



The Lillian and Betty

**Ratner Montessori School**  
Curious. Creative. Caring.

# PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2019-2020

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**THE LILLIAN AND BETTY RATNER MONTESSORI SCHOOL**  
**PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
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## **SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

### **School Contact Information**

Telephone Number: 216.464.0033

Fax Number: 216.464.0031

Web Site: [www.theratnerschool.org](http://www.theratnerschool.org)

Address: The Lillian and Betty Ratner Montessori School  
27575 Shaker Blvd.  
Pepper Pike, Ohio 44124

<b>Title</b>	<b>Staff Member</b>	<b>Phone Ext.</b> (after dialing 216-464-0033)	<b>Email</b>
Head of School	Michael Griffith	1122	<a href="mailto:mgriffith@theratnerschool.org">mgriffith@theratnerschool.org</a>
Toddler and Children's House Division Director	Becca Ucker	1128	<a href="mailto:bucker@theratnerschool.org">bucker@theratnerschool.org</a>
Director of Facilities	Ray Montalvo	1017	<a href="mailto:rmontalvo@theratnerschool.org">rmontalvo@theratnerschool.org</a>
Finance Operations	Connie Hartley	1124	<a href="mailto:chartley@theratnerschool.org">chartley@theratnerschool.org</a>
Director of Enrollment Management	Ginny Wagh	1120	<a href="mailto:vwagh@theratnerschool.org">vwagh@theratnerschool.org</a>
Director of Advancement	Rebecca Bash	1123	<a href="mailto:rbash@theratnerschool.org">rbash@theratnerschool.org</a>
Executive Administrative Assistant	Mandy Walden	1125	<a href="mailto:mwalden@theratnerschool.org">mwalden@theratnerschool.org</a>
Communications Coordinator	Nadia Vinogradov-Carek	1177	<a href="mailto:ncarek@theratnerschool.org">ncarek@theratnerschool.org</a>
School Counselor	Kate Nagy	2220	<a href="mailto:knagy@theratnerschool.org">knagy@theratnerschool.org</a>

Please see our website for contact information for all teachers and staff.

## **Mission Statement**

### **Our Mission**

We empower students to find joy in learning and to become their best selves.

### **Our Core Values**

We meet the needs of each individual learner.

We create a challenging and relevant academic environment.

We are inspired by and practice Montessori Education.

We teach universal values rooted in the Jewish faith.

We embrace diversity.

We are a welcoming, caring, global community.

## **Admission Policy**

The Ratner Montessori School is a diverse and inclusive school for engaged, motivated, and bright children. We offer individualized learning, meeting each child where they are socially, emotionally, and academically. The Ratner Montessori School offers open enrollment at any point throughout the school year, pending availability and acceptance.

### **Admissions Procedures for New Applicants:**

1. **Contact our Director of Enrollment Management**, Ginny Wagh, to arrange a visit to the school. Ginny can be reached by email at [vwagh@theratnerschool.org](mailto:vwagh@theratnerschool.org), by phone at 216-464-0033 x1120, or via the school website.

Visit the school for a tour (unless during an Open House, tours are by appointment only) and complete an Application for Admission. Applications are available during your tour, and can also be downloaded on the Application Process page of our website.

2. **Assessment and Records**

- Once the application is complete, your child's assessment date will be scheduled. This may include two consecutive days of shadow visits for students (1<sup>st</sup> grade and up).
- You must supply the school with past report cards and teacher recommendations (1st grade and up).

3. **Family Interview**

- Your family will meet with the Director of Enrollment Management to go over the application process and have any final questions answered.

4. **Acceptance Decision**

- Offers of Admission are based on the results of the Student Assessment and the Family Interview.

5. **Admissions Procedures for Returning Applicants:**

Renewal enrollment forms will be sent to each family for each individual child during the designated re-enrollment period of the prior school year. Families will be contacted directly from the Enrollment Management Office with a detailed description of procedures.

### *Student Probation:*

A student may be placed on probation as a result of ongoing academic or behavioral concerns. The student will be given a specified period of time for improvement. If the improvement plan is honored, the student will no longer be on probation. However, students who do not honor the improvement plan may be asked to withdraw from school at the end of the semester in which the probation was initiated.

Re-enrollment for students placed on probation at the end of the second trimester will be determined at the end of the academic year. If the student has made satisfactory academic and/or behavioral improvement by the end of the school year, the probation status will be lifted and re-enrollment will be permitted, providing there is space available in that particular grade at that time. Both faculty and administrators will provide input and have significant discussion before placing any student on probation and withholding enrollment.

Students placed on probation will be required to attend a parent conference and will subsequently have periodic meetings to measure progress with teachers and administrators.

### **Withdrawal Policy**

- To withdraw a student, the parent or guardian must notify the Director of Enrollment Management and complete a withdrawal form.
- Withdrawal forms are to be submitted to the Director of Enrollment Management. The withdrawal form will be processed internally through the Enrollment Management office and business office.
- The student needs to turn in all textbooks and other school property to the Front Office.
- No records will be released until all forms are completed and financial matters are resolved. Please allow 5 working days after all forms are completed and all financial matters are resolved for records to be released. End of year records may require more time for processing.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The Ratner School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, or sexual orientation in the administration of its admission policies or financial aid program.

### **Confidentiality Policy**

The Lillian and Betty Ratner Montessori School follows the NAIS Principles of Good Practice guidelines where the school will operate under a clear and consistent set of practices for gathering, disseminating, and maintaining prospective student information, and respects the confidentiality of students, families, and documents in the admissions process. Our school ensures that the admissions process and/or official transcript have provided sufficient formal documentation of an appropriate match before offering admission to a student.

Please refer to the Confidentiality of Records for current students of The Ratner Montessori School listed on page 8 of this handbook.

