

# New Leaf PREP ACADEMY

## PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024/2025 SCHOOL YEAR

Effective Date: August 23, 2024



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## Foreword from the Head of School

So you're exploring education options for your child, or perhaps you're captured by the Montessori Method; we may already be more alike than you know! My name is Paige Christoff. I am the Founder and CEO of New Leaf Prep Academy and a mother to three girls with an undeniable passion for doing what I can to make the world a better place. I hold a bachelor's degree in environmental design from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, have over ten years of experience in the education field, and have run a successful Montessori-based private preschool for over five years.

I wholeheartedly believe that providing a Montessori & Nature-Based K-8 public school option for students right here in the Green Bay Area is my calling. Although I sometimes feel the mountain is too steep, I step back, knowing that the climb will be worth it for my children and the community! The Montessori Method has fascinated me from the beginning, but the day I visited a school and saw it in action was when I felt a sense of clarity like never before. I have been researching and better aligning my preschool with the methodology ever since. I have seen huge improvements in the attitudes, academic, and social/emotional growth of our school's young students. But my journey is far from over. During these three years, we have received copious interest and community support for a like-minded school for students beyond preschool, validating my desire to keep pressing to change the education landscape for our community. Through the community's support, educators, and parents, New Leaf Prep Academy was born!

But we're not just another school; I can promise you that. Every aspect of our school was challenged and looked at from multiple angles before being solidified to ensure it best serves every single student who enters our doors. If we do everything like other schools, what would be the point? New Leaf Prep Academy's Curriculum focuses on the whole child through the highly researched, hands-on Montessori Method and nature-based learning. Hands-on learning is a proven and exciting way to keep students engaged and increase retention. Naturally, New Leaf Prep Academy, through the use of the Montessori Method, curates critical thinkers, problem solvers, & self-motivated learners and will be adaptive to meet the needs of each student individually.

Our curriculum enables students to make sense of the world around them without gaining skills at the expense of actual knowledge through the practice of real-world community-based learning. Our holistic approach to learning examines all avenues that will affect lifelong student success, including each child's academic skills, such as math and literacy skills, and their social, emotional, and cognitive skills through individualized education. A minimalist environment free of technological distractions aids in calming students' minds and bodies and enables them to focus on the lessons and material at hand. Students will be allowed, nope, actually encouraged, to get dirty, make mistakes, and safely learn through trial and error.

We are honored that you are entrusting us with such an important role in your child's life! As a mother, I am relieved, and as a founder, I am inspired and driven to empower students and partner with families. Mahatma Gandhi once said, "You must be the change you wish to see in the world." I have never felt more charged up to create change!

Paige Christoff



Chief Education Officer  
New Leaf Prep Academy

## School Contact Information

Main Office:	920-455-0292
Fax Number:	920-455-0289
School Address:	360 Ams Ct, Howard, WI 54313
General Email:	contact@newleafprepacademy.org
Attendance:	attendance@newleafprepacademy.org
Website:	<a href="https://newleafprepacademy.org">https://newleafprepacademy.org</a>

## Daily Bell Schedule

Before School Care	6:30 am- 8:00 am
Doors Open	7:40 am- 7:50 am
Classes Begin	8:00 am
Student Dismissal	3:15 pm
After School Care	3:15 pm- 5:00 pm

## Administrative Directory

POSITION	NAME	EMAIL
Secretary	Mrs. Freeborg	contact@newleafprepacademy.org
Governance Board	All Members	board@newleafprepacademy.org
Chief Education Officer	Mrs. Christoff	paige.christoff@newleafprepacademy.org
Head of Upper School Upper Elementary-Secondary, Specials	Mr. Bennett	michael.bennett@newleafprepacademy.org
Head of Lower School Primary- Lower Elementary	Mrs. Moll	ashley.moll@newleafprepacademy.org
Facilities and Finance	Mr. Christoff	matthew.christoff@newleafprepacademy.org

## Mission

New Leaf Prep Academy provides a safe and self-directed environment for children to learn and grow to their full potential through enriching experiences! Our Academy incorporates nature-inspired, self-directed learning environments, a high-fidelity Montessori curriculum taught by qualified and passionate teachers, Nature-based learning, healthy and organic food, and an eco-friendly, toxic-free environment. Every aspect of New Leaf Prep Academy was meticulously planned with your child's best interests in mind. Our exceptional teaching guides and prepared studios cater to each child's individual needs and help them grow and expand mentally, emotionally, and socially at their own pace. New Leaf Prep Academy places great importance on assisting each child in understanding their importance as a steward of the environment and participating members of their community.

Hands-on learning is a proven way to keep students engaged and increase retention, ultimately curating critical thinkers, problem solvers, self-motivated learners, and involved community members. A Montessori and Nature-Based education at New Leaf Prep Academy allows students to develop grit and become intrinsically motivated so that they have the tools and abilities to succeed at whatever they put their minds to. In addition, students will develop a deeply rooted understanding of their importance in the world, driving them to contribute to their community in a personally meaningful way. They have the opportunity to ask questions and learn from their mistakes, creating an educational experience that is deeply meaningful and rooted in practical understanding.

As a charter school for students in Kindergarten through 8th grade, New Leaf Prep Academy provides an innovative child-centered public school option for families within the Howard and Suamico communities and beyond. Testimonials from parents, community members, and students, as well as achievement data from the Forward Exam, attendance data, and reports of discipline referrals, indicate that area elementary and middle school students--especially the educationally disadvantaged students--need NLPA. The physical, emotional, social, and intellectual health of the community's children make this option an educational imperative.

