

# LUMIN EAST DALLAS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Lumin East Dallas Community School is:

To transform education by starting young, involving parents, and creating learning environments to inspire children from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To provide an instructional program that will lay the foundation for successful academic achievement in later grades.
2. To teach English to Spanish-dominant children; to provide English-dominant children with exposure to and appreciation of Spanish as a second language.
3. To involve parents in volunteer work through which they can become directly involved in their children's education. Involved parents develop a sense of community with others at the school.
4. To aid in the identification of possible special needs of children by providing evaluations and therapeutic support when needed.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Lumin East Dallas Community School admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin in administration of the educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs.

## TEACHING METHODS

Basic skills in living, reading, writing and mathematics are taught using the Montessori method and materials. Other approaches may be used if consistent with the school's philosophy. Younger children are usually taught one-on-one. As they grow older, they receive more instruction in small groups. Expectations for work habits, independence and self-motivation are high. Children work at their own pace; materials are presented to challenge, but not overwhelm, the child. Each day some time is spent in group activities to share experiences, read stories, sing songs, or do movement activities.

Each classroom is composed of children of various ages. Older students help younger ones, much as siblings do at home or as students once did in the one-room schoolhouses.

As children become older, the community becomes a resource for valuable lessons. Through field trips to various sites in the city, children receive additional information which may not be

available to them in books. From time to time resource people visit the school to demonstrate their crafts or share their experiences.

**W**e do not give letter grades. Instead, the guides observe and record the step-by-step mastery of the materials and lessons presented to each child. Progress is reported to parents through verbal and written comments at conferences. Children leaving the Elementary Class are given a standardized tests to facilitate communication with other schools.

**T**he staff of Lumin EDCS functions at its best with the support and commitment of the parents-- this is why we say we are "working together for our children." Often, guides ask parents to extend the child's classroom to include the home. Reading to or with your child, sharing your family stories, and simply having your child help with daily home activities are important elements of learning.

## **ENROLLMENT**

**A**ll new student enrollment forms and returning student enrollment forms must be returned by the first day of school in order for your child to be admitted. A ticket will be given in order to be admitted.

If your child is a new student, you will be invited to meet your child's guide during the teacher preparation week. The first week of your child's attendance is an orientation period. For children that are 4 years old, or younger, please anticipate a short day schedule (1 1/2 hours) to give your child the opportunity to adjust to his/her new environment and the people in it. We know this is a challenge for our working families, and we appreciate your working with us to give your child the best start. Children that are 5, or older attend the first day of school for regular school hours.

**A Note About Summer Birthdays:** At Lumin EDCS we are fortunate to be able to respond to a child's individual developmental needs when determining the best placement for your child. It has been our experience that some children with summer birthdays can benefit from continuing in the Primary classroom for an additional period of time after turning 6 years old. Continuing in the Primary classroom allows the young child to become a leader in the class, to mature, and to develop cognitive skills. You and your child's guide will decide if this is the best course of action for your child.

## **PROGRAMS**

**L**umin EDCS has two Primary classrooms (ages 3 - 6 years), and two Elementary classrooms (ages 6 - 9). In addition, we have an After and Before School program (ABC) for children enrolled at our school.

### **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

**F**rom time to time, children participate in special programs. These programs include tutoring, Reading Recovery classes, and special playtimes in which children may express themselves through toys and/or art media. Enrollment in the school constitutes permission to participate in these special programs, and no separate permission is requested from parents. Parents are notified when their children will be participating in these programs.

### **LIBRARY**

**K**indergarten age Primary and Elementary students visit the Library, where they may check out a book for one week. Parents are invited to use our Parent/Staff Library. A new book may be lent only if books previously checked out are returned or accounted for. Lost books incur a charge of

\$5.00. Occasionally, we offer books for sale or give-away. You will be notified when such books are available.

### **AFTER AND BEFORE SCHOOL CARE (ABC) PROGRAM**

**E**nrollment in ABC is limited. When the slots are filled, your child may go on a waiting list. As openings become available, children are admitted according to their place on the waiting list. Children can be enrolled for the entire week, or twice a week as a half month option. If this option is chosen, the days that your child stays must be consistent for the duration of the school year. Our school also offers a “one time stay” policy for children, in the event that you are unable to pick up your child on time after school. In order to participate, you must contact the front office and notify us in advance, so that we can make arrangements accordingly. The fee for one time stays should be paid in advance or upon picking up your child.

**O**nly children enrolled in the ABC Program may stay in the afternoon after 3:00. These children are under the care of professionals who guide them in participating in the after school program. By teaching the children to be responsible, the ABC teachers can allow the children maximum freedom and flexibility in their afternoon activities.

**C**hildren not enrolled in the school may not attend ABC. Our insurance does not cover them, in case of an accident. The only exception to this rule is when a parent is doing volunteer playground supervision in ABC. If that parent brings a sibling (age 3 or older) of a child enrolled in the school, he or she must keep the sibling under his or her direct supervision at all times.

## **DAILY ROUTINES**

### **ARRIVAL**

**I**n the morning, children go directly to the program they have been enrolled in. Children enrolled in morning ABC may arrive at the ABC building any time between 7:00 and 7:45 a.m. Children who are not enrolled in ABC go directly to their classrooms at 7:55 a.m.

