

**St. Timothy's Montessori School
Parent Handbook
2009-2010**

**St. Timothy's Lutheran Church
Sunday Service
9:30 am
255-8001**

**St. Timothy's Montessori School
211 Jefferson NE
Albuquerque, NM 87108
266-0099**

School Program

St. Timothy's Montessori School provides a quality Montessori education for children ages 2 ½ to 6 in combined age classrooms Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm with a choice of 3-day or 4-day programs. Specialty classes of Music, Yoga, Science, Spanish and Kid's Club with Pastor Pat supplement our classroom curriculum.

Licensed by the State of New Mexico
Children, Youth & Families Department

Staff

Director

Debby Woodworth

Preschool-Kindergarten Classroom

Head Teacher: Antoinet Vigil

Educational Assistants: Maria Sisneros and Laura Trujillo

Preschool-Kindergarten Classroom

Head Teacher: Dawn Miller-Castle

Educational Assistants: Laura Smith and Lucia Flores

Early Preschool Classroom

Head Teacher: Carolyn Joule

Educational Assistant: To be announced

Director Contact Information

Debby Woodworth

School 266-0099

Cell 235-3319

Director's hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Please call the school number if you are calling in an absence.

Board of Directors

Judy Jacobson

Ken Bauhs

Casey Denhollander

Melanie Jacobson

Debby Woodworth

Wendy Simms-Small

St. Timothy's Evangelical Lutheran Church Mission Statement

We are a supportive community of believers committed to Christ who come together to nourish our beliefs, plant the seed of the Gospel, and reach out in joy to share our faith and blessings with our communities.

St. Timothy's Montessori School Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of St. Timothy's Montessori School is to provide a program of quality Montessori education that meets the needs of young children ages 2 ½ to 6 and their families. We strive to do this by giving children the opportunity to explore materials and learn through "hands on" experiences in a loving Christian environment that fosters imagination and creativity. Through these experiences we hope to help the child build a relationship with God and instill a lifetime love of learning.

St. Timothy's Montessori School Curriculum Statement

St. Timothy's Montessori School provides a Montessori curriculum program and environment that encourages the children to initiate their own learning and growth through the freedom of making their own choices and becoming independent. Children are allowed to learn appropriate social behavior and interaction through play and active exploration of their environment. Our program offers a vast array of lessons that are designed to encourage children to actively experiment, explore and manipulate with materials that are provided for them. In addition, they are encouraged to use their creativity and imagination to explore their relationship with God. STMS programs and classrooms are designed to promote active engagement of children. The teachers and assistant teachers provide lessons and role modeling that promotes social emotional and spiritual development of young children.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

St. Timothy's Montessori School believes that children possess a unique sensitivity and the mental power to absorb and learn from their environment, which are unlike those of an adult in both quantity and capacity. The most important years of cognitive growth are the first six years of life, when unconscious learning is gradually brought to the conscious level and ideas are brought from the concrete to the abstract. We believe that children have a deep love and need for purposeful work. The child works, however not as an adult for profit and completion, but for the process of work itself. The work process creates the child's mental, physical, psychological and spiritual powers. Children are encouraged to explore their individual interests, beliefs and other cultures at age and skill appropriate levels.

The environment at STMS provides hands-on materials and curriculum to help each child develop as an individual. Our classrooms are divided into areas that feed each child's individual interests and skill levels. These areas are: Language Arts, Mathematics, Practical Life, Sensorial Culture and a Faith Center. Resources are provided for self-expression in creative arts, play and spiritual development.

Our spiritual program is supplemented by education and training provided by various Christian Organizations. We use a curriculum from a major Christian Publishing House and we benefit from Pastoral oversight through St. Timothy's Lutheran Church. We believe that early spiritual formation is important for children and we encourage families who are not involved in a faith community to bring their children to the Godly Play Montessori Sunday School at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church.

STMS lead teachers are trained from nationally recognized training centers in Montessori education. Our assistant teachers are trained in Early Child Development education. Our teachers and assistant teachers also have experience working with young children. They understand the development of young children and how they learn best. Through keen observation the teachers can access a child's interest, skill level and style of learning. They model essential aspects of the tasks and allow the child to pursue the task independently. Through positive interactions our teachers support young children's natural curiosity and desire to learn by providing a rich individualized learning environment that is challenging.

