Enrollment Form and AZ Proof of Residency have been received a student placement assessment will be scheduled. The student is assessed for program readiness and entry level. Once the assessment is complete parents will be notified of classroom assignment.

7. School Year Registration

The School Year Registration window is in July. Parents will be notified of the Registration window and must complete the process online through the Tyler SIS Parent Portal. Completion of School Year Registration is required of all families to hold a child's position. All required documents are requested at this time and due prior to the first day of school; PHLOTE Form and an Immunization Record. An Immunization Record is required to attend school.

8. First Day of School Attendance

We encourage all students to attend the first day of school. As with any new experience, students may be nervous. It is re-assuring to students when they know their peers may be experiencing first-day jitters too.

Admissions Policies

Readmission

Re-enrollment for a continuing student is guaranteed as long as the Re-enrollment Form is received by the deadline. If a Re-enrollment Form is received after the deadline, the family will need to complete a Waitlist Application and the student will be placed on the wait list for the upcoming school year. They will be subject to the enrollment process. However, this student will have priority due to their previous enrollment. Once a child is re-enrolled families must complete school year registration in July.

Admissions Priority

KMES will place on the waitlist all eligible pupils who submit a timely Waitlist Application. After the re-enrollment window closes for currently enrolled students, the number of available positions is determined. It is at that time a position may be extended to waitlist applicants based on chronological receipt of the waitlist application. Priority is given to previously enrolled students and siblings of current families.

School Year Registration

School year registration is held during the month of July. All parents must confirm their enrollment, complete additional documents, and update their information at this time.

Suspension and Expulsion

Students at Khalsa Montessori Schools are expected to adhere to a code of conduct conducive to a non-threatening and respectful learning environment. Corrective action will be taken for unacceptable behavior according to the procedures in the “KMS Discipline Policy.”

Classroom Placement

Classroom placement decisions for students entering their first year of a lower or upper elementary classroom are made by the Khalsa Montessori Classroom Lead Teachers with the goal of creating the best balance of students in each classroom. These decisions are made after student placement assessments and teacher observation of the students. All kindergarten and third grade students, including current Khalsa students and new-to-Khalsa applicants, are given the same placement assessment to determine readiness for the next educational level. Classroom placement is NOT a parent selection process.

Completing the Three Year Cycles

We do not recommend that a student begin a Montessori cycle (Primary, Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, or Middle School) if there is no intention of having the student complete all the years of that cycle.

Over many years of watching students’ progress through Montessori education, it is clear that students get the greatest benefit by completing all of the Montessori cycles. A child experiencing each cycle builds on his/her understanding of concepts and understanding of the Montessori materials from the previous level. The conceptual understanding, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and social awareness grow exponentially at each level.

But, if a child is not going to complete the full Primary, Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, or Middle School programs in Montessori, it is best that they leave at the end of a cycle: after kindergarten, 3rd grade, or 6th grade. A child who leaves a three-year cycle in the middle never feels the success of the final year leadership position and never experiences the culmination of learning in all areas of the curriculum that occurs in the final year. Though a child benefits from every year in Montessori, part of what is taught in the first two years of a cycle is an understanding of materials that will be fully utilized in the child’s final year. If they are not planning to continue in a Montessori environment, then this is not always time well spent.

For parents of Upper Elementary students, we have a Khalsa Education Paper *The Importance of the 6th Year in the Upper Elementary Classroom*. This will be available at the annual Introduction to Upper Elementary Meeting and will be given to all 5th grade parents each spring. Copies are available in the office.

Fees

KMES is a public charter school and does not charge tuition or fees for its educational programs.

There are fees to participate on field trips scheduled during the school day and in extra-curricular programs offered beyond the school day. These fees are not optional and must be paid in order to participate in these programs.

Field Trip Fees

Khalsa Montessori Elementary School coordinates field trips both on- and off-site that enhance the cultural curriculum. As these activities incur cost beyond the classroom curriculum, there is a fee to participate in field trips. The fee structure is as follows: Kindergarten is \$80 per year; Lower Elementary (grades 1 – 3) is \$200 per year, Upper Elementary (Grades 4 – 6) is \$280 per year, and Middle School (grades 7 – 8) is \$780 per year. If a family chooses not to participate in field trips, the student will remain in the classroom until the class returns to school. They will focus on the daily work plan during this time.

Extra-curricular Fees

Each year, KMES partners with qualified instructors to provide after school programs. These programs have included Drama, Photography, Taiko Drumming, and Chess to name a few. Several classes may continue for years and there are programs that are unique and offered for shorter periods of time. These fees are due at the time of registration for each program. Placement in an extra-curricular class is not confirmed until both the Registration Form and fee have been received by the school office. Registration is limited to KMES students and is available on a first-come first-served basis. Payment arrangements cannot be made for these programs.

Returned Check and Late Payment Fees

There will be a \$20 charge for all returned checks.

Activity Funds

KMS Development Fund and Activity Fund

Parent gifts have played an important role in the development of the Khalsa Montessori Elementary School. Tax-deductible donations are appreciated for specific areas (program development, facility development, etc.) or for our general fund. These gifts allow us to do the extra things that are so important to the development of our environments.

You have a wonderful ongoing opportunity to donate to the development of KMES and leave a lasting memory of your child at the school. Donate a Brick with your child's name etched in it for our developing brick path area. Details are available at the school office.

Donations to the KMES Activity Fund result in a dollar-for-dollar state tax credit up to \$400 per Arizona family while supporting KMES within-curricular special programs and activities. In the past, donations to the Activity Fund have improved the playground, built an art room, and supported many exciting field trips and extra activities like gardening, Spanish and yoga/health programs. Every year Activity Fund donations help us support those intra-curricular programs that are not education curriculum related.

Help us promote the KMES Activity Fund!

Primary/Toddler parents and Khalsa friends can donate up to \$400 and get a direct \$400 tax credit on their state taxes through the Arizona State Tax Credit program. Elementary parents can add a donation to

their field trip or extra-curricular fees to add up to \$400 to maximize the tax credit benefit. Gifts are also a tax deduction on federal taxes.

Tell your friends about this opportunity to make a difference in the lives of Khalsa Montessori Elementary School students while getting their entire donation back through the AZ State Tax Credit program!

Programs of Instruction

Programs

KMES offers multi-aged classrooms with three-year cycles. An effective Montessori experience depends on the increased possibility for self-paced learning in a classroom with a range of ages and stages of development. KMES has three Lower Elementary classrooms, two Upper Elementary classrooms, and a Middle School classroom. The Khalsa Montessori Primary School provides Kindergarten for the final year of the primary cycle in three classrooms.

Khalsa Montessori Elementary School believes that students within classroom programs should be placed individually according to ability and readiness rather than chronological age. Exact numbers of students at each grade level may vary but the school will strive for a balance of ages in each classroom when it reaches its capacity.