### **Drop-off Procedure**

**I**f your child is in one of the two Primary Classes, drive down Parkview toward East Grand. Enter the Primary driveway from Parkview, and then pull up as far as you can. Stay in the car while a staff member opens the car door and lets your child out and guides him/her safely to class through the garden. When your child is safely out, look to make sure no children are near your car, then drive on through. Please drive carefully, as other cars may be entering or leaving the Elementary drive and the Parkview street parking lot.

**I**f your child is in one of the Elementary Classrooms, please turn into the driveway outside the Elementary 1 building (1003 Parkview). Let your child get out of the car, and then drive on through the driveway, so that the next parent can pull up.

**I**f you are going to get out of your car, even for a moment, please be sure to park in an appropriate place. Please do not park in the driveways at any time as other parents need to be able to drop off their children. If there are no more parking spaces available in the parking lot, you may find a parking place on Parkview, on the other side of the school, or some other appropriate spot.

**I**f you wish to walk your Primary child to class, please make sure that your child can walk independently and confidently to class from the Primary gate facing the green space. Please park in the parking lot on Wayne and walk your child to the Primary gate. Unlatch the gate, let your child walk into the garden and toward his/her classroom. Latch the gate and leave promptly.

**I**f you wish to walk your Elementary child to class, please watch for traffic, and walk your child to the carpool gate on Parkview.

**W**hen dropping your child off in the morning, always make sure he or she has been received by an adult in carpool or has entered the secured areas before you leave. We cannot be responsible for children left outside the building.

**Cell Phones:** Please be respectful of your child and the Lumin EDCS staff by giving full attention when dropping off your child, or picking them up. Cell phones are distracting. We ask that you are not on your cell phone during this time.

**A Note About Bringing Items to School:** At Lumin EDCS, each classroom is full of beautiful and inviting activities and educational materials which the children are eager to use. Please explain to your child that he or she may not bring toys, jewelry, money, game cards, or other items to school. When a child brings toys to school, it is distracting and often leads to disagreements, broken or lost toys, and hurt feelings. The guides will remove these items from the classroom and they will need to be collected after school. If for some reason you forget and find yourselves at the gate with an object that needs to stay home, please return to the car with the child, put the object away, and then bring the child back to the gate.

## **DEPARTURE**

**C**hildren may be released only to parents or to a person designated on the child's emergency card. A photo ID is required to verify anyone new picking up your child. Children may not leave with any other person, even another school parent, without a note or phone call from you.

**I**f you need to pick your child up early for any reason, go to the office and someone will call the classroom to request your child. A child must have a note from a parent covering any special circumstances, such as leaving school early, leaving with someone not specified on the emergency card, going to birthday parties, or missing portions of the school day for any reason. You may e-mail your child's teacher 24 hours in advance as your form of notation. Check with the teacher to make sure that the time of departure will not disrupt the child's schedule, or conflict with lunch.

**After and Before Care (ABC)** requires that you sign your child out each day before they are released. If you want to call ABC staff after 3:00 p.m. to explain changes in how your child will be picked up that day, call (214) 824-8950, ext. 229.

## **PARENT INFORMATION FOLDERS**

**F**or children in ABC, there are folders containing school letters and other messages for our families. Please make a point of checking your family's folder daily to collect your messages. Important information regarding such things as tuition, school closings, re-enrollment, and

parent work days, are filed in these folders. The folders are located in a file box close to where you pick up your child:

Primary	Elementary	ABC
Handed out by staff at carpool	Handed out by staff at carpool	Near front door inside

### **TARDIES**

The school day begins at 7:55 a.m. Arrival time for all classes is 7:55-8:10. It is important that your child be here and ready for school at that time. A child who is tardy runs the risk of disturbing the classroom, missing lessons and group activities, and losing out on a portion of the work day.

If for some reason your child must arrive late (after 8:10), please follow these procedures which are designed to ensure your child's safety. We must be sure that (1) we know your child is here; and (2) your child arrives safely at his classroom.

1. Call the office and let us know if your child will arrive much later than 8:10 a.m.
2. Park your car and bring your child into the office.
3. Register your child in the office and fill out a tardy slip.
4. Leave promptly. The office will call a staff member to walk your child to his/her classroom.

The need for children to be on time for school cannot be stressed enough. The students' success in a Montessori classroom depends largely on their concentration and "work rhythm," that is, how the child moves from one lesson to the next. This rhythm is easily thrown off if children come in late during the morning. You can imagine how difficult this can be for small children. They naturally want to get in tune with their classmates who have already been working for several minutes. Late children want to take a little time to greet friends and re-establish their social connections while others are already working and concentrating. In addition, children who arrive late lose valuable time needed to be able to do the work they need for their full development.

The guides and school director are available to offer suggestions to those families who need assistance to ease the morning transition from home to school. If in the opinion of the guide a child's tardies are too frequent, the parent will be called in to meet with the school director. If tardies continue, a second meeting may be requested. If the child continues to be tardy, he will not be admitted to class, but will be sent home with the parent.

### **ABSENCES**

When a child is absent, the parent must call the school or write a note explaining the absence. If the child is out two days and we have not heard from the parent, the parent will be called.

In some cases a family knows in advance that the child will be absent, such as when the family is planning a trip. In such cases the family should discuss the proposed absence with the teacher to make plans which will enhance, rather than disrupt the child's education.