### **Further Admission/Enrollment Information and Policies:**

- Admission information, policies, and procedures are described in detail on Ratner's website: [www.theratnerschool.org](http://www.theratnerschool.org), or can be obtained from the Director of Enrollment Management.
- Enrollment forms and information are available on Ratner's website: [www.theratnerschool.org](http://www.theratnerschool.org), or can be obtained from the Director of Enrollment Management.
- Tuition and fee schedules are available on Ratner's website: [www.theratnerschool.org](http://www.theratnerschool.org), or can be obtained from the Director of Enrollment Management.
- Financial Policies and Procedures for Enrolled Students can be found in Appendix B.

## COMING/GOING

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance is crucial for academic success. Our expectation is that your child will be at school on time every day. Of course, we know that there are reasons why students cannot attend school from time to time. If a student misses school due to illness, family emergency, religious observance, or funeral, the absence is considered “excused.” If you decide to keep your child out of school for any other reason (most commonly, vacation), please know that the absence is NOT considered an “excused absence” and may result in the child not having an opportunity to make up missed work for full credit.

Parents must notify the School when a child is ill or absent for other reasons. Please call, email the Front Office, or fill in the online absence form <https://www.theratnerschool.org/apps/form/attendance-absence>) by 8:30AM **each day** that your child will be absent. (Students are required to keep up with homework and classroom assignments, or arrange for make-up work with their teachers upon return from an excused absence.) Chronic absenteeism will be addressed by teachers and the Head of School.

### **Arrival**

Students may enter the building beginning at 8:15 AM.

Drop-off times are very busy. As the safety of your children is our primary concern, we ask that ALL drivers do the following:

- A. OBSERVE THE STOP SIGN THAT REQUIRES CARS **FROM BOTH DIRECTIONS** TO STOP IN FRONT OF THE PEDESTRIAN ZONE.
- B. **DO NOT** leave your car unattended – even for a minute. **If you need to enter the building for any reason, even briefly, you MUST park your car in the short-term parking lot across from the car pool lane or the upper lot.** Please use the upper parking lot for longer visits. The children are to proceed to their homerooms after putting backpacks and outdoor wear in their cubbies or lockers.
- C. Only drop students off on the sidewalk-side of the driveway (adjacent to the school building).
- D. If you do park and walk your child into the building, please be sure to cross at the cross-walk.

### **Arrival Before 8:15 AM/Early Bird**

Hours: 7:30 - 8:15 AM

Students arriving at School before 8:15 AM must report directly to either “Morning Movement” in the Gym (Kindergarten and Grades 1 – 8), or “Early Bird” room (Toddlers and Pre-K). The “Early Bird” room is in one of the Toddler/Children’s House classrooms.

The “Morning Movement” program is available on a “drop-in” basis for students in Kindergarten and Grades 1-8; however, parents of Toddlers and Pre-K students must give at least 24 hours notice to use Early Bird.

### **Tardiness**

**All students are expected to be in their homerooms no later than 8:30 AM.** The school day begins exactly at 8:30, and students will miss very important information that outlines their learning for the day if they are late. Tardiness also creates a distraction and impacts the learning of other students. Exception is made, of course, for those students who rely on school buses that may, on occasion, arrive at school after our normal starting time. Students will also be given an excused tardy for doctor appointments that are communicated to the Front Office. Parents are requested to notify the School if their child will be arriving late. Any child arriving after their starting time, for any reason, must stop in the office and get a tardy slip before proceeding to homeroom. All Toddler and Children’s House students arriving late cannot be dropped off at the door – they must be walked to their classroom and handed off from parent to teacher. For the safety and security of our children, it is important to be able to account for each child. Chronic tardiness will be addressed by teachers and the Head of School.

## Dismissal

All parents, including those of Toddler/Children's House students, are encouraged to use the drop-off/pick-up carpool line. If parents choose to come into the building to pick up their children, they must remain in the lobby where the students will be escorted to them by their teachers and released to the parents' care. **As a matter of safety, cell phone use in the lobby is strongly discouraged and is prohibited in the car pool line.** Please read the paragraph below that outlines our bus and carpool procedure.

Students in Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be escorted each day by their homeroom teachers to designated dismissal areas where they will remain seated quietly until their bus or car arrives to take them home. Food and beverages may not be consumed during dismissal. **Students may not use cell phones during dismissal times.** Parents should form a carpool line at the front of the building. **If there is a need to enter the building even for a very short period of time, parents must park in the short-term parking lot across from the front doors or the upper parking lot. Under no circumstances should cars be left unattended in the car pool line.** The children will be called and escorted to waiting cars and buses.

Please note that your child must be at least five years old and enrolled in our Kindergarten program to be eligible for busing by your school district. The bus drivers will not allow additional children on board to accommodate an after school activity or play date. However, if parents of children riding the same bus would like to have their child dropped off at a friend's stop, this can be arranged. A note from **both** families must be turned into our office on the day of that arrangement. Our staff will then give those notes to the bus driver. The following buses leave the school grounds at or around 3:30 PM: Beachwood, Mayfield, Orange, Shaker Heights, Solon, South Euclid/Lyndhurst.

**Dismissal is a very busy time.** It is important that your child knows how he/she is getting home each day. Please review this before your children leave for school each morning. **For the safety of our students, we will only accept communication FROM PARENTS/GUARDIANS regarding all changes in dismissal,** such as leaving early, as well as changes in transportation. This information must be put in writing and given to the homeroom teacher during check-in/homeroom, or phoned in to the office **no later than 10:30 AM for half-day Toddler/Children's House students and 2:30 PM for full-day Toddler/Children's House and all Grades 1 – 8 students** on the day of that change. Otherwise, students will be sent home in their regular way.