Enrollment

Children will be admitted on a first come, first served basis. If there are fewer openings than children we will form a waiting list. Priority may be given to siblings of current or previous students and members and employees of St. Timothy's Lutheran Church. Parents must visit our facility and allow the staff to meet the child before enrollment. If there are no spaces, names will be put on a waiting list. Each child must be physically and emotionally ready for the kind of group experience the school will provide. The maturity may be determined by an interview with the Director, Head Teacher, parent and child. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or gender. Enrollment is finalized when the parents have completely filled out the personal information form, immunization information, registration form and registration payment. All forms must be turned in before the child may attend school.

Disenrollment

STMS reserves the right to continually assess any child's participation in the program. Some children may have needs that can be better met by programs in other facilities. If a child's behavior should adversely affect the school's learning environment or the other children the school may request withdrawal of the child from our program. When the philosophical differences between the staff and parents cannot be resolved within a reasonable amount of time, we reserve the right to refuse service. Unless the child is in immediate danger to himself or to others, a two week notice will be given should the school request withdrawal of the child from the school. If the parent should need to withdrawal due to a job transfer, or other family reasons a two week written notice is required in order to prorate or discontinue tuition payments.

Monthly Rates*

	<u>3 Days/week</u>	<u>4 Days/week</u>
Early Preschool -	\$368.00	\$394.00
Preschool /Kindergarten-	\$326.00	\$347.00

*Note: 5% Discount on 2nd child's tuition only

Annual Registration Fee: \$275.00

St. Timothy's Montessori School will collect tuition beginning with the first payment in August and the last payment in May.

Annual registration fees assure your child a place in our preschool. This fee is non-refundable except in the case of military call-up.

YOUR CHILD MUST HAVE CURRENT SHOT RECORDS FROM YOUR PHYSICIAN BEFORE ATTENDING SCHOOL.

*Monthly rates are based on 3 or 4 days/week programs. There is not a reduced rate in December for Winter Break, or the spring for spring break.

The program rate is divided into 10 equal monthly payments.

All pizza and field trip checks need to be made out to MONTESSORI ACTIVITY ACCOUNT.

Late Fee

All tuition is due on the 10th or 20th of each month. If tuition is received after these dates STMS will access a \$25.00 late fee. If tuition is 30 days over your child or children will not be allowed to return to school until tuition payments are current.

Returned Check Fee

If a check for tuition or activity fees is returned from the bank, you will be charged a \$25.00 fee per check.

Late Pick-Up Fee

Pick up time is **2:00** , if you are late picking up your child we will charge a fee of \$1.00 *per minute*, to be collected in cash that day, for children left after **2:10pm**. This grace period is for emergencies only and not intended as a regular pick up time for your child.

Discipline Policy

A calm, relaxed atmosphere and positive encouragement of good behavior help to create a favorable classroom climate. It is important to set limits and be firm and consistent. Limits help children feel more secure. These limits are explained in a cheerful, sympathetic manner to make them understandable and acceptable to the children. In order to develop self-discipline, it is important for children to learn to take responsibility for their actions. We feel they need to experience natural and logical consequences for their actions. (If you throw sand, you have to leave the play area.) If a child is disrupting the class, he/she will be taken into a supervised

area until he/she can gain control of his/her behavior and return in a calm manner.

The following disciplinary practices are prohibited at St. Timothy's:

- 1Physical punishment of any kind.
- 2Withdrawal of food, rest, or bathroom opportunities.
- 3Abusive or profane language.
- 4Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment.
- 5Unsupervised isolation of the child.
- 6Any other type of punishment that is hazardous to the physical, emotional, or mental health of the child.

Arrival and Pick-Up Routine

If your child will be absent, please call to inform the school. State regulations require that all children must be signed in/out each day with drop off and pick up person's initials. Please list who is picking up your child each day. We will not send your child home with anyone not listed on your child's information sheet unless we have **written word** from a parent. If you have additional comments regarding information for your child for the day a "comment" section is available to allow you to communicate your message to our staff. If you phone in we will leave your message in the "comment" section. Classrooms will not be open before 9:00 a.m. Entry will be through the gate on the playground. Parents must be sure the child is in the presence of a teacher before leaving. We will begin class at 9:15 a.m. when children are lined up from the playground. If you arrive late, please do not disturb a class that is in session. Quietly drop off the child with the assistant in the hallway. Once we are in the classroom our focus is to start our day, parents entering the classroom can be very distracting. If your child is having difficulty separating, please let us know if you would like our assistance and we will help ease the transition. If we are not on the playground, you will need to use the door with the key code entry to enter. Be sure to obtain the code from a staff member and only give it out to those authorized to pick up your child. School ends at 2:00 p.m., call if you will be late. Children can be picked up on the east side of the building by pulling up along the sidewalk and we will escort your child to your car. Please do not allow your child to play along the sidewalk or be unattended in the grass area. If you need to visit with a teacher or another parent put your child safely in your car and pull out of the pick line so other parents can pick up their children.