When a child is not in school, that child is losing valuable instructional time. If a child's absences become excessive, the guide will contact the parents to discuss what can be done to resolve the problem. Guides make every effort to keep the child's lessons progressing in a timely fashion and can do so if absences are occasional. It is not possible to send "make-up" work home, because so much learning occurs through the use of the material that must remain in the classroom. For this reason older children who are frequently absent may need to attend tutoring

classes given by a Montessori-trained teacher. It is the parent's responsibility to arrange and pay for this, if it is needed. Parents should also be aware that excessive absences can adversely affect their child's ability to be accepted at another school when the time comes to make such an application.

### **LATE PICK-UP**

Each child is enrolled in a specific program and must be picked at a specified time. As soon as your child's program is over, the teachers are busy with other duties. For this reason we need to stress punctuality. Because of the difficulties in attending to children who are picked up late after 3:00, parents who are late more than three times may be required to enroll their children in the after school program. EDSC closes at 6:00 p.m., so all children must be picked up by then.

The following late fees are charged:

**Primary: 11:30 pick-up:** \$1.00 per family per minute after 11:45  
(1 warning)

**Primary: 3:00 pick-up:** \$1.00 per family per minute after 3:15 (1 warning)

**Elementary: 3:30 pick-up:** \$1.00 per family per minute after 3:45 (1 warning)

**Primary/Elementary ABC 6:00 pick-up:** \$1.00 per family per minute after 6:00  
(1 warning)

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

Lumin East Dallas Community School and Lindsley Park Community School coordinate on school closings. Tune in to TV channels 4, 5, 8 or 11 to find out if school will be closed due to bad weather, or go to our website, or the television website to confirm.

Join our school text line and you will be notified conveniently on your mobile device when school closings or other emergencies occur.

## **CLOTHING/SHOES/JEWELRY**

Children in the Primary Classes should wear clothing they can easily manage by themselves when they go to the bathroom. The more things children can do independently, the better they feel about themselves. Please send an extra set of clean clothing -- to be kept for emergency situations such as illness or a bathroom accident. If your child is in ABC you will need to send two sets -- one for the Primary Classroom and one for ABC. These clothes should be sent in a plastic bag and labeled with your child's name. Accidents can happen to anyone, so please be sure to bring a clean set on the first day of school to be replaced if your child's wet clothes are sent home in the plastic bag. Please send in the new set of clean clothes the very next day. If your child comes home in emergency clothes that belong to the school, please return those clothes immediately, as the school needs them for other emergencies.

Provide comfortable clothing for the school day and be guided by the weather. In cool weather, send a jacket or sweater and a cap. Caps are very important in cold weather, as up to 50% of body heat can be lost through the top of the head.

Whenever possible, label all sweaters, jackets, shoes, socks and personal belongings, and check to be sure that your child leaves school with his or her belongings and lunchbox. Every year, we collect lost clothing that cannot be returned because there are no labels.

## APPROPRIATE SCHOOL ATTIRE FOR ALL CLASSROOMS

Consider both the appropriateness and safety of your child's clothing.

**Shoes:** Tennis or rubber soled shoes are appropriate for school because they are comfortable, easy to run and play in, and do not come off easily. Please do not send your child in boots; they are awkward on the playground and climbing equipment and the heels hurt others easily. Flip-flops, clogs, open-toed sandals and backless shoes fall off easily during active play and can present a danger on playground equipment, as well.

\* *Light up shoes are not permitted- they are distracting.*

**Clothing:** As noted above, children should wear comfortable clothing that is appropriate for the weather and easy for them to manage independently. Clothing, lunch kits and book bags with cartoon, TV and other popular characters are not permitted as they often cause distraction and competition in the classroom.

**Jewelry:** If your child's ears are pierced, a simple pair of earrings is permitted. Bracelets, rings, and necklaces can be worn at home; jewelry can be broken or lost, and small pieces can be dangerous in little hands and mouths.

In addition, consider your child's hair-do. It is helpful for children of all ages to have their hair pulled back from the face enough to be able to work easily and see the materials well. Hair that falls in a young child's face is distracting, interferes with learning, and can fall into her food during mealtimes. Large hair ornaments, such as big bows and some barrettes, can also get in the way. In addition, they may get lost on the playground.

## NUTRITION

What a child eats has everything to do with his or her performance throughout the day. At Lumin EDCS, we want to provide our children with healthy foods that will nourish their bodies and not harm them. For this reason, we do not permit foods with high sugar or salt content in the classroom. This stipulation is carried through into all-school functions and lunches. We also try to keep sugar and salt to a minimum in any food preparation undertaken by the children, as too much sugar or salt may be detrimental to good health and behavior. Because children learn by example, the example of nutritious food preparation is an important one.

### BREAKFAST

All children need to start the day with a healthy, balanced breakfast to function effectively. Please help your child by providing a good breakfast or enroll in our breakfast program. Avoid sugar, corn syrup, artificial flavorings and other additives. Items such as pop tarts, sweet rolls and presweetened cereals are convenient, but can adversely affect your child's health, behavior, concentration and performance. Foods such as eggs, whole-grain breads or muffins, fruits, oatmeal, multi-grain cereals, pure juice smoothies or yogurt can give your child a good start for the day.