**NOTE: Changes in dismissal plans must not be arranged via cell phone conversation between children and parents, as cell phone use by students in the school building is strictly prohibited.** If students require a conversation with parents during the school day, they may ask to come to the Front Office to use the office telephone. (Please note that arrangement of last-minute play dates is not an acceptable use of office phones. Play dates should be arranged in advance and any accompanying dismissal changes should be communicated to the Front Office by parents.)

**Any person other than a parent, guardian, or designated pick-up person picking up a child must provide proof of identification before a child will be released to them.**

## After School Care /"We Care"

"We Care" provides convenient, flexible hours (3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.) for parents of children enrolled at The Ratner Montessori School. Parents may choose to enroll their children in We Care for one to five days per week on a consistent basis, or use the service on a drop-in basis, if space is available. **Arrangements must be made with the Front Office prior to 2:00 p.m. before a child can be accommodated on a drop-in basis.** Parents using the service on a drop-in basis will be billed. We Care begins at 3:30 p.m. for all students. At this time the children are offered a snack followed by supervised work and play. The We Care phone number is 216-314-8779.

**"We-Care" ends promptly at 6:00 p.m.** For any student in "We-Care" beyond 6:00 PM, parents will be charged \$10.00 for each 10-minute block past 6:00 PM.

### **Late Pick-Up Policy**

To ensure proper supervision of children after dismissal, any student who is not picked up by **3:45 p.m.**, or promptly at the end-time of any after-school activity, will be **placed in “We Care” at a cost of \$21.00 per student/per day.**

### **Holidays, Vacations, and Scheduled School Closings**

School will be closed for the following national holidays: Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Day, Presidents’ Day, and Memorial Day.

School closes for the following Jewish holidays: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, and Passover. Additionally, we close for Good Friday.

School will be closed during parent conferences. School will also close during in-service days, when teachers have meetings to facilitate planning, or for professional development activities. School also closes for Winter Break and Spring Break.

Please check the online school calendar for details of school closings.

### **Snow Days**

As we live in northeast Ohio, we must plan for the possibility that the School will need to close due to inclement weather (snow, ice, etc.). As a general rule of thumb, if the Orange School District Schools are closed – we will close as well (if the roads are not safe for their busses – they aren’t safe for your cars!). However, we have to consider the fact that we have families driving to Ratner from a much broader area. It is possible that Ratner would choose to close even when the Orange schools do not close. We will post any school closing on the website, report the closing to local TV networks, and send notifications via e-mail, text, and/or phone to all families ASAP. The School’s answering machine will also have a message indicating the closure. Once we open, however, we will not close early except in the most dire of circumstances.

### **COMMUNICATION**

At Ratner we believe that we are partners with parents in educating their children. And we know that good communication is important for a strong partnership. For that reason, we do our best to communicate with you on all aspects of your child’s experience here at Ratner. Similarly, parents should never hesitate to initiate communication. Email is the most efficient form of communication; we typically respond to all emails within 24 hours (weekends and holidays excepted).

When the nature of the information to be shared or sought does not lend itself to electronic communication, we are happy to schedule time for a face-to-face meeting or a phone call in a prompt manner.

If you have any trouble communicating effectively with your child’s teacher, either the Front Office or the Head of School will be eager to help move that communication along.

### **Regular Forms of Communication**

#### *Website*

Our website is a valuable source of information. Lunch menus, school closings, special events, homework, contact information, parent organization information, and much more can be accessed on our website. The web address is *www.theratnerschool.org*.

#### *Weekly E-Newsletter*

Communication about upcoming key dates, events, extra-curricular opportunities for students, reminders about field trips, and a regular letter from the Head of School, will be delivered via email each school week. If this method is not workable for you and your family, please notify the Front Office to make other arrangements. **It is very important for the School to have your current email address and that you inform us should it change.**

### *Notes Sent Home*

For the most part, communication from your child's classroom teachers will come via email. However, students will occasionally bring work or notes home in backpacks. Parents/guardians are asked to remind students to check their backpacks regularly for classroom correspondence.

### *Communication and Custody*

In two-parent families, it is assumed that both parents are living at the same address unless we have been notified otherwise. We will, therefore, send home notices, communications, etc. with the child or to the family's address on file.

Where parents are separated, or a divorce is pending, information will be sent to the parent who currently has responsibility for child care. It is assumed that this information is shared by and between the parents. Since changes in a family's situation can impact a child's achievement and interactions at school, parents are asked to inform the Head of School, Division Directors, and teachers of changes so that appropriate support can be given to the child. **Unless there is a legal document filed at school stating otherwise, each parent will have full rights to the child and his/her records.**

In cases of joint custody (shared parenting agreements) it is assumed that one copy of communications and information will be sent home with the child and that this will be shared by and between parents.

In cases of an actual divorce decree involving clear custody by one parent, school communications will be sent home to the custodial parent unless the decree indicates otherwise. The custodial parent should understand, however, that unless the divorce decree specifically limits the non-custodial parent's right to access to records, the non-custodial parent has a right to the same access and information as the custodial parent. We ask the custodial parent to cooperate with the School and share information, correspondence and conference appointments directly with the non-custodial parent. Further, unless restricted by court order, any non-custodial parent has the right to attend any school activity.

### *Parent Conferences*

Conferences with parents are scheduled twice a year: in the late fall and again in early spring. We use an online scheduling tool for parent-teacher conferences. The link for the online scheduler will be listed in the weekly e-newsletter. Conferences may also be scheduled at other times of the year by the request of parent(s), teacher(s) or administrator(s).

## **Written Reports and Student Records**

### *Trimester Progress Reports*

All parents/guardians receive student trimester progress reports in November and March, just prior to parent conferences, and a final report at the end of the school year. The information is designed to inform parents/guardians of student progress and achievement while fostering healthy, productive discussion between the faculty and families.