The Montessori Prepared Environment

The Montessori Method is both a philosophy of child growth and a rationale for guiding such growth. The children experience a prepared environment of hands-on learning materials and exercises, which develop their intellectual, physical and psychological abilities. This environment is designed to be responsive to the sensitive periods of the child, (i.e., language, order, movement, culture). The prepared environment of the Montessori classroom emphasizes “Structure and Order”, “Freedom”, “Reality and Nature”, “Beauty”, and the “Development of Community Life.” Classrooms encourage the absorption of the rich environment by being relaxed and non-threatening; being filled with attractive and activity-oriented materials; and allowing freedom with structure (i.e., the freedom for children to choose from the varied, and carefully presented Montessori materials). Cross-curricular activities and materials are developed in accordance with integrated thematic units.

A **multi-sensory sequence of manipulative materials** in all areas of the classroom give children concrete experiences that form a firm basis for their conceptual knowledge. **Self-correcting materials** provide the immediate feedback required for self-discovery, and teacher demonstrations allow for learning through observation. Material presentations are one-on-one or in small groups to ensure that the child is neither held back, nor overwhelmed by the pace or level of other children.

Multi-age classrooms allow for peer learning. Children learn especially well from the observation of slightly older children, while older children are able to demonstrate their mastery of materials by teaching the material to younger students. Multi-age classes provide:

- The stability of three years in the same environment;
- A **three year student/teacher relationship** which provides a deep understanding of a child’s learning style;

- Opportunities for chronologically older children to become leaders and examples for newer students;
- Opportunities for children of similar skill levels, but different chronological age levels, to work together; and
- An environment conducive to the Montessori **Spiral Curriculum**, (in which similar concepts and tasks are presented at different levels of complexity at several times during the three year curriculum cycles).

The Role of the Teacher

Individualized curriculum is provided for each student as our teachers observe performance, record areas of progress and areas of difficulty, and design future presentations and assignments according to the perceived needs and capacity of each child. The “indirect method” neither imposes upon the child, nor abandons the child to grapple alone. The teacher observes each child to determine specific needs and to gain the knowledge needed to prepare an environment conducive to the child’s growth. The teacher’s role is to prepare the environment, evaluate each student, introduce new materials, and give each child guidance.

Student Outcomes

- **Independence and internal motivation**, stimulated by the freedom of activity and choices
- **Self-discipline and concentration**, gained as the child carefully attends to and completes each chosen task without interruption
- **Self-confidence**, as children learn without comparing themselves to others
- **Mastery of fundamental skills**, as children learn with concrete materials
- **Enthusiasm for learning**, as children work at their own pace and according to their own interests
- **Critical thinking**, developed by reasoning and creative problem solving throughout the curriculum
- **Transfer of knowledge**, developed through the integrated curriculum
- **A sense of personal meaning and responsibility**, resulting from the child’s social studies and growing recognition of him/herself as a beneficiary of the evolution of civilization and the many contributions of other human beings

Montessori Elementary Curriculum

The complete Khalsa Montessori Elementary School curriculum is available on request.

Special Program Emphasis or Methodology

Multiple Intelligences

KMES utilizes the concept of multiple intelligences, developed by Howard Gardner and David Lazear. By understanding the ways in which our students best learn and express themselves, we will design individualized lessons to better reach individual students and allow them to demonstrate their understanding.

Neural Pathway Development, the Arts and Physical Education

KMES sees physical and arts education as critical to the healthy development of every child and important ways in which a child develops new skills and patterns. We have evaluated research in the area of neural pathway development and understand the importance of providing physical and creative experiences for optimum brain development.

The development of neural pathways is a fundamental reason for our teaching of yoga. By giving children a wide variety of new combinations of movement, positions, breathing and vocalizations, new neural pathways are developed. As the number of pathways grows, so does the amount of functional cortex resulting in an increased ability to perform complex tasks in all academic as well as physical areas.

When we talk about a “variety of experiences” at Khalsa, our goal is to provide the kind of stimulating environment that helps children build and strengthen new neural bridges while also exposing them to experiences that may spark their interest for years to come.

Emergent Curriculum

KMES will allow for children to develop their own specific activities within the framework of general educational objectives. Teacher planning may include a variety of possible outcomes for a lesson, thereby allowing for students to suggest specific directions as the unit progresses. When teachers are responsive to the needs and ideas of students in the learning process, children become active agents in their learning process and experience knowledge as emerging from the self and social interaction.

Khalsa education utilizes the intuitive and spontaneous creativity of the teacher. It understands that often the best lessons are ones that spontaneously develop through the interaction of the students, teachers, and outside events. It counts on the ability of the teacher to perceive the needs of children and develop lessons that meet these needs. It allows teachers the flexibility to change lesson plans to follow the enthusiasm of their students and it encourages them to do so.

Community Integrated Learning

The Khalsa Montessori Elementary program uses the surrounding community as its classroom. Community resources are regularly evaluated and used for unit development. Field trips are a vital way in which the children’s classroom is extended allowing them to experience their connection to the world. This is one of the many aspects of cosmic education, which places the child within the scope of the universe.

Parents are encouraged to search for and present resources that are available to the children. We encourage all families to share their holidays and special traditions with our students, providing opportunities for KMES students to experience the cultural diversity of our community.

Special Education

KMES will provide appropriate special education services to all students with disabilities. A copy of the *Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual for Khalsa Montessori Elementary Schools* is available for your review in the school office. If you have any questions or concerns about a child you know please contact the school office at 602-252-3759 for more information.

Khalsa Montessori Elementary ensures that all school-aged students who have a disability, and who are in need of special education and related services are identified, located and evaluated. In cooperation with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), Khalsa Montessori shall be responsible for developing, implementing, and documenting child identification procedures. This policy applies to highly mobile students with disabilities and children that are suspected of being a student with a disability and in need of special education, even though they are advancing from grade to grade.

It is Khalsa Montessori Elementary School's responsibility to inform the general public and all parents of students enrolled in our school of our responsibility to make available special education services for students with disabilities and how to access those services. The procedure for child identification includes documentation of KMES public awareness efforts to inform the public and parents of the availability of special education services and of the KMES screening activities within the first 45 days of the school year. Classroom lead teachers conduct a 45-day screening on all newly enrolled and new-to-level students including kindergarten which includes consideration of academic, cognitive, vision, hearing, adaptive, communication, social/emotional and psychomotor domains.

We are responsible for identifying, locating, and evaluating, all children with disabilities within our K-8th grade charter school and for making appropriate referrals to:

1. Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) for children birth through 2 years of age for evaluation and services if needed, and
2. School district of residence for children aged 3 through 5 for evaluation and services if needed.

KMES shall provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), which includes special education and related services for student with disabilities at public expense under public supervision and direction and without charge to the parents.

Khalsa Montessori Elementary School maintains documentation and annually reports the number of children with disabilities within each disability category that have been identified, located and evaluated. The collection and use of data to meet these requirements are subject to the confidentiality requirements of §300.560 and §300.577.

Tutoring

KMES may offer individual and small group tutoring sessions for a variety of subjects. Tutoring needs are identified on a student-by-student basis by the lead teacher and/or as discussed in the Student Study Team.