### SNACKS

We provide food for the children at school during the course of the day. Snack is provided at 3:00 for the children in ABC. Snacks are generally grains, protein, and/or fruits, with milk or fruit juice to drink. Snacks are not intended to replace a meal.

## **LUNCH**

Children bring their own lunches from the time they enter Primary. You may also enroll in the school's lunch program and lunch will be provided. You will be billed for meals eaten.

Primary and Elementary children should bring nutritious foods for their mid-day meal. Items that contain high amounts of sugar or salt (such as candy or chips) will be sent home uneaten- we are a NO SUGAR, NO JUNK FOOD school. Pack only as much as you think your child can eat. If food returns home to you, it means either that you sent more than your child could eat, or that the food item had unacceptable amounts of salt or sugar. Make sure the food items are sent in containers your child can open and close by himself. No cans with pull up lids are permitted. Please do not send frozen dinners. If, however, your child's lunch needs to be heated please follow classroom guidelines.

If your child forgets his lunch, the teacher will provide lunch if there are extra meals leftover from our lunch program and you will be charged for the meal.

Here are some ideas for tasty and nutritious lunches. Experiment a little--you may be surprised to find that your child enjoys a variety of "good-for-you" foods.

### **PROTEIN**

Meat, fish, chicken, boiled eggs, yogurt, cottage cheese or peanut butter in a whole-grain sandwich. Please cut sandwiches into quarters for primary children and halves for elementary children.

### **GRAINS**

Whole-grain bread, corn tortillas, crackers, sunflower seeds or nuts.

### **VEGETABLES**

A slice or wedge of fresh vegetable such as carrot, tomato, celery, cucumber, lettuce or avocado.

### **FRUITS**

Banana, peach, plum, strawberries, apple, orange or grapefruit. It is easier if the fruit is peeled and sectioned for your child.

### **DRINKS**

It is not necessary to send drinks. The school provides water at lunch time, or milk if your child is in the lunch program.

Please label lunch boxes or bags and all containers. Please, do not send candy, cupcakes, cookies, chips, fruit rolls, pudding, jello, snack packs or gum. Such foods are removed from the child's lunch and are sent home.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS, BIRTHDAYS, and CELEBRATIONS**

Many children enjoy sharing a birthday treat with the class. If you would like to send a treat for the class, please schedule a time for the treat with the guide or office. Please do not send sugary treats such as cake, cookies, or candy. Some children have peanut allergies, so please ask the teacher before sending in anything containing nuts. Healthy snacks can be just as festive. Here are several ideas for healthy birthday treats:

- popcorn in baggies
- fruit kebabs or fruit tray
- vegetable tray
- trail mix in little cups

Please do not bring or send presents for your child to the school. If your child is having a birthday party please mail the invitations, unless you are inviting every child in the class, in which case parents may hand out invitations after school. Also, please remember that children may not go home with other children, even for a birthday party, without a note or a call from the child's parent.

The children at Lumin East Dallas Community School come from a wide variety of backgrounds. It is the philosophy of the school to respect each child's culture and religion. As part of our cultural program, during the school year we do honor various religions, ethnicities and cultures. We encourage parents to share their family's history and rituals with our classes.

## **SETTING LIMITS ON CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR**

Discipline is an essential part of any child's education. It provides guidance in what behavior is acceptable in order for a child to flourish, and for the group to be safe and develop healthy relationships. It is our goal at East Dallas Community School to provide the kind of guidance and limits that promote a child's growth, allow freedom of expression, and support the child's ability to control himself in a socially acceptable way.

It is the philosophy of the school that setting limits is most effective for the child's development if handled in a way that shows firmness, kindness, and respect for all parties concerned. For the child's well-being we encourage parents to work together with us as partners in matters that relate to discipline. We recognize that different families have different ways of raising their children, and that each family has the right to choose the way of educating its children that it thinks is best. For this reason it is important to choose a school that has a philosophy of education and discipline that is generally consistent with your own. Corporal punishment is not used at the school and we ask parents not to use it at home for behaviors that occurred at school.

Classroom guides do much to support positive behavior. The number of "no's" in the classroom are kept to a minimum. Children don't have to be told, "Don't touch," because the classroom materials are there to be manipulated and explored. Lessons are given to show polite ways to meet one's needs. Community life and cooperation are fostered through many group activities. In addition, the adults in the classroom set an example of respectful and courteous behavior.

### ***Student Code of Conduct***

*All students enrolled at Lumin East Dallas Community School shall recognize the following rights and responsibilities of each student at the school:*

- 1. Each child has the right to physical safety.**
- 2. Each child has the right to emotional safety. Persistent teasing, taunting or other forms of harassment are not acceptable.**
- 3. Each child has the right to work in the classroom without undue interruption.**

Behavior which violates these basic rights shall be addressed by the classroom teacher. Repeated or persistent negative behavior shall be addressed by the Director and/or an official of the school

designated by the Director, along with the classroom teacher. Throughout the process parents will be both informed and consulted in attempts to improve problem behavior.

Persistent, unresolved behavior problems on the part of a student, or parental failure to seriously respond and attempt to correct behavior problems in concert with the school, may result in consequences including suspension or expulsion.