### *Standardized Testing*

Test results help teachers and administrators better respond to individual learning needs as well as to assess the School's curriculum for both content and pacing. Rather students take standardized tests that are used in many of the nation's schools.

### *Student Records*

Families seeking information to be sent to other schools should submit those requests to the Front Office. This includes 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and their parents seeking teacher and administrative staff recommendations for high school placement. Front Office staff will distribute the corresponding paperwork to the appropriate teaching and administrative staff members. Generally speaking, the goal for our teaching and administrative staff is a two-week turnaround timeframe.

### *Confidentiality of Records*

Every student has a standard academic file that is accessible to all Ratner faculty members. This file contains standard reporting documents (e.g., grade reports, etc.). When we have additional information about students and that information is health-related, we create and maintain a confidential file that is accessible on a “need-to-know” basis. If a Ratner Learning Plan has been written for a student, the Plan would be in the standard file; however, the testing and data upon which the Plan is based would be considered confidential and would be placed in the student’s confidential file.

## **BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

Within The Ratner Montessori School, behavior and discipline policies are guided by the school’s core values (Montessori Philosophy, Jewish Values, Diversity, and The Individual). Within those core values, are embedded guiding principles of respect:

- Respect for self
- Respect for others
- Respect for the environment

Teachers support these principles and encourage behavior that embodies these traits in daily procedures and practices.

### **General School-Wide Rules**

Within halls and classrooms:

1. Follow directions and rules throughout the school.
2. Manage one’s body in a safe way: keep hands, feet, and object to self.
3. Encourage and support each other with positive words and tone of voice.
4. Respect school environment and personal property; food, beverages, and gum are not permitted without adult permission.
5. Travel safely within the school building and campus; use quiet voices and follow teacher directions.
6. Keep personal property stowed in a safe and orderly way (in cubbies, lockers, etc.).
7. Uphold the core values and mission of the School.

### **Consequences:**

#### *Toddler and Children’s House Students*

Children are taught the limits of the classroom during the orientation period. When children break the rules they are reminded of expectations. When children consistently break rules or hurt other children, they receive a consequence that is designed to teach and encourage a more positive behavior. Often children will be asked to stay next to the teacher until he/she can get “in control” again. These policies are in accordance with Rule 5101:2- 12-19 OAC and apply to all employees of The Lillian and Betty Ratner Montessori School.

#### *Grades 1 through 8 Students*

Ratner Montessori School teachers will review behavioral expectations with students. We know that students make mistakes - and that from time to time a student will fail to meet those expectations. For minor occurrences, a verbal reminder or redirection by the teacher or staff member observing the event may be sufficient. We want to help students develop their own voice and sense of self - which can be aided by showing them that they are trusted to remedy problems themselves. We also recognize that parents should know when their child is struggling to meet behavioral expectations. Teachers will communicate with parents and work with them if needed to address problems in the classroom. The Head of School will be involved if there are ongoing concerns and teacher communication has not been successful in making improvement.

For concerns of a more serious nature (i.e., threats, abusive language, or physical contact - or any conduct that is detracting from the positive learning environment of the school), the Head of School will be notified and will determine the appropriate course of action.

In the event a child demonstrates consistent behavior concerns, we may choose to develop and implement a behavior management plan. This plan would be developed in consultation parents and appropriate faculty and administrators.

### *Suspension*

More serious behavioral problems warrant the involvement of the Head of School. And very rarely, the consequences could include suspension (either in-school or out-of-school). This consequence is reserved for the most serious offenses or for the most chronic problems. In-school suspensions may be advised by teachers and authorized by the Head of School; only the Head of School may authorize an out-of-school suspension. Suspended students are expected to keep up with their schoolwork, and may be penalized for work missed while suspended.

### *Expulsion*

If a student is unable or unwilling to live by the school expectations, that student subjects him/herself to the possibility of being expelled. After consultation with the parents, the student, and the appropriate faculty and staff members, the Head may conclude that all corrective avenues have been exhausted and move to expel the student. There is no appeal process for expulsion.

### **Dress Code**

We believe that pride in one's appearance is an important lesson to be learned. The primary responsibility for school dress and grooming, however, rests with the parents of our students. We ask that parents use the following guidelines in helping students come to school properly attired:

1. Clothing and jewelry should be appropriate for school. Clothing should be in good repair, neat, and clean.
2. No footwear that damages school floors may be worn. Shoes with wheels are prohibited. Toddler and Children's House students and those in Grades 1-4 may not wear flip-flops. Open shoes that can easily fall off are strongly discouraged as they present a distraction in the classroom and a potential hazard on the playground. Students must be able to move up and down stairs and through the building safely.
3. No article of clothing may be worn that displays ads or promotions for alcoholic beverages, tobacco or any other drug, or that advocates violence or discrimination against any institution, individual, racial, ethnic or cultural group, or displays inappropriate, offensive, or sexual innuendos.
4. Bare midriffs, tank tops, muscle shirts (boys) and transparent shirts or blouses, and spaghetti-strap tops (girls) are not permitted. Undergarments should not be visible. Revealing clothing is prohibited (plunging necklines, bare backs, and exposed midriffs/navels).
5. Hats, caps, or head covers of any kind are not to be worn in academic settings, unless for religious reasons.
6. Coats, jackets, and other outdoor wear are to be kept in the lockers or cubbies until dismissal.
7. Shorts are allowed, but must be appropriate and in good taste. Shorts, skirts and dresses must be at least as long as the tips of the students' fingers when arms are placed against their sides.

The dress code is in effect for all school-sponsored activities. If a student is in conflict with this code, an opportunity will be provided for him/her to change into something acceptable. If not, the student will be required to wear clothing provided by the School.