Historically, area families have only been able to access the benefits of a Montessori education through private religious, tuition-based schools in the neighboring communities of Green Bay and De Pere. None of these private, sectarian schools serve students beyond Grade 5. While parents in our area may choose from a number of public schools through the Wisconsin Open Enrollment program, public Montessori education is not widely available or accessible. The nearest public Montessori school to serve elementary grade students is in Appleton, WI--more than 66 round-trip miles, on average, for families in the Howard and Suamico communities. The nearest Montessori charter schools to serve middle school students are in Madison and Milwaukee (274 and 244 roundtrip miles, respectively). NLPA is strategically located in the geographic boundaries of the Howard-Suamico School District. This location, just off US Highway 41 and US Highway 29, increases the opportunity for

children to access the high-quality, individualized instruction of NLPA and expands the opportunity for families to be engaged in the NLPA school community.

NLPA's mission to provide Montessori and nature-based learning experiences will reduce and eliminate the achievement gap of educationally disadvantaged students, providing them with increased opportunities to learn to care for themselves and others and develop social and emotional skills. The Montessori method is effective in closing achievement gaps as the individualized curriculum is customized to support the strengths of each student and is scaffolded to address their needs. In a longitudinal study titled "Montessori Preschool Elevates and Equalizes Child Outcomes: A Longitudinal Study," conducted by individuals from the Department of Psychology and Department of Education, found that although test scores started at the same base point between traditionally educated children and children taught through the Montessori Method, over time the children educated through the Montessori Method made greater strides in academic achievement, social understanding, and mastery orientation.

At New Leaf Prep Academy, each student learns at their own pace and time frame. Montessori honors and respects learners' choices and promotes increased executive function, time management, problem-solving, and conflict resolution. These college and career readiness skills, along with the increased academic performance, will ensure that NLPA students will be prepared to be thought leaders and decision-makers in high school, college, workplaces, and communities.

New Leaf Prep Academy implements the Montessori curriculum and whole-child approach to education. NLPA's curriculum is based on the highly researched Montessori Philosophy and will help children to develop as confident leaders, problem solvers, and self-driven, successful individuals. In a longitudinal study titled "Montessori Preschool Elevates and Equalizes Child Outcomes: A Longitudinal Study," conducted by individuals from the Department of Psychology and Department of Education, found that although test scores started at the same base point between traditionally educated children and children taught through the Montessori Method, over time the children educated through the Montessori Method made more significant strides in academic achievement, social understanding, and mastery orientation.

New Leaf Prep Academy takes a culturally responsive, or assets, approach to children's learning by using individual interests as the basis for program development and supporting unique learning needs by "following the child." That is, students' lived experiences are valued and used as the basis for carefully designed child-centered learning. NLPA's environment is a safe space for children to freely explore and learn from their surroundings to support the development of independence, confidence, self-discipline, mutual respect, social connection, and stewardship of the environment.

The Montessori Method was designed to align with the biological development of the child, therefore characteristics associated with the method stem from stages of mental, physical or emotional development. Characteristics unique to a Montessori school encompass an

understanding of sensitive periods, planes of development, false fatigue, and the need for independence & responsibility.

## **Montessori History**

Maria Montessori was an Italian physician, educator, and innovator acclaimed for her education philosophy, The Montessori Method, which builds on the way children learn naturally. In 1896, she graduated as one of Italy's very first female physicians. Maria's early medical practice focused on psychiatry. She later developed an interest in education, attending classes on pedagogy and immersing herself in educational theory. Her studies led her to observe and call into question the prevailing methods of teaching children. Eventually, Dr. Maria Montessori Utilized scientific observation and experience gained from her earlier work with young children, designed unique learning materials for children, many of which are still in use in Montessori classrooms today, and created a classroom environment that fostered the children's natural desire to learn.

The Montessori Method was established through scientific observation and stresses the development of a child's initiative and natural abilities. With more than 300 public schools in the United States using the Montessori Method, 150 of them being charter schools, there is a great deal of support for the method's success. Our curriculum is based on the highly researched Montessori Philosophy. Our curriculum helps children develop through a holistic, whole-child approach to create confident leaders, problem solvers, and successful self-driven individuals! Many successful & accomplished CEOs, business leaders, artists, and innovators received education in Montessori Schools and often credit their success in part to the methodology. This includes people such as Larry Page and Sergei Brin, the founders of Google; Jeff Bezos, the CEO of Amazon; Grammy Award-winning artist Taylor Swift; inventor Thomas Edison, and Jimmy Wales, the founder of Wikipedia. Even Harvard credits Montessori as an essential building block for success in later life!

## **Mixed-Age Groupings**

The Montessori Method utilizes 3-year age groupings based on the scientifically observed sensitive periods. Age groupings are based on the Planes of Development identified by Dr. Maria Montessori. Multi-age groupings enable younger children to learn from older children and experience new challenges through observation; older children reinforce their learning by teaching concepts they have already mastered, develop leadership skills, and serve as role models. Because each child's work is individual, children progress at their own pace; there is cooperation rather than competition between the ages. This arrangement mirrors the real world, in which individuals work and socialize with people of all ages and dispositions. Academic rigor and an emphasis on group work in Elementary classes promote collaboration and community. The complex, outward-facing activities such as service learning projects undertaken by adolescents in Secondary classrooms help students become empathetic, peaceful, resourceful, independent, and kind.