Parent Checklist:

Communication

School to Parent Communication

Message Center and Website Communication

The Message Center, located by the entrance to the school yard, is our on-campus communication center. Daily messages will be written on the message board.

The Message Cart is your daily communication portal. Parent notes will be placed in your students folder in the Message Cart. Hence a student will be allowed access to only their folder. The only exceptions are PTO flyers to promote school events and placing birthday invitations to the entire class. For the latter use, a parent must accompany student to the office and be present when placing the invitations. **Check your message folder every day and read the message board as you drive by.**

Messages on the Message Board are to be written only by the campus On-site Coordinator. Notices or flyers placed on the school bulletin boards, or in the Message Center cart, must be approved by the school Director. Please submit these a few weeks in advance of the event.

This KMS website has all of the most current Khalsa Montessori School information and school-wide communications. Current Handbooks, Education Position Papers, Staff Biographies, monthly newsletters, and other school communications and information are available on the website.

You are responsible for keeping up to date with school and teacher communications. Please call the office if you have any questions or concerns.

Office Communications

602-252-9211 is the KMES Parent Line. This is an unlisted number for you to use to call the office. If this number is busy, call 602-252-3759. Both numbers, if busy or unanswered, will be forwarded to a voice mail system. Leave a message and the On-site Coordinator will call you back as soon as possible. The fax line is 602-252-5224.

Direct communication to the administration may be made by email. You can reach the School Director and Administrative Assistant at kms@khalsamontessori.org.

The On-Site Coordinator will be in the office from 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. If you wish to talk to the School Director or Administrative Assistant, call the office and the On-site Coordinator will pass the message on to them. The On-site Coordinator will be glad to set up an appointment for you. If you are at the school, please go first to the elementary school (downstairs) office to set up an appointment with the School Director or Administrative Assistant.

Khalsa Montessori Elementary School Parent Handbook

The KMES Parent Handbook is in the Current Parent Section of the school website (www.khalsamontessori.org/parents). New-to-Khalsa and New-to-Elementary parents will be given pages from the school website when their children begin at the elementary school directing them to the handbook. Please ask the office if you need a hardcopy of the handbook. The KMES Parent Handbook includes all of the current policies and procedures of the elementary campus. Please always refer to it for any procedural questions that may arise during the year. Check it before you call the office with your questions!

Regular Newsletters and Notices

Approximately five times per school year, parents will be emailed a notice that the newsletters are available on the website and given a direct link to it. Hardcopies of the newsletter will be available at the Message Center. Newsletters contain important information from teachers, the administration, and the PTO as well as information of educational interest, and a calendar of events for the upcoming month(s).

Notices and Fliers for special activities will also be provided several days before the event in both hardcopy and as an email message.

Bulletin Boards

All calendars, community events and important notices are placed on the bulletin board in the entrance hallway. All notices must be approved by the School Director prior to posting.

Be Direct in Your Communication

If we can assist you in making a direct communication, let us know. We will respond to direct communication, but not to “she said that he said that she said” communications. We also want to help your child communicate their problems at school. If your child expresses a school-related problem that concerns you, please encourage him/ her to communicate his/her issues to other children, to a teacher, or use the lead teacher moderated class meeting process. You may also come in with him/her to help him/her make the necessary communication, but please, do not take over this responsibility.

- Questions, concerns or suggestions regarding classroom or playground occurrences or plans should first be brought to the Lead Teacher of that program. If you continue to have questions or concerns then bring these to the administration.
- If your concern has not been resolved by the classroom Lead Teacher or the Administration, the KMES Board of Directors provides a final review of school issues. To put an item on the board agenda, discuss your item with a board member at least 72 work week (non-weekend) hours before the next board meeting.
- Questions about behavior or academic progress should be brought to your child’s program Lead Teacher. See the “Behavior” section of the Parent Checklist for additional procedures regarding behavioral issues.
- All changes in telephone numbers, addresses, immunizations, and pick-up persons should be brought to the office.
- Questions, concerns or suggestions about overall school programming, environments, policies or staff should be brought directly to the administration.
- Questions, concerns or suggestions regarding fund raising or any of the Parent Teacher Organization school events should be brought to the Parent Teacher Organization.

If the person you need to talk to is not available, set up an appointment through the campus On-site Coordinator or write a note via the Khalsa School Communication Form, located in the each campus office.

Khalsa Montessori Elementary School Grievance Procedure.

1. Bring your concerns to the attention of the involved classroom Lead Teacher, After-School Program Director, or Administrative Staff. The school staff will schedule a meeting as soon as possible.
2. If you continue to have questions or concerns, bring these concerns to the School Director. The school staff will schedule a meeting as soon as possible. The Director may request that the teachers or staff involved also attend the meeting.

3. If you continue to feel that the concern has not been resolved by the classroom Lead Teacher or the School Director, the KMES Board of Directors provides a final review of school issues. To put an item on the KMES Board of Directors agenda, ask a board member at least 72 work week (non-weekend) hours before the next board meeting to place the item on the agenda.

Teacher-to-Parent Forms

KMES Behavioral Report

You will receive a Behavioral Report if your child's behavior broke a school or classroom rule or was inappropriate in any way. These reports will describe the behavior and what was done at the time. On the "Level of Action" line you will see one of three options indicated.

1. Specific points may be assessed according to the KMES Discipline Policy (see KMES Discipline Policy section). These points are assessed after a meeting between the teacher who witnessed the incident and your child's Classroom Lead Teacher. The school director approves the points.
2. "Points Pending" indicates that points will most likely be assessed after the required meetings and approval have been completed. We want you to receive information on the incident the day that it happened (if possible).
3. "No points assessed at this time," indicates that we want you to be aware of the behavior, but teachers are working with your child on this behavior within the Positive Discipline method of teacher/student communication and classroom meetings. Points may be assessed at a later date if a pattern of this behavior continues despite efforts to change it.

Incident Report Form

Incident reports are to inform you, and to document, any physical injury that happens at school. It will inform you of what happened and what the staff did to help your child. If the incident is at all serious we will call you. If it is an emergency we will call 9-1-1 and then call you.

Parent/Teacher/Student Meeting Summaries

Any meeting between parents, teachers and students regarding student class placement, behavioral incidents or academic difficulties will be summarized for documentation, agreement, and clarity. A copy will be given to you to sign. Parent Teacher Conferences may be so documented if decisions regarding future courses of action are made.

Parent Meetings, Workshops and Conferences

The All Parent Evening in August, Parent Education workshops, Introductions to Program Levels, and Conferences are scheduled throughout the school year. These parent events are designed to inform parents of the progress of their child's education and upcoming transitions as well as to discuss topics of interest to parents. Dates will be announced via email and in the newsletter. For you and your child's benefit, the August All Parent Evening is absolutely essential!

Parent-Teacher Conferences

These are scheduled twice yearly in November and May. At Upper Elementary and Middle School, a student attends the conference. Parent/Teacher parent goal setting meetings are scheduled during in mid-September. Khalsa School policy is that both parents attend the same parent/teacher conference.