### **Articles Prohibited in School**

Problems arise when students bring articles that are hazardous to the safety of others or that interfere in some way with school procedure. Such items include but are not limited to: fireworks, toy guns, water pistols, sling shots, knives, beepers, pagers, and laser pointers. If any of these items are brought to school, they may be confiscated and returned later to the student or parent. **Any item that can reasonably be considered a weapon will be confiscated and reported to the appropriate authorities.**

## **Personal Property/Valuables**

Students are discouraged from bringing valuables to school. Large amounts of money and other items not directly related to school should not be left in lockers. The School is not responsible for personal property lost or stolen.

## **Lost and Found**

Items that are left behind or found throughout the building will be placed in our *Lost and Found*, typically located in the cafeteria. Parents and/or students are encouraged to look there for anything they are missing as soon as it becomes apparent. Periodically those items will be displayed in the lobby so families can identify their belongings. After a period of time, lost and found articles will be donated to charity.

## **Wireless Telephones/Personal Electronic Devices**

While the widespread use of cell phones and personal electronic devices is recognized, a student may not use cell phones, portable gaming systems, headphones, iPods, MP3 players, smart watches, or hand held electronics of any sort in school without specific teacher permission. These items are to be stored and turned off upon entering the school building in the morning until the student is dismissed and exits the building at the end of the day. Violation will result in the confiscation of the item and parents will be contacted to determine a return date. Please refer to the acceptable use policy regarding use of smart phones and computers.

## **STUDENT LIFE**

### **Snacks and Lunch**

***All lunches and snacks must comply with Ratner's nut-free environment. Please check ingredients of packaged foods carefully.***

Snack time is handled differently in each classroom. Please check with your child's teacher regarding their policy. Afternoon snack is served daily in "We Care." Students in Grades 1-8 may bring a healthy snack to eat during a designated time of the school day. We do encourage a healthy breakfast.

Students may carry a water bottle, but no other beverages are permitted during class times.

Students have the option to buy or bring a lunch. The lunches the School provides are nut-free. A child may be signed up to buy lunch every day, or families may opt to be occasional buyers. An online menu and ordering form is made available on the school website in the middle of each month so selections can be ordered for the following month. All lunch ordering must be done using the online form.

When changes occur in the lunch menu, we will attempt to inform you in a timely manner. We ask for your understanding when substitutions to the published menu occur unexpectedly.

Be aware that we cannot heat up food nor can we provide refrigeration. Well-balanced, nutritious lunches are the goal. Beverages should be selected for their nutritional value. Soda and sports drinks are discouraged.

As a means of protecting our students with food allergies, we do not allow children to share food. If a child comes to school without a lunch, we can provide a healthy meal. If there is enough of the menu item available, the child will receive that lunch – otherwise, they will be given an alternate selection. Parents will be billed for the meal.

### **Field Trips**

We take advantage of the many educational opportunities in Cleveland. Each year several field trips are planned to the local museums, the Cleveland Play House, the Cleveland Orchestra and other places of interest.

All field trips are organized in advance and parents are notified of details prior to the trip. Students are expected to stay with the group and follow all bus and safety procedures. Busing is provided by Orange Schools or approved private busing companies.

Students in Grades 4 through 8 participate in overnight trips. These trips will be explained in detail at parent meetings before they take place.

### **Student Government**

Students in grades 3-8 have an opportunity to serve as Student Government representatives. Student Government officers are elected from those who wish to serve in Grades 6-8. Members meet periodically under the direction of faculty advisors to plan some school events and dedicate work to a service project.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are a special time and may be celebrated in a number of ways. It is best to check with each homeroom teacher regarding the policy. In an effort to be mindful of everyone's feelings it is our policy that invitations to parties or other social gatherings be handled from home.

### **Outdoor Play**

We encourage outdoor play/recess. Please send warm coats, hats, gloves, boots and snow pants for safe winter outdoor play. Children will not be taken outside if the wind chill is below 20 degrees or if it is raining, icy or stormy. We strongly recommend keeping an extra set of clothes in your child's cubby/locker, in the event clothes get wet or muddy on the playground.

### **Napping and Resting**

For Toddler and Children's House students requiring a nap, a quiet napping room is available. Children should bring blankets and pillows from home that will be sent home weekly for laundering.

## **MEDICAL**

**ODJFS Child Medical Statement Form:** Parents of all students are required to submit this form (found on our website), completed and signed by a physician, providing a vaccination, immunization and general health history. These records are to be updated yearly from the date of the last exam on the form. Health records and personal data including emergency forms must be on file **prior to the first day of classes**. Please see Appendix A for full policy regarding medical form requirements.

### **Medication**

State law mandates that schools can only dispense medication (prescription or over-the-counter) when the proper paperwork is on file. These forms are available in the Front Office. New forms must be submitted each school year. Any changes in your child's medication instructions (such as dosage, time of dosage, etc.) must be made in writing on a new form, signed by the attending physician. Prescription medications must be in current prescription containers indicating student's name, dosage, and time(s) to take the medicine. If your child takes less than a whole tablet, please split the pills at home. If your child takes liquid medication, please provide an accurate measuring cup. In addition, children may not carry any medication to school. This is to prevent the inappropriate or accidental dispensing of medication to your child or to another child. Please deliver medication for your child to the Front Office in person. Please monitor the amount of medication your child has in school so that you can provide refills when necessary. We will do our best to let you know when supplies are getting low.

Over the counter medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, dosage, and time(s) to take the medication. Students may not carry any of these items in their pockets, backpacks, lunch boxes, etc.

Students in grades 1 through 8 may carry inhalers only if a completed Asthma Inhaler Authorization Form is on file in the Front Office.

With the proper forms signed and on file, students in grades 1 through 8 may be able to obtain acetaminophen when necessary. When this occurs, we will send home notification that will include the date, time, and dosage administered.