**I**n rare cases, a parent or parent-designated adult may be called to pick up a child during the course of the school day without previous warning. This may occur when:

- The child's behavior is serious or dangerous enough to warrant immediate action, and/or
- The child's behavior is serious enough to be detrimental to the security or psychological well-being of the group.

When a child's behavior over a period of time concerns a guide, he or she will inform the parent, usually through a written note or a phone call. Please don't expect teachers to give daily reports. Please do respond promptly to messages left by guides asking to communicate with you.

For students eligible for special education services, the school recognizes exceptions for students whose behavior is a reflection of their disability.

Discipline, including suspension and expulsion, for students eligible for special education services, will be consistent with regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and the Texas Education Code (TEC). Specifically, 34 CFR 121(d) [ Free Appropriate Public Education]; 34 CFR 300.522 [Determination of Setting]; TEC Chapter 37.004 [Placement of Students with Disabilities]

**Expulsion** – The permanent removal of a student from school. Re-application to the school is not permitted.

**Suspension**- The temporary exclusion of a student from attending regular classes. In some cases the suspension may be in-school. A cumulative total of ten suspended days, whether in school or out of school, during any school year, may result in expulsion.

It is important to note that when parents and teachers work together to resolve a child's behavioral problems, the result is speedy improvement! When we say, "we could not do it without you", we really mean it. Consistency in approach and partnership between home and school are two key elements that permit a child to benefit most fully from our program.

## **OBSERVATION**

**W**e welcome observations in the Primary, Elementary, and After-School classrooms by parents, prospective parents, and teachers.

**O**bserving your child in the classroom will help you understand his work and the educational system we use. Parents need not wait for a regularly scheduled observation before conference time, but are welcome any time during the school year. Every parent will observe in the classroom at least twice during the year prior to conference time. Please call the office for an appointment, starting in October. Observations last 20 minutes.

## **OBSERVATION GUIDELINES**

**A**ll visitors must check in at the office before entering a classroom. The following guidelines are designed to make your visit more enjoyable. Naturally, the children are interested in visitors who come to the classroom. By following these guidelines, you will be able to see the classroom in as close-to-normal conditions as possible.

1. Come into the classroom as quietly as possible. Have a seat in the chair provided and remain there.
2. When you go into the classroom, there may be children doing work on the floor. Be careful not to step on any rugs on the floor, since this is where they lay out their work.
3. The children may talk to you or they may not notice that you are there. If the children talk to you, answer their questions briefly and with a very quiet or whispered voice, so as not to disturb the children who are working.
4. Do not start a conversation or prolong one started by a child. You may suggest that you came to see the boys and girls at their work: "I'd like to see you doing your work, too."
5. Do not expect to see all the children working all the time. Each one is different and works at his or her own pace.
6. Montessori classrooms are orderly, but not necessarily quiet, classrooms. The children at this age need to talk to each other and the guide a great deal.
7. Please do not talk to the guides or walk around the classroom. Please don't feel that the guide is being rude when he or she doesn't stop to talk with you. The guide's top priority is to be working with the children.
8. Please do not take photographs while the children are inside the classroom.
9. You are provided a clipboard and paper to write down any notes or questions that occur to you during your observation.
10. You are welcome to sit quietly in a classroom for about 15 to 20 minutes. We encourage visitors to observe for at least 15 minutes to get a feel for the atmosphere of the classroom.

**O**bservations are meant to be a pleasant experience for both the child and the parent. It is a special time for the child when his parent comes to show an interest in his life at school. Try to maintain a positive attitude while observing the richness of classroom life. Notice all the wonderful things that are happening as the children learn and interact with each other. You are the welcome and honored guest in your child's classroom home.

**A**fter you leave the classroom, you may have some questions or concerns. Please feel free to contact the guide or the school director with any comments you might have. As part of your respect for the children, if you notice a child (not your own) behaving inappropriately with another child (not your own), we ask that you not call the parents of those children to share your concern. Rather, bring your concern to the attention of the guide. Although it is possible that this behavior is already being addressed, your input will be valuable.

## PARENT CONFERENCES

Conferences are a vital part of your child's education. They are an opportunity to meet one-on-one with your child's guide to discuss his or her progress and to gain a better understanding of the Montessori materials and philosophy.

Parent conferences are required twice a year (fall and spring). It is a good idea to sign up as soon as the notices go out to schedule a time that is most convenient for you. It is very important that you schedule a conference and then attend that conference on time. In some cases, the classroom teacher will assign a time for you. The guides have set that time aside especially for you and they are looking forward to sharing ideas and information with you. Please call to reschedule if you are unable to attend your conference or if you are running late. If a conference is missed without notice to the guide, the child may not return to school until it has been rescheduled.

Conferences are a special time for parents and guides to meet and concentrate completely on a subject of great interest--your child! For this reason, we request that only the parents or other adult who is intimately involved with the education of the child come to the conference. Please leave all children at home, except for the baby that you can hold in your lap for the whole time.

It is important to know that if there is a concern at any time during the school year the guide will contact the parents and explain his or her observations. Parents need not wait for a regularly scheduled conference time, but may request a conference any time during the school year if they have a concern, a question, or simply an interest in their child's progress.

## SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT AT HOME

Parent involvement extends into the home also. By working with your child at home and discussing the events of the school day with her, you are reinforcing the importance of school and your interest in your child's welfare.