Regardless of marital status, both parents are still partners in parenting their child. It is even more important in dual house-holds that everyone is on the same page. Conferences are for sharing observations between home and school and answering questions. It is important for everyone to have the same information and be able to collaborate together for the sake of the child. This is why we've established the school policy that we do not do separate parent/teacher conferences for dual-household families.

Meetings with Teachers

By calling the office, arrangements can be made for meeting with, or an email from, your child's teacher. If you have any questions or concerns, PLEASE come by the office, email or call.

Information

Annual Disclosure

At registration you will receive KMS' Annual Disclosure form. This form describes your right to legal access to your child's student records. It also indicates the school policy on releasing school directory information. As written in this notice, you have two weeks after the receipt of the notice to inform the school if you do not want your directory information released.

Reports Available for Your Review

The following are available for your review through the school office:

- KMES Charter Application. This document gives an outline of our educational philosophy, curriculum, and operational procedures.
- KMES Charter Contract.
- KMES Alignment with the Arizona State Standards
- Khalsa Montessori Elementary School Special Education Policies and Procedures
- KMES Staff Biographies and Finger Print Clearance Cards
- Annual KMES charter financial audits
- KMES district standardized testing reports

Special Education and NCLB policies and procedures

At the final PTO meeting of every year the administration will present a review of the current Khalsa School No Child Left Behind policies, NCLB grants, Special Education Policies and Procedures, School Report Card, and the school's alignment with the state standards. This review is presented both to give parents and interested parties information and to encourage input on these programs, procedures and documents. All documents relating to the Khalsa Special Education Policies, NCLB policies, alignment with the state standards, state test results and original charter are available in the Administration Office for parents' review.

Khalsa Education Position Papers

See the Khalsa Montessori Education Position Paper packet for the KMES educational philosophy and policies regarding student consequences, spending an extra year in a Montessori cycle, and plagiarism. Additional position papers may be given to parents throughout the course of the year when appropriate.

Classroom Observations

Parents are very much encouraged to observe in the classroom. Please contact the campus On-site Coordinator to make an appointment starting in October. Observing from the hallway “one-way” windows is available for current Khalsa parents. Sign-in as a visitor in the office, turn off the hallway light, and watch!

Please observe the following “Observation Guidelines” when coming into the classroom to observe:

- *Please observe from a visitor chair.*
We’ve found that visitors are less distracting to the children if they are sitting down, rather than walking around or “hovering.” If you want to see a different part of the room, please feel free to move your chair there.
- *Please encourage the children to continue with their normal activity.*
If you want to see what the school is usually like, then it’s important to minimize the effects of your own presence! If someone stops to talk, say “hello”, then explain that you came to watch the children. If someone asks you for help, suggest that he/she ask the teacher.
- *Please stay long enough to receive a real impression.*
We feel that a half hour is about the minimum time possible for absorbing an adequate picture of Montessori classroom life; an hour is better; and all morning is best. After your observation period, the Lead Teacher may be able to take a short time to talk with you, or another time for you to meet him/her can be arranged.

KMES Board of Directors

The KMES Board of Directors includes parent representatives, teacher representatives, community members, and administration representatives. See the school website for a current list of board members. Any changes in board membership or positions will also be announced in the *Khalsa News*.

The board meets monthly. Meeting announcements, agendas, and minutes are posted on the bulletin board in the elementary downstairs office hallway and on the KMES website. The board was designed to approve major decisions such as budgets, enrollment changes, staff, and policy decisions. It is not involved with day-to-day management. The board may provide a final review of issues that parents feel have not been resolved by the school staff or administration. To put an item on the board agenda, discuss your item with a board member at least 72 hours (non-weekend) before the next board meeting.

Elementary Campus Arrival and Departure

Elementary Extended Care (AM and after school care)

Extended Care (paid care) is available for Elementary students from 7:30-8:00 am and 3:00-6:00pm on regular school days. The cost for Extended Care is \$190.00 per month for Part Time Extended Care (up to 2 hours), and \$220.00 per month for Full Time Extended Care (more than 2 hours). A 10% discount will be applied for families with siblings in the same program. If your child is not signed up for Extended Care, but arrives before 8:00 AM, you will be charged a \$5.00 drop-in fee for each day of use. Payments must be made, in the front office, the day the child arrives early. Emergency use by unregistered students of the Extended Care program after school is described in the Late Pick-Up Policy which is signed annually during final school year registration.

Morning Arrival

Arrive on time! Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary begin each day at 8:30 am. Your child may arrive after 8:00 am, at no charge, to allow for play and socialization before class begins. It is essential to your child's day that they arrive before class begins. Excessive tardiness will result in a parent/teacher or parent/administrator meeting to discuss the problem. Continued excessive tardiness may result in the student spending an extra year in their current classroom to complete the academic cycle (see "Absences").

Please have your child ready to exit your car when you arrive for morning drop off. Drive your car to the gate and have your child exit quickly. **Help us avoid drop off delays and traffic backups.**

NEVER leave your child unattended in the parking lot before the gate is opened at 7:30! The gate will only be unlocked when the staff member monitoring children is ready to receive them.

Late Arrival and Early Pick-Up

If your child arrives late or is picked up early for any reason, including leaving and returning during the day for appointments etc., **you must come into the office and sign the "Student Check In/Out Sheet"**. Please inform the school in advance whenever possible. The ORANGE FLAG is put out by the front gate when your child is tardy. Even if children are still on the yard, **if you see the ORANGE FLAG, you must come to the office and sign your child in!** Your child will then pick up a wrist band to give to his/her teacher. This assures you and us that we all are aware of your child's presence on the campus. If you don't sign them in, the student will wait in the office until you are able to return and sign him/her in.

Absences

Please call or email the office by 8:30 a.m. if your child is to be absent from school. The State requires us to report all absences and their reasons.

Absences affect your child and the school. Teachers may be unable to make up lessons your child misses during absences. **Please plan your vacations during school vacations!**

Excessive unexcused absences will result in a parent/teacher or parent/administrator meeting to discuss the problem. Per State law, upon the tenth consecutive unexcused absence, a child must be withdrawn from the school.

Excessive school year absences will result in the student spending an extra year to complete the academic cycle.

KMS Attendance Policy

Khalsa Montessori School has established a minimum standard for attendance necessary for a student to complete one year of academic work.

Students with 25 or more absences per year will need an extra year in their current environment to complete the work missed due to days tardy or absent.

Item Drop-offs and Parent School Visits

If you are dropping off any items (lunches, etc.) for your child after the start of class, leave them in the main school office. **Never enter a classroom in progress unless you are coming for a scheduled observation.**

Lunches will be left in the office for students to pick up before their lunchtime. Please label all items.

If you are coming to the school for any reason during the school hours, you must check in at the main school office. All visitors are required to complete and wear a Visitor's Badge for the duration of their stay.

Pick-Up Procedures

After school pick-up times: Lower Elementary: 3:00-3:10 p.m., Upper Elementary and Middle School 3:30-3:40 p.m. Students will be in the front yard monitored by a staff member. Students with Upper Elementary siblings or a 3:30 p.m. extra-curricular program will be with a staff member in the yard until 3:30 p.m.