## **Sensitive Periods**

Three-year age groupings allow students to function within the classroom as leaders and work in a way that supports their sensitivities. American Montessori International states, "A

child in a sensitive period is believed to exhibit spontaneous concentration when engaged in an activity that matches a particular sensitivity." During a child's sensitive period, they become intrinsically motivated, and exhibit increased concentration as they work towards physical, biological, mental, or social independence. By honoring children's sensitive periods, our trained teachers will excel at assisting children to develop a deep love of learning based on their strengths and interests as associated with their observed biological developments.

## **Planes of Development**

The theoretical underpinning for Montessori's approach are the Four Planes of Development. At each plane, the associated human tendencies and characteristics inform how to prepare an environment for optimal learning. As described by Dr. Maria Montessori, "I have found that in his development, the child passes through certain phases, each of which has its own particular needs. The characteristics of each are so different that certain psychologists have described the passages from one phase to another as 'rebirths'" (The Four Planes of Education, page 1). Maria observed four distinct periods of growth, development, and learning that a human being progresses through: ages 0 – 6 (the period of the "absorbent mind"); 6 – 12 (the period of reasoning and abstraction); 12 – 18 (when adolescents construct the "social self," developing moral values and becoming emotionally independent); and 18 – 24 years (when young adults construct an understanding of the self and seek to know their place in the world). Cohesive with the methodology, our studio age-groupings correlate with the Planes of Development.

## **Work Cycles**

A work cycle, or work period, is a two-and-a-half to three-hour long uninterrupted period of work in the morning. The last hour of the work period is typically when children are most likely to choose challenging work and concentrate intensely. The Montessori characteristic of work cycles, meaning long interrupted periods of work time as determined by the American Montessori Society, allows students to break through false fatigue and tap into deep concentration and understanding that is disrupted in traditional public school settings due to many transitions through the day. Furthermore, the interdisciplinary Montessori approach, made possible by work cycles, gives students a more profound sense of their purpose and the world's interconnectivity. During the work cycle students receive small group or individual work presentations, choose works, and work at their own pace. Children are expected to choose challenging work, do their best, and record goals and work progress in their work plans as developmentally appropriate. During the work cycle, teachers, often referred to as guides in a Montessori setting, present work and observe students. Observation in a Montessori setting is a crucial component that allows teachers to individualize work across all subject areas based on students' observed needs, struggles, interests, and accomplishments.

## **Freedom within Limits**

Given the freedom and support to question, probe deeply, and make connections, Montessori students become confident, enthusiastic, self-directed learners. They can think critically, work collaboratively, and act boldly—a skill set for the 21st century. Montessori



environments are carefully and thoughtfully designed to encourage children to move about freely and choose their own work within reasonable limits of appropriate behavior. This concept of freedom within limits enables children to exercise their own free will while ensuring that their chosen activities are respectful of others and their environment, working as responsible members of their studio community. Through practical exercise, they learn that actions have consequences and that many rights come with inherent responsibilities. Students develop independence through the freedoms and responsibilities they are given within our studios, as developmentally appropriate. From simple, loving interactions and through lessons in practical skills and independence, Montessori students learn to take care of themselves and their environment and to be helpful to others. They wash tables, organize shelves, prepare their own meals, and assist younger children. In addition to mastering real-life skills, they come to see themselves as valued members of the community.

By and large, the skills of most Montessori children are on par with or above the academic skills of other children. Often, children from Montessori environments exhibit maturity above that of their peers. This is generally because Montessori students have been allowed to make independent choices early on within the context of a multi-age peer group. Additionally, Montessori students tend to exhibit strong citizenship and leadership skills. They are accustomed to being responsible and contributing members of their communities. Generally, teachers in other environments appreciate the children's or adolescents' leadership skills and self-motivation and are impressed by their independent learning, organization, and time management skills. Carrying the Montessori Method with them, these learners thrive.

## Vision

*Revolutionizing education  
to cultivate lifelong self-driven  
critical thinkers &  
problem solvers.*

## Goals & Objectives

- To foster and inspire a love of learning through the use of hands-on Montessori teaching methods and nature-based enriching experiences
- To help students develop their self-confidence through the existence of a positive nurturing environment that encourages persistence
- To promote the use of manners and enhance student's values through hands-on experiences
- To develop a solid academic foundation
- To develop and refine life skills that will establish independence
- To empower self-discipline
- To create a clear set of school expectations to encourage responsible, safe behaviors and freedom within limits
- To empower students as stewards of their environment and active community members

## Core Components

1. Self-Directed
  - Student-driven education with guidance from instructors and a prepared environment
2. Child-Centered
  - Interest and developmentally prepared environments and lessons
3. Hands-On
  - Montessori and Nature-based manipulatives and labs allow for touchable, tangible learning through trial and error
4. Individualized
  - Fully Individualized education for each student
5. Nature-Based
  - Integrating the natural world to bring concepts to life for a solid understanding of the world around us
6. Holistic Approach
  - Examining holistic practices and implementing for the best educational outcomes
7. Environmentally Conscious
  - Creating a solid understanding of how we affect our planet and working together to establish environmentally friendly practices
8. Community-Based
  - Engaging in Service Learning to serve as active members of our community
9. Natural Health Focused
  - Implementing health and wellness teachings rooted in natural holistic practices
10. Fundamental/ Conservative
  - Focused on building a strong foundation grounded in proven methodology while limiting mainstream distractions in the educational environment