### **Illness**

Please use your good judgment when sending your child to school. It is in everyone's best interest if you keep your child home when he/she displays symptoms that are not typical of good health.

Our staff is trained by a Registered Nurse to recognize symptoms of illness and will call you at the first sign that your child needs to be sent home. It is very important that you pick up your sick child as soon as possible. Sick children will be isolated in the office. For emergencies, serious illness or injury, staff will follow procedures as approved by parents on emergency forms.

Parents will be notified via email if a classmate's illness has resulted in exposure to a communicable disease (strep, etc.).

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, please keep him/her home:

- Diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Severe cough
- Severe cold
- Temperature of 100° with other symptoms, or 101° or higher.
- Sore throat and/or difficulty swallowing
- Difficulty breathing
- Red, watery, burning, itching eyes
- Vomiting within past 24 hours
- Lice/nits in hair
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Untreated infected skin patch
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck
- Unusual spots or rash

The following guidelines should dictate when to send your child back to school:

- Children should be fever-free, without the use of fever reducing medication, for at least 24 hours.
- Children who have had throat cultures may not return until the results are known. If the culture is positive, your child must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.
- For conjunctivitis ("Pink eye"), your child must be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours (if bacterial) OR, there should be no discharge present (if viral).
- If lice/nits have been detected, your child must be treated and nit-free before returning to school.

### **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

All precautions are taken to assure the physical safety, health, and protection of the students.

#### **Emergencies**

The Lillian and Betty Ratner Montessori School has several procedures to follow in the event that an emergency would occur during school hours. In order to prepare children for the need to evacuate, the School conducts monthly fire drills and periodic tornado drills. Should the School need to be evacuated, our emergency destination is the Pepper Pike City Hall which is located across Shaker Boulevard. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible to pick up their children. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contacts listed in your child's emergency information.

In the unlikely event of an environmental threat or a threat of violence, the staff will secure the children in the safest possible location, contact and follow the directions given by the proper authorities and contact parents as soon as the situation allows.

In case of an accident, parents are notified immediately, and, when serious injury occurs, Emergency Transport (911) is called to take the child to the nearest hospital. Please be vigilant about updating records if your contact information should change.

### **Reporting Suspected Abuse**

In the State of Ohio all educators are obligated by law to report suspected cases of abuse or neglect of a child to the Children Services Board of the County Department of Welfare. Any report to the County Department of Welfare is made with the goal to protect the child.

### **Entering and Exiting the Building**

In an effort to ensure the safety of our students, parents and visitors are to enter and exit the building via the front doors only.

### **Parents/Visitors**

Anyone other than school personnel or students must report directly to the Front Office, sign in on the visitor log upon entry, and sign out when leaving. Any items that need to be sent to students should be left in the office for delivery to classrooms.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Parent Participation**

Parents are encouraged to become involved with the activities at The Ratner Montessori School. The Ratner Parent Organization (RPO) coordinates parent involvement and is always eager to have more volunteers. Parents who want to get involved should contact [RPO@theratnerschool.org](mailto:RPO@theratnerschool.org). More information can be found on the school website.

### **Parent Communication with the School**

Should parents have a need to resolve an issue related to their child's school experience, the first point of contact is always the child's teacher. The next points of appropriate contact are: the Head of School, and the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

### **Fundraising**

Fundraising is essential in the life of any independent school. Tuition revenue at The Lillian and Betty Ratner Montessori School, as in all independent schools, does not cover the full cost of educating our students. Opportunities for charitable contributions are offered as a way to bridge the gap, and as a way to offer tax-deductible options to paying tuition.

How you can help:

- Contribute generously to our Annual Fund and other yearly fundraising initiatives. Your gift immediately goes to work to benefit every student and help to close the tuition gap while providing funds for financial aid, staff development, and special student projects.
- Explore matching gift programs at your work. In this way you can double your gift to our school.
- Become an active volunteer in any of our fundraising initiatives or educational experiences – a great way to meet other parents and help out our School!

### **Computers**

Students at The Ratner Montessori School are given full access to the Internet, and significant access to school computers. Students in grades 4-8 will be given a one-to-one computer, network accounts and e-mail accounts. Access to these powerful resources and educational tools is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will

result in a cancellation of access, loss of computer use privileges, and/or other disciplinary action. Because computers are a community resource, their use is governed by certain rules and responsibilities.

#### STUDENTS MAY NOT USE NETWORK OR INTERNET ACCESS TO DO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. Access, upload, download, view, or distribute pornographic, sexually explicit, obscene, or otherwise provocative material or material of an excessively violent or hateful nature.
2. Use obscene, abusive, or sexually explicit language.
3. Violate any school rule or any local, state, or federal law.
4. Access another person's information without permission.
5. Violate copyright or use the intellectual property of another individual or organization.
6. Use the network or Internet access for financial gain or commercial activity.
7. Post malicious or insulting comments about other students or people on a web site, via email, by blogging, or in any other fashion using the Internet. We consider this rule valid both at school and at home.

#### IN ADDITION, COMPUTER USERS MUST

1. Respect the process of education and show loyalty to the School. Report violations to computer administrators.
2. Respect private property. Do not share any network passwords with anyone else. Do not login as another person or attempt to change existing work files of other students.
3. Show respect for school property. Deliberate damage to school computers in any way will be treated as a serious disciplinary infraction and will result in action that may include paying the cost of any repairs.
4. Respect the operation of computers. Installation or addition of any software to school computers without teacher permission is strictly forbidden. Modification of any software or software settings – including backgrounds and screen savers – is not permitted except at the direction of teachers.
5. Remember that the school's computers are for educational purposes. Do **NOT** play games, except as part of a classroom activity or as instructed by a teacher.