Some of the activities that parents can do at home are described in the handouts that are sent home in the parents' folders. Here are some examples of things you can do to help your child at home. Check with your child's guide for other ideas.

1. Read to your child every day.
2. Have conversations with your child every day.
3. Include your child in daily activities such as cooking and doing laundry. While sorting laundry, for example, children observe, classify, listen, talk, and learn. Language, experience, and concept development all contribute to the later development of reading, writing, and mathematics.
4. Provide regular, consistent routines that help your child get the most out of his experiences at school. These include a reasonable bed-time and enough time in the morning to allow for unhurried dressing and eating.

5. Nurture your child's growing independence in taking care of himself--find ways to enable your child to dress or feed himself, for example. As your child gets older, he can prepare his own school lunch and take greater responsibility for his own belongings.
6. Limit TV time. Too much TV can hinder children's physical fitness, and can have a negative effect on social development and school achievement. It takes time away from other more wholesome and creative activities, such as playing outside, reading, and talking. It can also expose children to violent scenes that can lead to an increase in aggressive behavior. If TV is permitted, be sure to watch with your child so you can monitor and discuss what he sees.

**If** you have any questions or concerns about how you can best support your child's development at home, please talk them over with your child's guide or the school director.

## **SCREENING, TESTING, AND EVALUATION**

### **SCREENING**

**I**n compliance with Texas state law, children ages 4 and older are screened for vision and hearing impairment by a state-certified screener. It is important that your child be in school for the screening as no make-up screening is available. We will let you know the dates of vision and hearing screenings.

**O**ther screenings may also be available to the student body from time to time. These include speech and language screening, developmental screening, dental screening, and/or physical examinations of the children. Your child's presence at the school is considered permission to participate in screenings. You will be notified when such screenings will take place.

**W**e are very grateful for the services provided by professionals in doing the screenings. Please remember that screenings only indicate possible areas that need further investigation. They do not provide diagnoses for any specific condition a child might have.

### **TESTING AND EVALUATION**

**F**rom time to time the school requires students to have further evaluations--medical, educational, or psychological--to assist us in our mission to help each child reach his full potential. Evaluations often give us the guidance we need to better serve the needs of an individual child. In some cases the results of an evaluation indicate that further services must be found outside the school. Such services might include speech therapy, counseling sessions, or some other adjunct to our educational services.

**T**he Montessori philosophy and approach to education can accommodate a wide range of abilities and learning styles. At EDCS our goal is to provide an ideal learning environment based on Montessori principles, with appropriate modifications, if possible, that will guide and nurture the full development of children with learning differences.

**A**ll children occasionally display some behaviors which interfere with their learning and/or with the functioning of their group. Examples include difficulty in maintaining focused attention, impulsive behavior that can interfere with task completion and or social relations, and oppositional behavior. In some cases, the behavior is marked enough, either in intensity or persistence or both, that the guides become concerned about the child's ability to learn adequately in our classroom environment, or about the child's disruptive effects on the class, or both.

If a guide observes that a child is exhibiting characteristics of being at risk for a learning difference, he or she may request observation of the child and consultation by a learning support team, composed of the child's guide, the school director, the child's parents and at least one other qualified professional. The learning support team will make suggestions for ways to help the child function more successfully at school. This may include strategies to be followed in the classroom and at home, the use of outside resources such as counseling or tutoring, and/or modifications to the classroom or home environment to better accommodate the student's learning style. The learning support team will communicate regularly to monitor progress and make adjustments to the plan, if necessary. After six weeks of implementing the recommended strategies, another conference will be held to assess the success of the approach. In some cases, evaluation or diagnostic testing may be required to more precisely identify a child's educational needs. If it is determined that the EDCS classroom environment cannot adequately meet the needs of the child, the guide and school director will meet with the parents to explore solutions.

If at any time the teaching staff is concerned about your child's progress, they will contact you and discuss what they have observed. Please make it a point to stay in close touch with your child's guide--this is how we can best work together.

## **PARENT EDUCATION**

Parents frequently have questions about child development and parenting skills. At EDCS, parent education often occurs in an informal manner, as parents talk with members of the teaching staff or with the school director in the office. In addition, the trained parent educators who work with the Parents as Teacher program are available to all parents who wish to discuss a parenting question or concern. Handouts of interest to parents are sent home in the Wednesday Memo from time to time.

Our school offers parent education meetings, seminars and workshops to parents free of charge. Every effort is made to find topics that are important and interesting to parents, and which will also help the child's development.

All parents are expected to participate in some form of parent education, including attendance at parent conferences. In some cases, parent education classes or family counseling may be required as a condition of continued enrollment in the school.

## **HEALTH**

While we want to have every healthy child in attendance every day, a child who is ill must not be sent to school. Children who are contagious need to be isolated from well children. The school follows the guidelines indicated on the chart entitled "Communicable Disease Chart for Schools and Child Care Centers," by the Texas Department of Health. Parents are welcome to come to the office and refer to this chart at any time.

Parents often wonder if a child is well enough to attend school. The following is adapted from a draft of the American Academy of Pediatrics/American Public Health Association Reference Standards. These signs indicate that a child should stay home:

- o VERY UNUSUAL BEHAVIOR, such as extreme lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, or difficult breathing.