11. Unconventional/ Non-con-formative Ideals:

- Redefining the status quo and evaluating every component of our model for the best educational outcomes

## New Leaf Core Rules

All New Leaf School rules stem from 3 main rules which are hallmarks in a Montessori classroom:

1. Respect for oneself
2. Respect for others
3. Respect for the environment

## School & Studio Rules

- Walking feet are to be used within the School, except for within the auditorium when appropriate
- Indoor voices are to be used at all times when inside the school
- Hands to yourself; aggressive behaviors will not be tolerated
- Respect classmates and do not disturb those who are working
- Respect others' personal belongings
- Use manners at all times
- Take care of your studio by using works for their intended purpose and cleaning up after yourself
- Respect school grounds
- Do not touch or open doors unless instructed by a teacher or parent. Please help us to enforce this rule at pick-up & drop-off

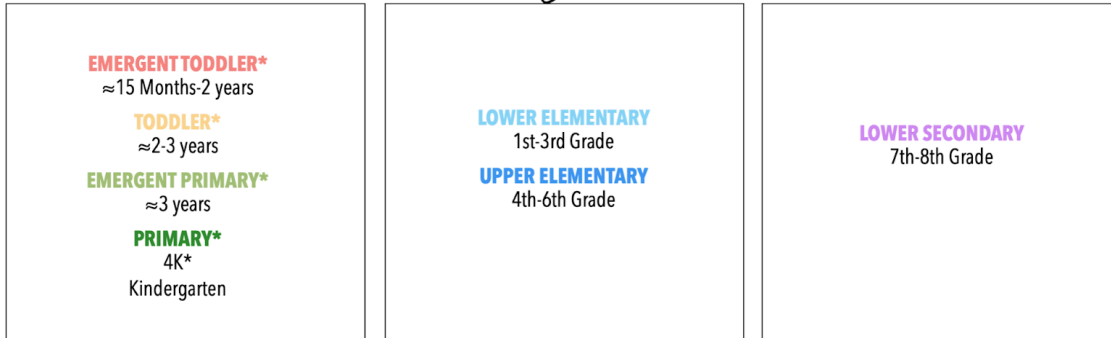
## Multi-Age Grouping

A hallmark of the highly-researched Montessori Method is 3-year age-grouped learning environments. Age grouping allows children to develop leadership, teamwork, motivation, and responsibility, allowing for observation, teaching, confidence building, and advancement. It also creates a sense of comfortability for students who will know their teacher, peers, and studio expectations during the last two years of their cycle. Research shows that students in mixed-age groups outperform peers of the same age both academically and socially. Through extensive research, Maria Montessori has developed the planes of development to group students based on their development. We did a slow roll-out of mixed-age studies to ensure proper student and educator adjustment. All Montessori Cycles, or age groups, are now implemented as shown below.

PRIMARY	4-year-old and 5-year-old Kindergarteners
LOWER ELEMENTARY	First - Third Grade Students
UPPER ELEMENTARY	Fourth - Sixth Grade Students
LOWER SECONDARY	Seventh & Eighth Grade Students

# NEW LEAF PREP ACADEMY

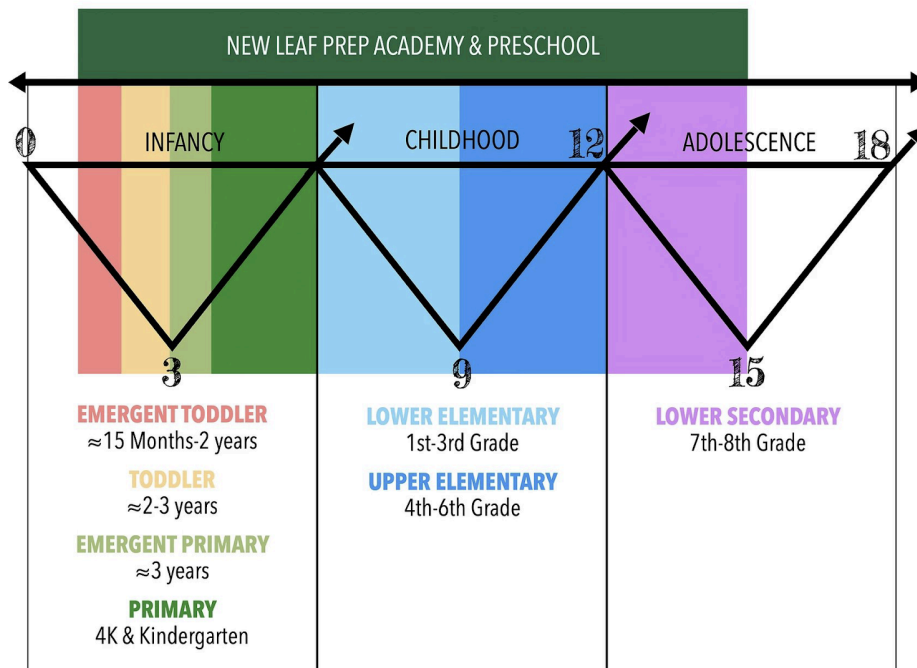
## *Developmentally based studios*



<p><b>NEW LEAF PRESCHOOL*</b> Private Early Childhood Education, Tuition Based Students ≈ 15 months-4 years old Studio assignment and enrollment is developmentally based</p>	<p><b>NEW LEAF PREP ACADEMY</b> Public Charter School Kindergarten-8th Grade</p>
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## *Montessori*