We encourage the use of car seats for children. State law requires restraint seats for ages of one to four.

Please hold your child's hand in the parking lot. Never allow your child to walk alone in the parking lot. Never leave children unattended in the vehicle while dropping off or picking up a child. Children should never be allowed to play in the areas next to the parking lot. Please consider how nervous this makes our staff when your children are not supervised in the parking lot and how dangerous it is for your child. Please do not allow children to play in the rock beds or landscaped areas around the building, children must stay on the sidewalk or they may walk in the grass. Please do not prop doors open that lead outside or let children through doors if they are not escorted by an adult.

Drop off and pick up times can be very busy times of the day. To ease the confusion the staff can assist your child to/from your car at the playground gate areas between 9:00 - 9:15 a.m. and between 1:45 – 2:00 p.m. Simply pull up and give us a few minutes to collect your child and his/her things. If you decide to come inside, keep in mind that throughout our day we teach children to respect their environment. Walking feet and inside voices are expected in the hallways and classrooms. Please encourage them to follow these rules when you are with them at school.

Custody Issues

Only those people the parent has authorized to pick up a child will be allowed to do so. If there is custody issues in a family the parents need to inform the Director who will keep the entire staff informed. We cannot legally refuse a biological parent, whether listed on the information form or not, access to his/her child unless there is a court order. We will require written permission or official documentation from any person not listed on the information form as authorized to pick up a child before granting access to a child.

Documentation of the legal status of a child will be kept on file and all employees informed. Any restraining orders, guardianship, powers of attorney, court orders or custody by child protective services must be made known to the Director and documentation provided.

What to Wear

Children should be dressed suitably for outside play, running and jumping, sitting

on the floor, and engaging in painting or other “messy” activities. Play clothes and comfortable, soft soled shoes are a must. Our playground is on the northwest side of the building. This location makes it chilly on most days of our school year. Please make sure your child keeps a sweater or coat at school for weather changes. Remember, it is easy enough to remove these should it be warmer than expected. If you child will not wear a coat to school on cold days, send one anyway; weather in Albuquerque changes constantly. Jewelry, costumes, distracting hair accessories, and toys are not allowed at school. *** Also, since accidents or spills can happen, please send a change of clothing with your child to keep at school in a plastic bag, as listed in the school supply list.***

Hours of Operation

Monday through Thursday 9:00am-2:00pm

Adult to Child Ratios

Our Toddler classroom has a 4 to 1 ratio, with 2 teachers and 8 children.

Our Preschool – Kindergarten Classroom has an 8 to 1 ratio with 3 teachers and 22-24 children.

These ratios are the maximum ratios that STMS operates on a daily basis.

First Day of School

School Year Calendar Will Be Distributed Separately

Fundraising

We will hold one mandatory fundraiser during the year and other optional fundraising events. Our main fundraiser will have an option to “buy-out” for parents who are not interested in selling items for a fundraising effort. The other fundraising events may not to be to raise funds for the school but to raise funds for other organizations in need. We understand it is not possible for everyone to participate in each one.

Holiday Celebrations

STMS celebrates holidays either in the classroom or as a school. If you do not wish to have your child participate in any holiday activity please contact your child’s teacher or the Director to make other arrangements for your child during the celebration.

Birthdays

Each teacher plans her own Birthday Circles for the children. If your child is celebrating a birthday during the school year the teacher will notify you of the plans, date and items you will need to send with your child.

Show and Tell

“Show and Tell” or “Sharing Time” is a good way for children to become more comfortable speaking in a group. It is good practice for verbal organization (staying on the subject) and because we pass the treasure around the circle, it helps the children learn about respect for other peoples’ possessions. The object for sharing should be a “treasure”, a “found object”, “natural wonder”, something hand-made, something from “far away”, or a souvenir. It should always have an interesting short story to accompany it – something that can be rehearsed at breakfast. In general, **toys are not to be brought to school**, such as stuffed animals, jewelry, toy cars, etc. However, postcards and photographs are great! We also might have a seasonal theme to show and tell from time to time. Each teacher will have her own show and tell schedule. Scheduling show and tell is at the discretion of each teacher. A teacher has the option to eliminate show and tell from her curriculum if she chooses to do so.

Field Trips

Field trips may be either walking or with transportation by bus. All field trips are planned with a definite purpose in mind and to be fun as well as educational. Parents will be asked to volunteer as chaperones for field trips as needed.