Students not picked up at the gate must be accompanied from the gate to your car. Please communicate to your child to be on the lookout for your vehicle. **If your child is not at the gate when you arrive, you must park, pull forward along the center island or rotate to the end of the line.** Never block the pick-up line by waiting for your child! If you use the drive-thru pick-up method, you must stay with your vehicle at all times.

If you are in the yard with your Lower Elementary child during pick up, please utilize the Ramada area and keep your child with you between 3:00 and 3:10. Your child may not play on the yard during this busy pick-up time. A Khalsa staff member is not responsible for monitoring your child once you are present on the school grounds.

Elementary Children not picked up within the 10-minute grace period will be signed into Elementary Extended Care, the elementary campus after-school care program. If a child is not enrolled in Khalsa Extended Care, and is picked up late, his/her parents will be charged \$10 per half hour for the first two emergencies. Any subsequent emergencies will be charged \$25 per half hour. Please review the *Late Pick-Up Policy* for additional details.

Arrangements for pick-up time should be made (with your child) at home BEFORE SCHOOL. The office telephone will not be made available to students trying to make last minute pick-up arrangements.

In case of an unforeseen change in your pick up time, call the office and a message will be communicated to your child.

Vacation Program Care

KMES offers on-site Vacation Care for early release and full day In-Service Days, Parent-Teacher Conference days, the week that includes Christmas Day of winter break and the full week of spring break.

Vacation Care is available in 3 tier levels. Extended Care is only available to Lower and Upper Elementary students. There is no extended or vacation care option for Middle School students.

Tier 1 covers all 11:30 early release In-Service and Parent-Teacher Conference dates.

Tier 2 includes all Tier 1 times, as well as full In-Service and Parent-Teacher Conference dates.

Tier 3 includes all Tier 1 & 2 times, plus the closed week of Winter Break and Spring Break.

No programs are offered on national holidays, the closed week during Winter Vacation and the school set-up weeks in August. Enrollment forms and information are available in each campus front office.

Early Release

Except for the day before Thanksgiving, ALL early release days end at 11:30 am for all Elementary students, Lower and Upper.

Parking Lot Safety

We are increasingly concerned about students running across the parking lot in front of cars during drop-off and pick-up times. Drop-off and pick-up is designed for one car at a time directly in front of the gate.

- If you are dropping off or picking up your child and you are not directly in front of the gate, it is imperative that you (and anyone else that picks up or drops off) accompany your student BOTH to and from the front entrance gate to your car. This should be done at all times of the day.
- At pick-up time, students will be required to wait at the gate for their parent's vehicle to arrive at the gate, or the adult must park and walk to the gate to retrieve their student(s). Students will not be allowed to exit the gate, to a car away from the gate, without an adult to accompany them.
- If, for any reason, you need to park to wait for your child, (i.e., her/she has not been released yet, or must run back to school for something that has been forgotten), you must accompany them. They may not walk through the parking lot unaccompanied.

We realize that the parking lot can become congested at drop-off and pick-up times. However, we must place our first priority on children's safety. Please be patient. Do not make the risky assumption that your child is an exception. We all agree that safety is our first priority.

Parking

Please use the school parking lot, if you need to park and come in. **Please, never block our drive-thru driveway!**

Additional parking for school events is available in the parking lot to the southwest of the campus. This lot is accessible off Ashland.

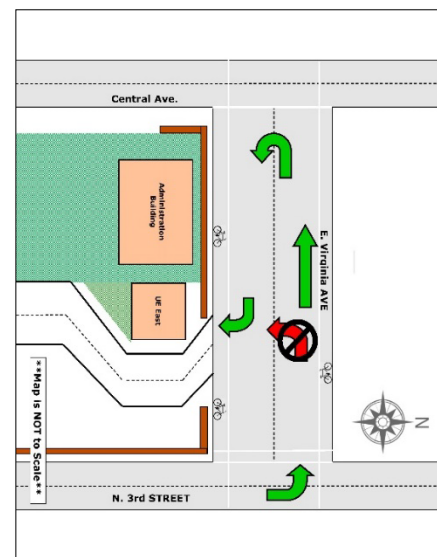
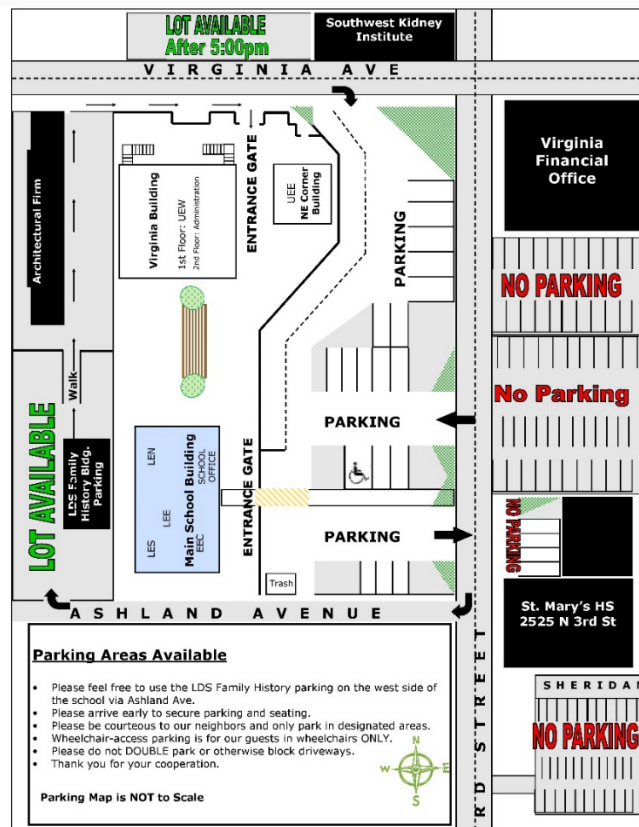
Traffic Management Plan

Under no circumstances may you cut through nearby residential streets to reach Khalsa Montessori Elementary School on 3rd Street. Driving to and from KMES in Phoenix must always be done on major and feeder streets. This is a stipulation of our use permit. North/south routes include 3rd street, 7th street and Central Avenue. East/west routes are Virginia, Thomas, Osborn and Indian School to the north and Palm Lane, McDowell and I-10 to the south.

Because our use permit could be revoked if this policy is not followed, the following consequences have been established:

- 1st Offense – Verbal reminder from the school office
- 2nd Offense – Meeting with the school director
- 3rd Offense – \$10 fine (donation to residential Neighborhood Association) and Meeting with School Director

Additional Offenses – \$20 fine (donation) for 4th offense, \$30 for 5th, etc. and director meeting to discuss child's enrollment in the KMES.



Things to Bring and

Things Not to Bring

YES!

- Sturdy bags (LE) or backpacks (UE) for homework books and folders.
- Water bottles with straps for P.E.
- Voluntary class supplies as requested by the teachers.
- Books and items of educational interest may be shared during specific activities. Your child or their teacher will let you know of the appropriate days and times.