#### Parent Visitations

While we welcome parents to partner at Ratner and visit classrooms or other areas of school, every effort should be made to respect the learning environment and to not interrupt instruction and learning opportunities for students. If a parent would like to visit their child's class or speak with a teacher, the teacher or Front Office should be contacted **in advance** to schedule an appointment. Morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times are very busy for teachers, and do not offer the best opportunity for parent-teacher communication.

#### Special Services

*Testing:* A licensed psychologist consults with teachers on a regular basis. Upon teacher or parent request, the psychologist may also observe an individual student within the classroom setting, offering suggestions to help the child be successful, or to provide testing when additional assessment is necessary.

*Speech, Language, and Hearing:* Speech, language and hearing screenings are provided to all kindergarten students and students new to grades 1 – 8 at The Ratner Montessori School. Speech/Language support services are available to students in kindergarten through 8th grade who are determined to be in need of intervention.

*Outside Evaluations:* All evaluations requested by outside professionals should be given to the student's teacher. Forms will be returned directly to the requesting professional. Parents must provide a mailign address for the requesting professional.

*Intervention Services:* Intervention services are provided to students by the classroom teacher, intervention specialists, or Ratner's Speech and Language Therapist, as outlined in the Ratner Learning Plan, or if a need is determined by staff. The Ratner Learning Plan is based on a review of the IEP, other testing information, and supporting data.

*School Counselor:* Ratner's school counselor provides school counseling services that fulfill the American School Counseling Association's domains in academic, personal/social, and career development.

## CENTER PARENT INFORMATION

### Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Center Parent Information Required By Ohio Administrative Code.

The center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing child care are available for review at the center.

The administrator and each employee of the center is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the center shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent or guardian shall notify the administrator of his/her presence.

The administrator's hours of availability and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

It is unlawful for the center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>

Appendix C  
JFS Rule 5101:2-12-07

## ADDITIONAL STATE-REQUIRED INFORMATION

### STAFF-CHILD RATIOS, AGE GROUPING AND MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE

AGE OF CHILDREN	CHILD CARE STAFF MEMBER / CHILD RATIO	MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE
YOUNG TODDLERS (at least 18 months and less than 2 ½ years)	1:7	14
OLDER TODDLERS (at least 2 ½ years and less than 3 years)	1:8	16
YOUNG PRESCHOOLERS (at least 3 years and less than 4 years)	1:12	24
OLDER PRESCHOOLERS (at least 4 years and not enrolled in or eligible to be enrolled in Kindergarten)	1:14	28
YOUNG SCHOOLAGERS (enrolled in or eligible to be enrolled in Kindergarten or above and less than 11 years)	1:18	36

### LOCATION OF ONSITE SPACE FOR MOTHERS TO BREASTFEED AND/OR PUMP BREASTMILK

The Montessori Pre-Primary Director's Office is a designated Lactation Station, available as needed for mothers requiring this space.

**Accrediting Agencies:**

*Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS)*  
*Ohio Department of Education (ODE)*

**Memberships:**

*National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)*  
*Ohio Association of Independent Schools (OAIS)*  
*Cleveland Council of Independent Schools (CCIS)*  
*American Montessori Society (AMS)*

The Lillian and Betty Ratner Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, disability, age or ancestry in the administration of its admission policies or financial aid program.



The Lillian and Betty

**Ratner Montessori School**  
Curious. Creative. Caring.

# 2019-2020 CALENDAR

## AUGUST

Early Bird and We Care Begins for Grades 1 – 8	Monday, August 19
Orientation for NEW Grades 1- 8 Students and ALL Grades 1, 4 and 7 Students	Monday, August 19 – Tuesday, August 20
Toddler/Children’s House Parent Orientation Night	Monday, August 19, 7pm
Orientation for ALL Grades 1- 8 Students	Wednesday, August 21 – Friday, August 23
Toddler/Children’s House NEW STUDENT Orientation	Wednesday, August 21 – Friday, August 23
Toddler/Children’s House Orientation – ALL STUDENTS	Monday, August 26 –Friday, August 30

## SEPTEMBER

SCHOOL CLOSED – Labor Day	Monday, September 2
Toddler/Children’s House Regular Schedule Begins	Tuesday, September 3
Toddler/Children’s House Early Bird and We Care Begins	Tuesday, September 3
All School Ice Cream Social	Thursday, September 5, 6pm
Grandparents Luncheon	Friday, September 6
Picture Day	Thursday, September 26
SCHOOL CLOSED – Rosh Hashanah	Monday, September 30

## OCTOBER

SCHOOL CLOSED – Rosh Hashanah	Tuesday, October 1
SCHOOL CLOSED – Yom Kippur	Wednesday, October 9
SCHOOL CLOSED – Sukkot	Monday, October 14
High School Panel, 6-8pm	Wednesday, October 16
SCHOOL CLOSED – Simchat Torah	Tuesday, October 22

## NOVEMBER

End 1 <sup>st</sup> Grading Period	Monday, November 4
Picture Retake Day	Thursday, November 7
SCHOOL CLOSED – Parent Conferences	Thursday, November 21 (Conference times: 12pm – 7pm)
SCHOOL CLOSED – Parent Conferences	Friday, November 22 (Conference times: 8am – 4pm)
SCHOOL CLOSED – Thanksgiving	Wednesday - Friday, November 27-29

## DECEMBER

Winter Band Concert	Thursday, December 5, 7pm
Toddler/Children’s House VIP Day	Thursday, December 19 (Toddler/Children’s House Students Dismiss at 11:30am)
SCHOOL CLOSED – In-Service	Friday, December 20
SCHOOL CLOSED – Winter Break	Monday, December 23 through Friday, January 3

## JANUARY

All Classes Resume	Monday, January 6
SCHOOL CLOSED – Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Monday, January 20

## FEBRUARY

End 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grading Period	Thursday, February 13
SCHOOL CLOSED – In Service	Friday, February 14
SCHOOL CLOSED – Presidents’ Day	Monday, February 17