Safety

STMS is very concerned about your safety as well as the safety of the children. You are asked to cooperate in helping to prevent injury to yourself, our employees, the children and to visitors by observing the following rules:

- 1.Keep yourself informed of the current emergency exit plans and disaster plans of the school, where the alarms are located, the drill routine, and what your duties are in case of fire or other disasters.
- 2.Avoid accidents by being aware of and eliminating any potential hazards indoors and outdoors.
- 3.Immediately report any unsafe conditions you observe to the Director.
- 4.Be particularly conscious of safety factors when using electrical equipment, sharp tools or swimming pools.

5. The proper procedure when dealing with a stranger or difficult person on the grounds is important in order not to endanger or disturb the children. In all cases make such situations known to the Director and the authorities if necessary. Seek immediate aid from any source available in such situations. Do not use force to deal with this type of situation except in self-defense. To do so may leave you liable for any damage or injury to another person or property. Everyone must remain alert to and report any unauthorized persons loitering around the school grounds or trying to enter the building. Promptly report the presence of any suspicious persons to the Director or the local authorities.
6. Everyone entering the building except the parents we have met must be asked to identify him or herself with a picture ID and to state why they are here. If we have any reason to doubt the sincerity of their visit, the Director to determine if that person should enter.
7. The safety of the children must remain our priority at all times therefore please remember to always leave your child with a staff member of the school. Do not leave them in the hallway or classroom alone. Teachers must accompany children at all times.
8. All doors to the outside **must** remain closed and locked at all times. Please do not prop open doors or allow unattended children out a door. Parents will be issued a code to the playground door.
9. At drop off time leave your children with the staff before you plan to speak to the teacher or other parents to prevent children from being unattended in the building if you should become distracted. At pick up times please pull up to the gate and we can bring your child to the car. If you need to speak to the staff or another parent please put your child in your vehicle first.

Emergency/Accident

STMS staff has current first aid and CPR training. If a child, parent, or staff member requires medical attention beyond our training we will be contacting a parent and/or emergency medical service depending on the severity of the injury. If we cannot reach a parent either at home or at work in the event of a medical emergency, an ambulance service will be requested to transport your child to the medical facility of your choice. You, the parent(s), will be responsible for all costs incurred in a medical emergency.

STMS has prepared an Emergency Disaster Evacuation Plan, if we need to evacuate the premises we will take the children to safety at the following locations.

1. **RED CROSS:** 142 Monroe NE
2. **ZIA Elementary:** 440 Jefferson NE

3. Highland High School: 4700 Coal Ave. SE

The emergency Disaster Evacuation Plan is available for viewing at the parent's request.

Child Missing

In the event a staff member should discover a child is missing from our facility we will follow the procedure below:

1. Notify all adults on the premises.
2. Call the police department at 911.
3. Call the parents of the child.
4. Call the State of New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department at 841-4825.

Allergies and Medical Emergencies

If your child has any food allergies or food restrictions, please list these on the information form that is given at the beginning of the school year. Be sure the staff is made aware of your child's symptoms and reaction needs.

Snow Days

We will follow APS lead on snow days. If APS closes or goes on an abbreviated schedule, we will close. KOB AM and FM radio will announce school delays or closings.

Our Day (a general overview)

9:00 – 9:15 a.m.	Arrival and gathering on the playground
9:15 – 9:30 a.m.	Line up for greeting and circle time
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Individual work time and lessons given by teacher
11:30 – 11:45 a.m.	Ending Circle
11:45 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 – 1:00 p.m.	Recess
1:00 – 1:45 p.m.	Scheduled specialty classes
1:45 – 2:00 p.m.	Recess or story time until parents arrive

The beginning of our day is very important to the children because of the social and academic advantages of our group activities at circle time. Please be sure to be on time so your child will not be left out. It is also important to role model a routine of promptness.

Lunch

Please remember to pack a nutritious lunch and drink for your child. Consider the food pyramid and daily requirements of dairy products, protein, fruit and vegetables. We have a refrigerator but also send ice packs in your child's lunch in the event the refrigerator is full of other items. Please send 2 napkins (1 small cloth napkin for a placemat and 1 paper napkin to wipe face and hands). All lunch containers must be labeled with child's **first and last** name. Every Thursday we offer a pizza lunch for \$12.50 a month. Lunch includes pizza, 100% fruit juice or milk, fruit or vegetable and dessert. Children are encouraged to eat the food that is served on pizza day; if they do not care for the food served they should bring their own lunch. The children are asked to eat a small helping of fruit or vegetable before the pizza and dessert is served. Pizza lunches are paid every other month and there is no credit if a child is absent. A sign-up sheet is put out monthly for parents to donate 100% juice or milk, fruit/vegetable, and dessert.