- Lunch Boxes – Please have your child bring a small insulated lunch box with an ice pack for keeping food cool. Freezing your child’s juice container is another way to keep lunches cool until noon. We do not supply napkins, spoons, etc. your child should come to school with containers they can open without instruments.

NO!

- No toys, dolls, sticker-books, make-up, trading cards, personal electronics, cell phones, or other non-educational items may be brought to school.
- No mechanical pencils, pens, laser pointers or calculators (only if requested by lead teacher in Upper Elementary or Middle School).
- No flip-flops, cowboy boots or high heels. Gross motor activities are enjoyed and experienced in shoes that are easy to move in and offer support, like running shoes or sturdy closed shoes.
- Students must wear clothing conducive to a non-distracting classroom atmosphere. Pants should fit on hips, no inappropriate language on clothing, no inappropriate or revealing clothing, no hats in class, and girls should wear shorts under dresses.
- Inappropriate items brought to school will be confiscated. Students wearing inappropriate clothing will be sent to the office and parents will be contacted.

Parent Participation

Parent involvement is an integral part of the KMES program. It is important for you, and for your child, that you are an active participant in the “other half” of your child’s world. KMES parent evenings, educational workshops, and parent/teacher meetings are designed to give parents vital information needed to support children in a Montessori environment. Therefore, parent participation in the August All Parent Meeting, the New-to-Khalsa Parent Orientation (for families when first joining the school), The Introductions to new program levels in the spring, and the twice yearly Parent /Teacher Conferences is absolutely essential!

Khalsa School policy is that both parents attend the same parent/teacher conference. Regardless of marital status, both parents are still partners in parenting their child. It is even more important in dual house-holds that everyone is on the same page. Conferences are for sharing observations between home and school and answering questions. It is important for everyone to have the same information and be able to collaborate together for the sake of the child. This is why we’ve established the school policy that we do not do separate parent/teacher conferences for dual-household families.

We also strongly encourage you to come observe your child’s classroom every year. And, you will enjoy feeling a part of the Khalsa School community by getting involved in the KMS PTO and in attending school yearly events and student performances: the holiday program in December, the January family hike on South Mountain, the Spring Carnival, the Special Program Presentations, and the End-of-the-Year Program and school picnic in May. Join in and enjoy the company of the Khalsa Montessori School family!

To facilitate this participation, each Khalsa Montessori Elementary School family is encouraged to volunteer 20 hours per year to the school. This participation helps solidify the school/parent partnership that is beneficial for your student's success at KMES!

There are many different ways in which you can contribute. **The major areas of participation are:**

- **Field Trips.** Exciting field trips are planned for the students, and parents are needed to help with transportation and monitoring. You will have the important responsibility of monitoring students other than your own. No siblings please! You and your child are expected to participate and stay with the group and follow the same classroom rules and schedule as the rest of the class.
- **Special Classes.** Many parents enjoy sharing their areas of expertise and knowledge with the children. Foreign countries and cultures, special programs, gardening, arts, occupations and holidays are some of the ways that a parent can add to the children's experience and understanding of the world.
- **School Improvements.** KMES offers a Saturday or two each year for campus improvement. On these select Saturdays we build, paint, garden and creatively improve the school.
- **Fund Raising.** The Parent-Teacher Organization actively organizes a variety of fund-raisers (a fall Parent-Teacher Mixer, a spring carnival, etc.). The success of these events has come from the support of all parents.
- **Project making and Donations.** Making Montessori projects at your home is a very important way in which parents help our classes grow. Ask your child's teacher for ideas. Also take a look each month at the "Classroom Needs" in the Khalsa News. Donating needed items helps the teachers spend their monthly classroom budget money on other items.
- **Room Parent.** Many classrooms have a Room Father/Mother who keeps in communication with the teacher and helps organize special programs, field trips and the search for classroom needs.
- **The Khalsa School Parent-Teacher Organization.** Every parent of the Khalsa School is encouraged to join the organization. The Parent-Teacher Organization meets monthly to overview the development of the school, to plan fund-raisers, and to discuss parental suggestions and concerns. JOIN THE ORGANIZATION! Meetings are announced in the Khalsa News and you are welcome at any meeting.

Parent Involvement Policy

[As required by federal No Child Left Behind guidelines staff and parents developed the following *Parent Involvement Policy* during the 2003-04 school year.]

Khalsa Montessori Elementary School (KMES) is a school for families who care deeply about their children's education and are willing to be partners in their school.

KMES (charter) is a non-profit corporation run by the administration in partnership with teachers and parents. The KMES Board of Directors includes two parents, two teachers, one community member and

the school director as members. The PTO officers and the KMES Board of Directors parent representatives act as a KMES Parent Advisory Committee.

KMES is a community of families, teachers and administrators working together as partners in creating a positive and nurturing environment that supports academic excellence and personal growth. Parents, teachers, students and administration each have areas of responsibility, input, and support as defined in the KMS Parent Handbook. At the beginning of each school year, each parent, teacher and student signs a *Family/School Agreement* that defines his or her areas of responsibilities.

Every KMES parent makes a commitment to agree to the school's policies and procedures as stated in the KMES Parent Handbook, and to understand the school's Montessori educational methods and Montessori philosophy. KMES parents agree to support their child in the school environment in a variety of ways depending on the educational level of the child. These ways include having the student attend school regularly; attending scheduled Parent/Teacher conferences, goal setting meetings and additional meetings that may be recommended; providing access to necessary resources for class projects or at home reading; supporting participation in outdoor education and class community building activities such as field trips; encouraging their child to finish their work in a timely fashion and to make up unfinished work before school, during recess, or after school; providing a time and place at home conducive to completing homework; checking student weekly progress reports and reading all school and classroom communications; and allowing their child to experience feedback in learning organizational, decision making, time management, and social skills. Every parent is encouraged to observe their child's classroom and to attend school events. Every family is encouraged to participate in school and classroom activities by volunteering 20 hours of their time per year in areas such as field trips, classroom events, aiding in the classroom, work days, material making, parent evenings and Parent Teacher Organization.

The KMES staff respects the parents' role as the child's first teacher and welcomes parent involvement and regular contact and communication. Parents are encouraged in many ways to bring their ideas, suggestions and concerns to the school's attention. These ways include: availability of the school director and lead teachers for meetings, communication forms that facilitate the leaving of messages, beginning of the year parent/teacher goal setting meetings, and twice yearly parent/teacher conferences.

The school addresses the needs of parents and the community, as well as children, through expanded services and programs. KMES has developed appropriate roles for community based organizations and businesses in areas such as educational programs and field trips, technology support and donations, support for Activity Fund donations, and donations of goods and services. The partnership of teachers and parents at Khalsa encourages the exchange of information and ideas for successful child rearing and education and offers support for the challenges of today's parents. KMES provides suggestions to help parents work with their children to improve their children's development and achievement. These ideas are provided in Parent Packets and Handbooks and at the All Parent Meeting in August and during parent/teacher meetings throughout the year. Parenting classes, workshops on educational and family issues, and other programs of parent interest are also offered to adults at the school.