### PLANES OF DEVELOPMENT



Physical & Biological Independence  
**"WHAT IS THAT?"**

Mental Independence  
**"WHY OR HOW IS IT?"**

Social Independence  
**"WHO AM I?"**

## Delegation of Authority

Our administrative structure is as follows:

<b>NEW LEAF PRESCHOOL</b>	<b>NEW LEAF PREP ACADEMY</b>
CEO, Paige Christoff	CEO, Paige Christoff
Head of School, Ashley Moll	Head of Upper School, Michael Bennett (4-8)
Curriculum Coordinator, Hannah Roffers	Head of Lower School, Ashley Moll (P-3)
Teachers & Support Staff	Teachers & Support Staff
Assistant Teachers	Assistant Teachers

All lead teaching staff and support staff employed by New Leaf Prep Academy report to the Heads of School, Mr. Michael Bennett or Mrs. Ashley Moll. Each cycle grouping also has a cycle year leader who is responsible for assisting to ensure proper alignment of studios within their cycle, and guiding proper curriculum implementation.

## Starting the School Year

At New Leaf Prep Academy, our emphasis begins with developing strong, warm, and trusting relationships. For every child, the first days of each year at New Leaf Prep Academy are filled with new experiences, peers, environments, and expectations. We strongly focus on starting on the right foot by making this adjustment period as smooth and comfortable as it can be for each student. We require parents to attend the parent education session at the start of the school year to ensure school and home are working together as a team. We expect that you work with your child's teachers and the school to create a bridge between home and school to help your child establish trusting relationships with their new teachers.

## Curriculum Overview

New Leaf Prep Academy Instructors plan activities, works, and provide children with a prepared studio featuring a full-set traditional Montessori materials and curriculum alongside enriching hands-on experiences. The Montessori Method and nature exploration are major components of our program. Our areas of study include sensorial, math, practical life, science, language arts, culture, geography, and music/ art. We celebrate the uniqueness of each child and allow children to develop at their own pace. We "follow the child" by observing them and tracking their progress. This enables us to modify lessons and materials to suit their interests and skill levels best to create an individualized lesson plan for each student. In addition to this program, your child will enjoy various enriching interdisciplinary classes and activities in the curriculum overview.

New Leaf Prep Academy's curriculum meets or exceeds all Common Core Teaching Standards. Standards are met through Montessori works and teaching methods, and nature-based learning experiences for a well-grounded, real-world understanding of each

standard. In our secondary studios, where our students have moved into abstraction, which means they understand concepts abstractly without the necessity of concrete Montessori works, students learn in a hands-on way cohesive with the Montessori Method. In secondary studios, curriculum and instruction is lab and project-based, and curriculum delivery is often presented as a flipped classroom or a Socratic seminar.

## Curriculum by Cycle

### Primary Cycle

Our Primary program is for children aged four by September 1st who are potty trained. Our Primary Program is a mixed-age four & five-year-old Montessori program in which we emphasize outdoor learning and nature-inspired activities while preparing your child for Lower Elementary. Montessori experience is preferred but not required for students entering this cycle. Our classroom is set up so children can be independent learners. More advanced works are introduced as children become developmentally ready. Academic areas of study include Practical Life, Sensorial, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Culture, History, and Geography.

As a well-researched and proven component of the Montessori Method, students will experience long 2-3 hour work periods where they can take time for full understanding of the multi-subject material being presented. Work period occurs in the morning and a specialty directed work period in the afternoon (5K students), separated by interdisciplinary studies of art & foreign language, lunch, and recess. Students in our Primary cycle engage in active listening each day during a read-aloud and active participation in a conversation to check for comprehension and understanding.

Additionally, our holistic approach to learning examines all avenues that will affect lifelong student success, including social, emotional, and cognitive skill development. A minimalist environment free of technological distractions will aid in calming their mind and body and enable them to focus on the lessons and material at hand. Uninterrupted work time is another hallmark of the Montessori philosophy incorporated into our program and gives children the time they need to focus on a task until they feel it is complete. With low teacher-to-child ratios, students can safely learn through trial and error. Teachers will complete observation-based progress reports to ensure that students are meeting and exceeding all state teaching standards. Conferences are held twice each school year so that parents have a solid grasp on how their child is progressing. Additional enrichment activities are also offered on a regularly scheduled weekly basis and include physical education, art, music, and nature/gardening. All aspects of our curriculum will be carried out in a toxic-free, natural-minded environment with very limited use of technology.

### Lower Elementary

The Lower Elementary cycle is for children in 1st - 3rd traditional grades. Cycles are completed in chronological order after completion of the two-year Primary cycle for 4 and 5-year-olds. Montessori experience is preferred but not required for students within these studios. Generally, students will remain in the same studio groupings for ease of transition

within the cycle, across the three years. If there is a specific reason that the teacher is not a good fit for your child, you may request that they be moved into a different studio. All studio/teacher requests must be made in writing and include a detailed explanation of why the request should be made to be considered.

As a well-researched and proven component of the Montessori Method, students will experience long 2-3 hour work periods where they can take time for full understanding of the multi-subject material being presented. Work periods take place in the morning followed by lunch, recess, specials, workshops, and exploratory learning. Academic areas of study include Science, Mathematics, Practical Life, Culture, History, Geography, and Language Arts. A full 3-year age span of Montessori Curriculum and Montessori works are available in each studio, allowing students a fully individualized educational experience. Students also participate in specials such as foreign language, fine arts, physical education, and nutrition. Please see the curriculum overview for details.