## MARCH

SCHOOL CLOSED – Parent Conferences	Thursday, March 5 (Conference times: 12pm – 7pm)
SCHOOL CLOSED – Parent Conferences	Friday, March 6 (Conference times: 8am – 4pm)
SCHOOL CLOSED – Spring Break	Monday, March 23 – Friday, March 27

## APRIL

No After-School Programs or We Care, 3:30 Dismissal	Wednesday
SCHOOL CLOSED – Passover	Thursday, April 9
SCHOOL CLOSED – Good Friday	Friday, April 10

## MAY

Taste of Diversity Potluck & Middle School Band Concert	Thursday, May 15, 5pm (potluck) and 7pm (Band Concert)
SCHOOL CLOSED – Memorial Day	Monday, May 25
End 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grading Period	Thursday, May 28
SCHOOL CLOSED - Shavuot	Friday, May 29

## JUNE

Toddler/Children’s House Last Day and Picnics	Tuesday, June 2 - Dismissal and Picnic at 11:30 a.m.
Kindergarten Celebration	Tuesday, June 2, 6pm
Grades 1 - 8 We Care Ends	Wednesday, June 3
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation	Wednesday, June 3, 6:30pm
Field Day/ Grades 1 - 8 Last Day/Early Bird Ends	Thursday, June 4, Dismissal at 11:45 a.m.

**NOTE: ADDITIONAL IN-SERVICE DAYS MAY BE SCHEDULED AS NEEDED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR. THOSE DATES WILL BE COMMUNICATED TO PARENTS AS SOON AS THEY ARE SCHEDULED.**



## REQUIRED PHYSICAL FORMS

In compliance with State-mandated physical examination and immunization requirements all students entering *The Ratner Montessori School* must have a physical examination by a doctor.

To ensure adequate protection and a positive start to the new school year for all our students, the school administration asks that ALL required physical examinations and immunization records be submitted to the school with all other required forms by August 1, prior to the start of school. (Please make a copy of all submitted exam forms to keep for your own records.)

The doctor's form (ODJFS Child Medical Statement) may be picked up from Ratner's front office or enrollment office, or downloaded from the school's website: [www.theratnerschool.org/handbook-and-forms/](http://www.theratnerschool.org/handbook-and-forms/)

Due to the high demand for medical appointments with local physicians, it is recommended that you schedule appointments as soon as possible.

Following are the physical examination and immunization guidelines required by school policy and State law:

1. All health examinations must be dated within one year before entering *The Ratner Montessori School*.
2. All health examinations must be dated within one year of entering school when a student transfers from another Ohio school district.
3. Health examinations are required whenever an out-of-state student first enrolls in *The Ratner Montessori School*, regardless of the date of enrollment.
4. *The Ratner Montessori School* recommends all children follow the State of Ohio Vaccination schedule. Immunization records must be submitted to the school (or file an exemption), with the ODJFS Child Medical Statement form.

Failure to comply with the above requirements by August 1st can result in the student's exclusion from school until the required completed health forms are presented to the school.

Please contact the Enrollment Office or Main Office if you have questions.  
216 464 0033



## **2019-2020 FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ENROLLED FAMILIES**

### **OPTIONS FOR PAYMENT**

**OPTION A:** Full Pay; One payment for 100% full tuition on or before 7/1/2019. Full payment results in a discount in the amount of \$250 per child enrolled. Discount will be applied to final invoice.

**OPTIONS B, C, and D** require mandatory enrollment in FACTS Tuition Management. Sign up required by July 1, 2019. FACTS will charge a \$35 enrollment fee. FACTS will assess a 2.7% credit card fee for payments. No fees for ACH- bank withdrawals

- **OPTION B:** Two payments as follows, 60% of tuition due on or before 7/15/2019 and 40% balance due by 1/15/2020. ***A late fee of \$50 per month plus 1.5% interest on balance will be assessed by the School on payments made more than five days late.***
- **OPTION C:** Quarterly payments as follows, 4 equal installments to be paid on 7/15/19, 10/15/19, 1/15/20 and 4/15/20. ***A late fee of \$50 per month plus 1.5% interest on balance will be assessed by the School on payments made more than five days late.***
- **OPTION D:** Monthly payments as follows: Ten equal installments due on the 15th of each of these months: Aug. 2019, Sept. 2019, Oct. 2019, Nov. 2019, Dec. 2019, Jan. 2020, Feb. 2020, March 2020, April 2020, and May 2020. ***A late fee of \$50 per month plus 1.5% Interest on balance will be assessed by the School on payments made more than five days late.***

The Enrollment Deposit of \$500, which will be credited to the Student's account, must accompany the completed enrollment agreement.

\$250 discount, if full pay, does not apply to any administrative fees or school trips.

All discounts applied directly to tuition costs.

### **DELINQUENT ACCOUNT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:**

All families with delinquent accounts will receive written and in-person communication from Enrollment and/or Finance Offices. If family becomes delinquent in FACTS, they will be immediately contacted and must make payment arrangements with the finance office within 15 days. If the family does not contact finance office and/or fails to make payment within 15 days of delinquency, the family will be notified in writing and in person that payment must be received upon notice, or the following will take place:

- Child cannot return to school until account made current.
- If the account is not resolved within 30 days, the student will be withdrawn from The Ratner Montessori School and the account will be sent to collections.
- All payments made on delinquent accounts are subject to a 1.5% interest charge until paid in full.

### **REGARDING RE-ENROLLMENT:**

- A deadline of March 25th is set to make accounts current.
- If the account is not current, then the school will not complete the family's re-enrollment or evaluate the family for indexed tuition.
- If student is in 8th grade, transcripts and final records will not be released to high schools until tuition paid.