KMES has an active Parent Teacher Organization. The mission of the KMES PTO is "To enhance the delivery of excellence in education and cultivate the community of Khalsa Montessori School". The activities of the PTO are "the planning and execution of social and educational community building events and fund-raisers. Every member is keenly aware of the crucial role a parent's involvement plays in the quality and success of teaching a child." KMES parents meet with teachers and the school administration on a monthly basis at Parent Teacher Organization meetings. At these meetings, parents and teachers discuss and evaluate fund-raising plans and strategies for strong parent involvement.

At the final (May) PTO meeting of the year and in the KMS Parent Questionnaire, parents evaluate the content and the effectiveness of the parent involvement policy and attempt to identify barriers to greater participation by parents. This annual review meeting is scheduled at a convenient time for all parents.

Khalsa parents have many opportunities to be informed on KMES curriculum and grant programs. At the final PTO meeting of the year, there is a full discussion of the school's Title I and other entitlement grants programs. Information throughout the year on school entitlement grant programs will also be presented to parents in the monthly Khalsa newsletter. As stated in the KMES Parent Handbook, parents are encouraged to review at any time documents in the Khalsa Administration Office that include a description and explanation of the KMES Montessori curriculum and its alignment to the state standards, the ways with which we evaluate student and classroom performance, and special education policies and procedures. These documents will also be made available to all attending parents at the May PTO meeting.

Discipline and Social Development

Win-Win Problem Solving

Our teachers use a variety of techniques, including modeling and conflict resolution, to encourage healthy social development. Our disciplinary approach is based on positive discipline. For more information on this approach we suggest that you read *Positive Discipline in the Classroom* by Jane Nelson, Lynn Lott, and Stephan Glenn (Prima Publishing, 1997).

KMES Discipline Policy

Students at KMES are expected to adhere to a code of conduct conducive to a peaceful and respectful learning environment. At KMES every child is encouraged to develop a sense of personal meaning and responsibility for themselves, others and our world. Students most likely to thrive in our self-directed Montessori environment are those who: can work independently; take responsibility for their work; are able to focus for an extended period of time; demonstrate internal control; and, respect themselves and others.

The primary responsibility of the staff at KMES is to ensure an environment, which is conducive to focus and learning. To further this goal, the school prohibits any behavior, including choices of appearance, which create a disruption or distraction to the optimal learning environment. Each teacher will make this judgment in the best interest of their class.

If a child's appearance creates such a stir and extreme bid for attention that its wearer's presence in the classroom interferes with the optimal learning environment, a teacher may ask the child to change his/her appearance immediately or leave school until it is changed.

The school finds that such personal choices are between a child and his/her parents to the extent that these choices do not interfere with the rights of other children to an undisrupted classroom. Parents are strongly encouraged to realize their responsibility to assist their children in seeing the effect of their choices on others in their community.

Most inappropriate behaviors will be dealt with through a variety of positive discipline methods, which may include teacher/student communication, teacher-designed logical consequences, classroom meetings and a student/teacher mediation committee. Parents may be informed of inappropriate student behavior which is being successfully dealt with through teacher-to-parent communications.

If a student does not respond to these school behavioral approaches or performs a severely disruptive act listed in the Corrective Action Guidelines, a teacher will complete a Behavioral Report describing the student's action, points assessed, and the consequence designed. Parents will receive a copy of the Behavioral Report and will be verbally notified of any action resulting in the accumulation of 4 points or

more. Point assessment will be made by the witnessing staff member and the child's Classroom Lead Teacher with final approval by the school director.

KMES' discipline policies are based on the suspension and expulsion laws of the State of Arizona ARS 15-840 to 15-844.

ARS 15-841

1. "Pupils shall comply with the rules, pursue the required course of study and submit to the authority of the teachers, the administrators and the governing board."
2. "A pupil may be expelled for continued open defiance of authority, continued disruptive or disorderly behavior, [and] violent behavior."
3. KMES will "refuse to admit any pupil who has been expelled from another educational institution or who is in the process of being expelled from another educational institution."

ARS 15-842

1. "A pupil who cuts, defaces or otherwise injures any school property may be suspended or expelled."
2. "Upon complaint of the governing board, the parents or guardians of minors who have injured school property shall be liable for all damages caused by their children or wards."

ARS 15-843

"The governing board of any school district shall, in consultation with the teachers and parents of the school district, prescribe rules for the discipline, suspension and expulsion of pupils. The rules shall include penalties for excessive pupil absenteeism." The KMS Board of Directors has given the school administrators authority to suspend or expel a student from school. All expulsions will be reported to the KMS Board of Directors and appeal procedures will follow guidelines established by the board as outlined in ARS 15-843.

ARS 15-844

Any expulsion or suspension of a student with disabilities will "incorporate the change of placement requirements of the individuals with disabilities education act and applicable case law regarding suspension and expulsion of children with disabilities."

The following contains a detailed listing of KMES' Corrective Action Guidelines.

KMES Corrective Action Guidelines

Point Assessment

- 1 Point – Disruption, injury, threat, endangerment, or damage to classroom, students, staff, self, materials or property.

- 2 Points – Malicious disruption, injury, threat, endangerment, or damage to classroom, students, staff, self, materials or property. Second instance of plagiarism or cheating.
- 5 Points – Illegal acts (including stealing and use of tobacco on campus) or extremely malicious disruption, injury, threat, endangerment, or damage to classroom, students, staff, self, materials or property.

Actions for Accumulated Points

1 Point	Teacher/student meeting
2 Points	School director and student meeting
4 Points	Parent and teacher meeting (school Director may attend) Behavioral Action Plan developed and reviewed in 2 weeks
5 Points	1-day suspension
7 Points	3-day suspension
10 Points	Expulsion

Plagiarism and Cheating Policy

Elementary teachers will discuss plagiarism and cheating with students at the beginning of the school year. They will specifically define what proper use of reference materials is and what plagiarism is. They will define the KMES Honor Code regarding testing, classroom work and homework.

If a student has an incident of plagiarism or cheating, the first consequence will be a meeting with the teacher to discuss the incident.

A second incidence of plagiarism or cheating will result in 2 discipline points.

A third or more incidences of cheating and/or plagiarism will incur 2 additional discipline points and zero credit for the pertinent assignment. Students will be allowed to make up assignments upon the 1st and 2nd instance.

Health, Outdoors, and Accidents

Please help us protect all children by NOT sending your children to school if they are ill. Any children who have a fever or are sick in any way will be sent home. If your child is taking prescription medication, you must supply a written statement from your doctor indicating that your child is not

contagious. School health questions will be resolved in coordination with the State Health Department and local health professionals.