Additionally, our holistic approach to learning examines all avenues that affect lifelong student success, including social, emotional, and cognitive skill development. A minimalist environment free of technological distractions aids in calming their mind and body and enables them to focus on the lessons and material at hand. With low teacher-to-child ratios students can safely learn through trial and error. Teachers complete observation-based progress reports to ensure that students are meeting and exceeding all state teaching standards and parent-teacher conferences are held two times each school year so that parents have a solid grasp on how their child is progressing.

## **Upper Elementary**

The Upper Elementary cycle is for children in 4th-6th traditional grades. Cycles are completed in chronological order after completion of the three-year Lower Elementary cycle. Students will remain in the same studio groupings for ease of transition within the cycle, across the three years. If there is a specific reason that the teacher is not a good fit for your child, you may request that they be moved into a different studio. All studio/teacher requests must be made in writing and include a detailed explanation of why the request should be made to be considered.

As a well-researched and proven component of the Montessori Method, students will experience long 2-3 hour work periods where they can take time for full understanding of the multi-subject material being presented. Work periods take place in the morning followed by lunch, recess, specials, workshops, and exploratory learning. Academic areas of study include Science, Mathematics, Practical Life, Culture, History, Geography, and Language Arts. A full 3-year age span of Montessori Curriculum and Montessori works are available in each studio, allowing students a fully individualized educational experience. Students also participate in specials such as foreign language, agriculture, fine arts, physical education, and nutrition. Please see the curriculum overview for details.

Additionally, our holistic approach to learning examines all avenues that will affect lifelong student success, including social, emotional, and cognitive skill development. A minimalist



environment free of technological distractions will aid in calming their mind and body and enable them to focus on the lessons and material at hand. With low teacher-to-child ratios students can safely learn through trial and error. Teachers complete observation-based progress reports to ensure that students are meeting and exceeding all state teaching standards and parent-teacher conferences are held two times each school year so that parents have a solid grasp on how their child is progressing.

## **Lower Secondary**

The Lower Secondary cycle is for children in 7th-8th traditional grades. Cycles are to be completed in chronological order after completion of the three-year Upper Elementary cycle. Montessori experience is preferred but not required for students within these studios. Instructors teach across two areas of study to easily integrate materials for real-world application. These core subjects are grouped as English Language Arts and Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science. Students will utilize their basis of knowledge from working with Montessori Manipulatives through the Upper Elementary Cycle years to apply concepts in a meaningful way for deeper understanding.

As a well-researched and proven component of the Montessori Method, students will experience long 2-3 hour work periods where they can take time for complete understanding of the multi-subject material being presented. One work period will take place in the morning and one work period in the afternoon, separated by specials, lunch, and recess. These studios will leverage flipped classrooms, Socratic seminars, group work, and hands-on labs for a full comprehensive understanding of materials. Real-world application will be pivotal for students as they utilize their knowledge and apply it to run a small business and serve their community. Academic areas of study include Science, Mathematics, Practical Life, Culture, History, Geography, and Language Arts. A full 3-year age span of Montessori Curriculum and Montessori works are available in each studio, allowing students a fully individualized educational experience. Students also participate in specials such as foreign language, micro-business, fine arts, physical education, and nutrition. Please see the curriculum overview for details.

Additionally, our holistic approach to learning examines all avenues that will affect lifelong student success, including social, emotional, and cognitive skill development. A minimalist environment free of technological distractions, yet with technology when meaningful for learning, will aid in calming their mind and body and enable them to focus on the lessons and material at hand. With low teacher-to-child ratios students can safely learn through trial and error. Teachers complete observation-based progress reports to ensure that students are meeting and exceeding all state teaching standards and parent-teacher conferences are held two times each school year so that parents have a solid grasp on how their child is progressing.

## **Service Learning**

The Service Learning component at New Leaf Prep Academy uses Maria Montessori's mandate to empower children to become agents of change and our personal mission to

create global citizens. The goal of the service work we do at all levels at NLPA is to promote the development of lifelong lessons in empathy, hard work, and cultural awareness while giving students a sense of belonging to a community. New Leaf Prep Academy students must complete 5 hours of service learning per quarter and record these hours in their service learning log included in their planner for a total of 20 hours per school year. Upper Elementary and Secondary students must complete at least 5 of their 20 hours outside of school.

Montessori education includes a large focus on peace education and authentic learning. Service Learning fits squarely within this philosophy. As defined by the National Service Learning Partnership, Service Learning is a teaching method that engages young people in solving problems within their schools and communities as part of their academic studies or other types of intentional learning activities.

Service learning at NLPA will start with the question, "How can I be of service?" and calls each student to identify and develop their personal talents, abilities, or interests and to use those to meet the needs of another. Involved in this process is self-reflection, an awareness of the needs within their community, education about those needs, an understanding of how their actions can make a difference, and a willingness to extend themselves in service.

Our Service Learning program at NLPA will begin at the earliest age and grow in scope and formality as our students near graduation. Beginning in our Primary Studio, our acts of service will happen not only within our studios but also within our NLPA community and our local communities.