Parent Volunteer and Involvement

STMS has an open door policy for parent visitation, keep in mind that your child may need to be prepared for your visit so they understand they may not be leaving with you after the visit. STMS encourages involvement from parents and other family members. Parents can sign up to volunteer as a classroom parent, substitutes, library parent, fundraising parent, Scholastic Book parent, Parent Representative for the Preschool Board, chaperone on field trips or teach a special class to the children. If you are interested in any volunteer position please see your child's teacher or the Director.

Conferences

Scheduled conferences are held twice a year although; conferences may be requested at any time by either the teacher or parent. The first conference is verbal and a conference form will be filled out and signed by the parent at the second conference.

Classroom Visit

Observation of our class time is welcomed by appointment with the teacher. Open House and Parent Nights are scheduled during the school year for children to share their environment with their parents.

Confidentiality Policy

Parents with children enrolled at STMS must respect the confidentiality of information pertaining to children, fellow parents and staff members. We ask that

you adhere to STMS ethical obligation and not disclose such information to third parties.

Child Abuse/Neglect Policy

STMS staff members are required to document and report any signs or evidence of child abuse or neglect to the Director. The Director will contact the Children, Youth and Families Department of the State of New Mexico at 841-4825.

Health Policy Absences/Illnesses

In accordance with State regulations, our program must have a current immunization record on file before enrollment. When your child receives a booster, please bring us a copy for their records.

Sick children must stay home. If your child becomes sick during the day, parents will be notified. The child will be removed from the classroom and supervised in a safe, comfortable place until picked up.

Common Illnesses:

Please keep your child home from our program if he/she is exhibiting any of the following symptoms:

- 1Diarrhea (in the last 12 hours)
- 2Vomiting (in the last 24 hours)
- 3Impetigo (rash caused by strep or staph)
- 4Headache
- 5Sore throat
- 6Persistent cough
- 7Yellow/greenish nasal discharge
- 8Drainage, redness or discharge from eyes
- 9Temperature 100.4 or higher
- 10Infectious rash (chicken pox, measles)
- 11Scabies, head lice or other infestation

Your child should be able to return with your physician's approval 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun or 24 hours after the child's temperature has returned to normal.

Children generally do not want to miss school but a child should not decide if he or she is too sick to go to school. This decision should be made by the parent. If your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness please notify the school Director.

Medications

NO medications of any kind will be given to any child by any staff member. Please do not bring or send any medicine with your child or in his/her lunch. This includes cough drops and vitamins. We will administer medication for asthmatic or severe allergic reactions if we have written permission from the child's physician.

Sunscreen

STMS suggests that you apply a long lasting sunscreen in the morning before school since our staff does not apply sunscreen.

Contacting Staff

If you need to reach the school staff between 8:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., please leave a message and a Teacher will return your call as soon as possible. Non-emergencies will be handled after 2:00. Please notify us if your child will be late or absent by calling the school number at 266-0099 or the church number at 255-8001.

Communication

You will have a mailbox for your child to check daily for important information and children's completed work. **Be sure to always read all letters sent home and watch for signs on the bulletin board and sign in table.** If your child has had a minor injury or incident we will leave an incident form in your cubby to keep you informed of any bump or bruise or verbal incident that occurred.

Newsletters and other notices will be left for parents in the mailbox and if you have provided an email address we will begin emailing as well. If you have a message for a teacher or the Director please leave it in the "Drop Off" basket at the front desk, it is less likely to get lost or misplaced if we are helping a child.

Keep in mind the Montessori classroom has a "hands on" philosophy and many of our exercises do not produce take homework from the classroom. Most days of the school year your child may have an extremely productive day in the classroom but will not have produced anything to take home other than what they have absorbed in their growing minds! Our classroom is also a self directed environment and we encourage you to ask your child questions about their day that will help them communicate the events of their day with you. Be specific with your questions when inquiring:

What did you do at circle today?

Did you get a new lesson on a new work today?

Who did you sit next to at lunch?

Who did you play with at playground time?

What “work” did you do today?
Ask about stories or songs we shared.

Complaints

Questions or concerns regarding class time, academics or behavior of a specific child must be directed to your child’s Head Teacher. Other complaints or concerns are to be discussed with the Director and all concerns must be documented.

Acknowledgement

All parents are required to read and sign an acknowledgement that they have read and understand the rules and regulations of the Parent Handbook. This acknowledgement is kept in the enrolled child’s file and required by the State of New Mexico Children, Youth and Families.

Thank you for taking the time to read our Parent Handbook!