Children should be kept from school when they have any of the following signs or symptoms:

Unexplained change in activity level

- Decreased activity level
- Increased irritability
- Restlessness

Fever Please check with a thermometer if the child has any other symptoms*

Eyes

- Red and inflamed
- Yellow or green discharge

Ears

- Discharge
- Child complains of ear pain if associated with any other symptoms

Mouth & Throat

- New coughing
- New hoarseness
- Sore throat
- Sores on lips or inside mouth
- Painful swollen glands

Skin

- Pale
- Clammy
- Flushed
- New rash
- Impetigo sores

Nose

- Thick green mucus from the nose
- Constantly running mucus with other symptoms

Gastrointestinal

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea, especially associated with fever, cramping, or blood
- Decreased appetite if associated with any other of the above symptoms

**Many authorities use either 100 (37.8 degrees Celsius) or 100.4 F (38.0 degrees Celsius) as a cut-off for fever, but*

this number actually can range depending on factors such as the method of measurement and the age of the person, so other values for fever could be appropriate. CDC has public health recommendations that are based on the presence (or absence) of fever. What is meant by this is that the person's temperature is not elevated beyond their norm.

Please consult your physician if your child is exposed to contagious diseases such as COVID-19, chicken pox or hepatitis.

If your child has any of these symptoms please see your pediatrician and let us know his/her findings.

If your child is sick or will be absent for any reason, please call the school before 8:30 a.m.

Proper clothing is an important part of the health of the children. Living in a warm climate, we may tend to forget the importance of warm clothing during the winter months. Make sure your child has clothes that are appropriate for playing outside during the cooler and damper times of the year.

Medication

The Arizona State Health Department recommends that we do not give out medicine at school. **We will give out medicine only if the medicine must be administered.**

In this case, be sure that:

- The bottle is labeled with your child's name.
- A Medical Consent Form is completed.
- These items are given to the On-Site Coordinator (not a teacher).
- You supply your doctor's written statement as indicated in "HEALTH" above.
- No medication will be given if these procedures are not followed exactly.

Medication placed in a child's lunch box is a health hazard!

Excessive Heat Policy

During school days when the Arizona Department of Health Services or the National Weather Service provides public releases regarding a Heat Advisory, the following procedures will be used for that day:

1. An appropriate heat label Advisory will be posted for all staff to see in the campus front office.
2. Lead teachers and assistants of all classrooms will remind students about the unusually hot temperature for the day and encourage students to take frequent breaks and drink water throughout the day.
3. During outdoor recess time, assistants will monitor any changes in student conditions resulting from the heat.

During school days when the Arizona Department of Health Services or the National Weather Service provides public releases regarding an Excessive Heat Watch or an Excessive Heat Warning, the following procedures will be used for that day:

1. An appropriate heat label – Watch or Warning will be posted for all staff to see in the campus front office.
2. Lead teachers and assistants of all classrooms will remind students about the heat label for the day and encourage students to take frequent breaks and drink water throughout the day.
3. During the duration of outdoor recess time, assistants will monitor any changes in student conditions resulting from the heat. Students will be encouraged to stay in shaded areas and drink water frequently. For individual students, a staff member may ask them to go indoors, to the office.
4. Classrooms will follow a modified outdoor recess plan:
 - Primary Kindergarten – To support children’s crucial need for space and gross motor development, while ensuring safety, on-site coordinator will determine a short period of outdoor time as modified recess. This decision will incorporate data from that day’s Heat Index.
 - Lower Elementary – Recess after lunch will be outdoors for 15 minutes followed by 15 minutes indoors. During lunch students will be encouraged to drink water frequently. The transition from outdoors to indoors will also involve a water break.
 - Upper Elementary – Half hour of recess after lunch will be outdoors. Upper elementary students have the option of going indoors at the beginning of recess. If they choose to stay outdoors, frequent water breaks will be called by the assistant teacher every 15 minutes or earlier, if necessary.

Accidents

In the case of an accident or apparent illness involving your child, the school will immediately contact you and inform you of the situation. If we are not able to locate you, we will then attempt to contact the identified Emergency Contacts defined on the annual Blue Card or *Emergency Info and Immunization Card*.

If the accident is an emergency situation, we will first call the medical paramedics and then contact you. An Accident Report is kept of all accidents and all accidents are covered by the school accident insurance. In the case of an accident requiring emergency treatment when we are unable to locate you or anyone on the *Emergency Info and Immunization Card*, we will have your child taken to Banner-University Medical Center or St. Joseph’s Hospital.

Keep your child’s file up-to-date with current phone numbers!

Food, Diet, and Birthdays

Khalsa School believes strongly in the importance of a nutritional well-balanced diet for every child.

Sweets

We strongly encourage parents to remove excessive sweets from their children’s diet. Many recent studies state that sugar causes hyperactivity and learning problems and our classroom experience confirms these

findings. If we feel that your child's diet is affecting his/her ability to learn, then we may suggest that you limit the amount of sweets. We will not allow students to eat candy and drink soda in lunches.

Sharing

At Lower Elementary, as required by parents, lunch food is not shared. An exception to this rule may occur in order to provide healthy food to a child who has not brought a lunch.

Birthdays

You are welcome to bring birthday or holiday treats for your child's class, but please do not send food containing sugar, eggs or meat products. Check with your child's teacher in advance so that classroom food allergy restrictions can be shared, if you would like to bring food treats. We encourage you to have wonderful parties at home, but please, do not send clowns, balloons, or favors to school.

Transportation

KMES encourages parents to transport their children to and from school. For parents who are not able to transport their children, we will help facilitate car pools or arrangements for public transportation. Due to the central city location of our school all eligible children can be transported to the school by one of these methods. KMES agrees to fully comply with ARS 15-816.01 and ARS 15-186 (a).

Field trips are an important part of KMES. When field trips are taken, the school follows the regulations as designated in the Arizona State Department of Health Services manual section R9-5-522. Vehicles shall be in a mechanically safe condition with adequate heating and cooling. All children must be in securely fastened **individual** seat belts and no adult or child shall sit or stand on the floor. No child shall be allowed to open and close the doors of the vehicle. A safe vehicle loading and unloading zone shall always be provided. Vehicle doors shall always be locked during driving and children shall never be left unattended in the vehicle. A first aid kit, list of children transported, and child emergency records shall accompany all trips. All drivers must be over 25 years of age with valid driver's licenses and clean driving records for the last 3 years. The school shall maintain motor vehicle insurance coverage as required by the State Board for Charter Schools.

Teacher In-Service Days and Vacation Care

Teacher In-Service Days are days of classroom growth and development. During these days, teachers work on improving their programs by evaluating classroom patterns and the progress of individual children, making and rotating materials to better serve the needs of the students, and observing other classrooms for new ideas. Please check the calendar for the dates of these In-Service Days. There are early releases (11:30 am) or no regular school programs on these days. Vacation Care is available to enrolled children on Teacher-in-Service days, Parent-Teacher Conference days, and during Winter and Spring Breaks. Check the annual School Year Calendar for the specific dates these fall on. Vacation Care for elementary students is available through the Elementary Extended Care Program. For interested families, payment for this service can be made in full for the year or monthly (Aug – May). See the Registration Form for fees and sign up at school year registration, or connect with the front office to enroll during the school year. Occupancy is limited for the Elementary Extended Care so registration for your student may not be available.