- o FEVER of 101 degrees Fahrenheit under the arm; a child who has had fever needs to stay home until free of fever for 24 hours.
- o DIARRHEA refers to more stools than the child's usual pattern, with increased stool water or decreased form that is not contained by the diaper or toilet use.
- o VOMITING two or more times in the previous 24 hours; an exception is made if a qualified medical person states that the vomiting is caused by a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- o MOUTH SORES WITH DROOLING, unless the child's physician or local health authority states the child is non-infectious.
- o RASH WITH FEVER, DRAINING, AND/OR BEHAVIOR CHANGES THAT MIGHT SIGNIFY ILLNESS, until a physician has determined the child does not have a communicable disease.
- o PURULENT CONJUNCTIVITIS or **pinkeye**, which may show itself as pinkness or redness of the eye and may also be accompanied by white or yellow eye discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep. Children may return 24 hours after treatment begins (once you have gone to the eye Doctor, received drops and are being treated with the proper medication). Parents must send in eye drops for application, if the prescription calls for medication to be administered more than twice a day.
- o INFESTATION, such as scabies or **head lice**, Children may return 24 hours after treatment begins, unless there is a statement from the child's physician giving alternate instructions. Note: ALL EGGS must be removed before child is admitted back to school.
- o IMPETIGO, until 24 hours after treatment begins.
- o STREPTOCOCCAL PHARYNGITIS or **strep throat**, until 24 hours after treatment begins and until the child has been without fever for 24 hours.
- o PINWORM INFECTION, until 24 hours after treatment begins.
- o RINGWORM INFECTION, until 24 hours after treatment begins.
- o CHICKEN POX (varicella), until six days after the onset of the rash or until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- o OTHER DISEASES, such as tuberculosis, mumps, measles, rubella, and hepatitis A virus infection, until the child's physician or local health department says the child is non-infectious.

**I**n addition, there may be times when your child may not seem to be ill, but still may need to be seen by a physician or other qualified health personnel. For example, if your child has a greenish-yellow nasal discharge which has not improved after 10 days, your child may have an infection which needs attention.

**V**ery young children, in particular, need to stay home when they are not feeling well. Toddlers cannot express themselves clearly about how they feel, and we often have to rely on non-verbal communication. Parents can usually tell when their toddler is “out of sorts” or “not himself.” Toddlers who are ill, coming down with something or just getting over something need to stay home. Such children may not have a fever, but they may be coughing, have a runny nose, or be

crying “over every little thing.” These children are telling us that they need to stay home where they can rest. They are not ready for the active toddler environment, and they can expose other children to germs at an age when infections spread easily.

**N**o matter how careful parents are, there may be times when once the child is at school, it is determined that she would be better off at home. If the guide deems a child to be too uncomfortable to stay at school, or just not feeling well enough to participate in the activities of the community, then that child’s parents will be called to come and take the child home. Please be sure we always have a number on file where we may reach a responsible adult who will be able to care for your child at such times.

**I**f the school calls you to pick up your child, please do so quickly. We do not have the facilities to look after ill children properly, and your child will need you or some other comforting, reassuring adult to take care of her in the familiarity of home. Be sure that there are enough names and phone numbers on your child’s emergency card to ensure that we can reach someone right away.

**I**f your child is absent because of illness, please call the school and inform us concerning the nature of the illness and the length of time your child may be out of school. We must be notified immediately if your child has a communicable disease so that we may notify other parents. When your child returns to school, we need a written note with the following information:

1. your child's name,
2. the dates your child was absent, and
3. the reason for your child's absence.

## **MEDICATIONS**

**S**tate law does not allow us to administer any medication without written instructions from parents. If your child will need medication during the school day, please fill out the Medication Clipboard in the office and give the medicine to the receptionist. If you arrive before the receptionist, you may note the information on the medical clipboard in ABC. Give the clipboard and medicine to the adult in charge and ask him or her to see that the appropriate person gets it. Call the office and find out where you can pick up the medicine at the end of the day, which varies with pick-up time. The clipboard must be filled out for every day your child is to receive medication, or the medicine cannot be given. All unused medication will be thrown away after one month. We cannot administer any medication after its expiration date.

**H**andy hint: If a prescription medicine is to be given for several days, ask the pharmacists to divide the medication and put it into two containers. That way one can stay at school, and the other at home. Most pharmacists are willing to do this.

\***PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS** must be in the original container labeled with:

1. the child's name,
2. the date of administration,
3. directions stating dosage amount and times, and
4. the doctor's name

\***NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION** may be given only with the parent’s written directions for administration (these must be in accordance with label instructions). The instructions and written permission must be provided daily. The medicine must be labeled with:

1. the child's name, and
2. The date of administration.

First aid supplies are kept at the school for minor emergencies. If a major emergency occurs, you will be notified by telephone immediately. It is very important that we have on file the name of the person to be contacted if you cannot be reached. Please IMMEDIATELY notify the office of any changes in address, place of employment or phone numbers. In the event of your absence, a medical release form signed by you is required to seek emergency treatment.

## **PREVENTION OF ILLNESS**

The single most effective way to prevent the spread of common diseases is to wash one's hands – thoroughly and often!