Below is a list of activities that may go toward students' service learning hours:

1. Caring for the School Garden
2. Tutoring Peers
3. Assisting in Other Studios
4. Picking up Trash
5. Serving Food at the Community Pantry
6. Packing Food for Feed my Starving Children
7. Attending a Mission Trip for any Non-Profit
8. Volunteering at the Library
9. Volunteering at a Fundraising Event
10. Volunteering at a Church
11. Volunteering at a Nursing Home
12. Assisting Elderly
13. Beautification Projects
14. Walking Foster Dogs/Volunteering with the Humane Society
15. Assisting at the Homeless Shelter

## Parent Information Sessions

It is crucial that each Parent & Guardian with students attending New Leaf Prep Academy understands that they play a vital role in their child's lifelong success. It is expected that all parents and guardians attend informational sessions on parenting topics that may be beneficial tools in enhancing their child's educational journey. Parent Information Sessions cover a wide range of topics that relate to the New Leaf Prep Academy mission and bridge the gap between home and school.

## Communication with Families

We must communicate regularly concerning the needs and interests of each child. We offer parent-teacher conference opportunities two times per year to discuss students' growth and development and adjustment to school. If issues or concerns need to be discussed, parents should arrange with us a convenient time to talk during prep hours, or before or after school. To foster communication regularly, New Leaf provides scheduled conferences, written newsletters, an online parent resource center, teacher and office email addresses, as well as a teacher comment section in student planners. It is a teacher's responsibility to actively communicate with all of their student's families. It is our hope that as a school we will over-communicate with parents rather than withhold information.

## Conferences

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are held twice each school year, once in the fall and once in the spring. Additionally, parents may request a conference with their child's teacher at any time throughout the year. Parents are required to attend both spring and fall conferences.

### Student-Led Conferences

A student-led conference is a meeting to share a student's current level of performance and to set goals for future learning. The student-led conference—which includes a student and a family member—adds to the traditional parent-teacher conference, giving the student ownership over presenting his or her work and setting goals for future growth.

Student-led conferences exist on a continuum from students being present at the conference to students leading every element of the conference. Ideally, the student speaks for the majority of the conference, curates his or her work in a portfolio, and reflects on data from the work and standardized measures.

Mandatory Student-Led Conferences will be held once per year and will be a major component in enabling student growth and self-reflection.

## Screen Time

Limited screen time, both inside and outside school is very important in regards to the development of children. For this reason, students are only allowed to watch age-appropriate short educational segments when they are cohesive with the teacher's

lesson plan when material can not be shared in an alternate manner. Teacher implemented screen-time is specifically approved for all cycles except secondary. On the occasion that screen time is available to students it is aligned with the content of our curriculum, is brief, and is teacher-directed. Students in older studios will have screens and technology available when it is necessary to learn. This will include use for research projects, typing, and testing.

For children to succeed at New Leaf Prep Academy we highly encourage limited and monitored screen time at home especially in regards to social media and violence. It is important that screen time is closely monitored to ensure that children are only exposed to content cohesive with your families own personal values and the values of New Leaf Prep Academy. We encourage that an adult is present during screen time to discuss and help their child understand the information that they are gaining through television, videos, and commercials so that it can be used as a tool for learning.

Social Media is regarded as unnecessary for students outside of school and may interfere with their learning growth both emotionally and academically within the school.

## Field Trips

Parents will be notified in advance of any field trip requiring the use of a vehicle, as well as any chaperoning opportunities. Children who are unable to attend a field trip will have an alternate activity available.

## Birthdays

Each Primary and Lower Elementary child is celebrated with a "Birthday Walk", a Montessori tradition, in which children take a walk around the representational sun one time for each year of life. Summer Birthdays are oftentimes celebrated during the school year on the student's half birthdays. You will be asked to assist your child by selecting photographs from each year of their life and helping them prepare a written history of milestones reached and fun times had during each year. The photographs and milestones will be shared with their classroom and displayed for the week. Birthday treats that follow the guidelines below are welcome but not required.

New Leaf places a strong value on healthy and organic options so it is important that birthday treats also reflect this. Desert type items such as cookies, cakes, ice cream, brownies, or other dessert type items will not be permitted.

If you plan to bring in a special treat to celebrate (which is completely optional) we do need to be made aware at least a week in advance and snacks must meet the following criteria:

- Must be a healthy option with a fruit or vegetable
- No Corn Syrup in ingredient lists

- Should contain limited refined sugar
- No artificial colorings or preservatives
- Apples or Dairy must be Organic

*Examples: Ants on a Log, Organic Apples & Peanut Butter, Chocolate Covered Bananas, Fruit or Vegetable Pinwheels, Fruit Popsicles, Trail Mix, Chips & Humus... etc. Please ask for a handout from the office if you would like a printed copy of our Birthday Treat Guidelines.*

Parents will receive a link to a Google Document to acknowledge whether their student can or cannot have all birthday treats that are brought in throughout the school year as long as they meet New Leaf guidelines. Parents will not be made aware of when or what Birthday Treats are served as long as the treat follows New Leaf guidelines and the Google Document has been signed.

## Holiday Concert

New Leaf Prep Academy will host a holiday concert every year. Parents and relatives will be invited to attend to support their student's progress and hard work at New Leaf Prep Academy and celebrate the holiday season through prepared songs, dances & fine art.