1. When children first get home
2. After using the toilet
3. Before preparing food
4. Before eating food
5. After blowing nose, sneezing, or coughing
6. After helping a child use the toilet, blow nose, sneeze, or cough
7. After diapering

We teach the children to do this at school, and we would greatly appreciate your reinforcing these useful habits at home. A few tips for handwashing:

1. Rub hands with soap for at least 15 seconds. Wash all over hands.
2. When you go to a public restroom, leave the water running while you get a paper towel; then turn off the tap with the paper towel rather than using your clean hands.
3. Keep lotion by the sink to use after each handwashing. This helps keep the skin comfortable and soft, and encourages frequent handwashing.

## **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Lumin East Dallas Community School is governed by a Board of Directors. Policy-making, long-term planning, and fiscal responsibility are some of the main functions of the Board. The school director runs the school according to Board policies and is responsible for day-to-day operations of the school.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Parental involvement is very important to a successful parent-school partnership. Parents are involved with their children's education at EDCS in a variety of ways. We encourage parents to talk with the guides and observe in the classrooms. Other ways parents can get involved include serving in parent leadership positions, reading the weekly memo, volunteer work, parent work days, accompanying the class on field trips, support at home, and participation in parent education classes and events.

In combination with other programs offered at our school, we offer educational support to students through the funds we receive from Title I. Once a year, a small group of parents, teachers and staff meet to assess needs and to set goals for federally funded programs through our CIP (Campus Improvement Plan).

## **VOLUNTEER WORK**

**P**arents make an important contribution to the school in the area of volunteer work. Volunteer work can include anything from helping out with after-school care and field trips to working on classroom materials and office mailings. Regardless of the task, it helps us operate the school better.

**P**arent volunteer work is also important to the children. They see that their parents value the school by taking the time from their busy schedules to help. The message the children receive through the parents' actions is: "School is important and so is your work at school." The message to the children from the school is: "Your family is important; their work is valuable."

**E**xperience has taught us that it is difficult to do volunteer work while trying to care for young children. Please arrange for someone else to look after your children while you are doing volunteer work at the school.

## **PARENT WORK DAYS**

**P**arent Work Days are scheduled twice a year to give all the parents an opportunity to work together to make EDCS a better place for their children. On past Parent Work Days, parents have built playgrounds and renovated buildings. Every Parent Work Day brings new tasks and new opportunities to get to know the other parents and children.

**L**ight refreshments and child care are provided, and good times seem to happen naturally. We encourage all parents to come and lend a hand to build a better school.

## **PARENT LEADERSHIP POSITIONS**

**W**e consider that every parent who participates in the life of the school is acting as a leader on some level. Many times parents make helpful suggestions, take initiative to improve something at the school, or participate in school life in a way that demonstrates this leadership.

**T**he persons in our Parent Organization act as parent leaders who organize parts of school events such as Parent Work Days and Graduation, working in coordination with school staff. They take full responsibility for other events. Because there is a close working relationship between the parent leaders and school staff, these events have proved to be very successful and beneficial to parents and the school. In addition, room parents for each classroom are asked to help with phone calls, organizing transportation for field trips, and other activities that directly benefit the classrooms or the school as a whole. It is encouraged for parents to join a committee in our Parent Organization.

## **PARENTAL RIGHTS**

Parents have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of his/her child's classroom teacher.

## **TUITION PAYMENT – Due the First Day of the Month**

**T**he tuition deadline for each payment is the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month, beginning in September and continuing through May (9 equal payments). If the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month falls on a day when there is no

school, such as a weekend or holiday, then payment should be made no later than the last school day before the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. As set out in the enrollment contract, tuition must be paid in full each month by the tuition deadline in order for your child to return to school. Please do not send your child to school if your tuition has not been paid, or your child may be sent home. If, at any time, you are unable to make your payment in a timely manner, please speak to the school director.

Many parents prefer to pay their tuition weekly. If you would like to pay weekly, be sure to begin making weekly payments the first week of August so that the first tuition installment will be paid in full by September 1.

#### **LOCATION OF TUITION BOXES**

Tuition may be left in the locked boxes located in ABC and in the office door. Be sure to put the money or check in an envelope and fill out the front of the envelope.

### **BORROWING ITEMS FROM THE SCHOOL**

Although the school encourages parents and children to borrow books from the Library, that is all the school can lend to the families of the school. From time to time parents wonder if they may borrow items that would be useful for a non-school function, but school policy does not permit us to make such loans.

### **ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

The school has accident insurance for the children enrolled in the school. Its coverage begins only where your existing insurance ends, and it covers only accidents that occur at school during school hours. If you have any questions about our coverage, or if you need claim forms for an accident your child had at school, ask the business office.

### **EMERGENCY RELOCATION**

It is highly unlikely that the children will ever need to be relocated away from the East Dallas Community School campus. However, in case of an emergency such as a fire, everyone may be ordered to leave the premises. If this happens, the children will be taken to the Samuell-Grand Recreation Center at 6200 East Grand Avenue. It is located near the school on East Grand, just north of the Mt. Auburn Elementary School. The telephone number is (214) 670-1383.

If you have any questions about any of the topics discussed above, or any aspect of your child's experience at Lumin East Dallas Community School, please let us know. We are always happy to meet with you and work together on behalf of your child. We are glad that your family is a part of Lumin East Dallas Community School, and we are looking forward to a great year together!

*Updated 2016-17*