## Moving Up Ceremony (Graduation)

At the closing of each school year students who have completed and are graduating a cycle will participate in a moving-up ceremony to honor and celebrate their accomplishments. These ceremonies will celebrate students graduating from Primary (5K), Lower Elementary (3rd grade), Upper Elementary (6th grade) and Secondary (8th grade) cycles. Moving up ceremonies are celebrated as a community of all student supporters including their peers, family, and friends. This is a great opportunity to celebrate all that they have accomplished through their school years thus far and acknowledge their hard work! Students who are participating in the ceremony are welcome to wear patterns on the day of the ceremony. Caps and gowns will be worn by Secondary NLPA graduates.

## Moving Up Day

One of the hallmarks of an authentic Montessori school is the "three-year cycle." We are very excited to honor age-grouping where students remain in the same program with the same teachers for multiple years to progress as Youngers to Middlers to Olders, beginning next school year! There are many benefits to multi-age grouping. Here are a few:

- Allowing students to learn from and be leaders for each other across years
- Enabling lessons to be given to small groups of mixed-age students, allows each individual child to be met where they are in the curriculum, rather than assuming that a whole grade is at the same level in every subject area
- Allowing for long-term, trusting relationships to develop with teachers over three years

Near the end of the school year students will get the opportunity to experience moving into a new studio, reflective of the cycle they will be joining next school year. They will have the opportunity to meet peers, and build relationships and it is a great opportunity for students to experience their first day within their new studio, as students only transition to a new room every two to three years.

- 3K Primary Students- Move into a Primary Studio
- 5K Primary Students- Move into a Lower Elementary Studio
- 3rd Grade Students- Move into an Upper Elementary Studio
- 6th Grade Students- Move into a Lower Secondary Studio

## Primary Star of the Week

Primary Students will get the chance to be recognized as the star of the week once each school year. Information will be sent home with families outlining the details of this special week which may require bringing photos of a timeline of life, or bringing in items from home. A Family member of our star of the week will be invited to eat lunch with our star and participate in a closing meeting or a special studio activity.

## School Visitors

All school visitors are expected to abide by reasonable procedures that have been established to ensure that such visits do not disrupt the education environment or endanger the physical or emotional safety of students or staff at New Leaf Prep Academy (NLPA) or New Leaf Preschool (NLP).

Except for persons attending scheduled school programs, all persons who visit NLPA, during the school day, shall report to the main office upon arrival, sign in, demonstrate proof of identity, and announce the nature and purpose of the visit. After proving identity to the satisfaction of school staff, visitors shall wear a badge while on the school grounds or in the school buildings identifying them as an authorized visitor to the school. This requirement applies between 7:45 am and 3:45 pm. After concluding the visit, school visitors are expected to report to the school office, record the time of their departure, and return their visitor pass to the office.

A school visitor shall not be permitted to visit any student who is not his/her child unless permission for such a visit is granted in advance by that student's parent/guardian.

## Volunteers & Chaperones

We highly encourage parents to volunteer with NLPA as often as their schedule allows but it is required that a parent or guardian from each family volunteers at least once per quarter.

All school volunteers are expected to abide by reasonable procedures that have been established to ensure they are cohesive with our school vision and mission, as outlined in the volunteer handbook. A signed Volunteer Handbook must be on file in addition to demonstrating proof of identity to enable NLPA to run a background check.

Visitors shall wear a badge while on the school grounds or while acting on behalf of the school. It is imperative that the volunteer handbook is read and reviewed in its entirety and requirements are properly executed. The volunteer handbook can be accessed on our website under the resources tab or a printed copy can be provided by the office.

If a volunteer fails to follow policies included in the Volunteer Handbook future volunteer work may be declined by NLPA both on or off campus.

*Wis. Act 88 prohibits a registered sex offender from visiting school premises (any school building, grounds, recreation center, athletic field, or any other property used or operated for school administration) without notification to the Superintendent and/or designee.*

*a. EXCEPTIONS to notification:*

*Voters; if that individual's polling place is a school facility.*

*Non School sponsored activities.*

*Parents; Notification is only required annually each school year, when a child is first enrolled or when the parent/guardian is first registered as a sex offender, whichever is first.*

## School Committees

There are numerous ways to get involved at NLPA, one of them being joining a school committee. We have several committees that are run by parents and community members and overseen by the school board. Generally, school committees meet once per month. To join one of our six school committees head to our website and add your name to the committee emailing list by clicking on the committee image on the resources tab. Current school committees are as follows:

- Athletics Committee
- Building and Grounds Committee
- Fundraising and Events Committee
- Specials Curriculum Committee
- Staff Appreciation Committee
- Specials, Curriculum & Community Engagement Committee

## Student Assessment Guidelines

Progress evaluations reflect how well a student has mastered the content material and the specific learning objectives through tracking of progress milestones and anecdotal records. Both anecdotal records and progress milestone tracking function as formative assessments providing ongoing feedback that can be used by teachers to help students improve in areas where they are struggling and build on skills that they are excelling on. Progress tracking and formative assessments are to be done daily and entered in Transparent Classroom.

Although we do not teach for the purpose of students testing well it is important that students try their best on all assessments. Assessments are a valuable tool which provide

information so that we can individualize to best serve students. Our charter contract is also dependent on showcasing student growth and achievement.

At the conclusion of each quarter, teachers create progress reports for each individual student. Progress reports are a way to view cumulative progress for student learning. Progress reports evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional quarter or unit by comparing their progress against the standard(s) or benchmark(s) that the student is recorded to have mastered, and the standard(s) or benchmark(s) that are age-appropriate according to the Wisconsin State Teaching Standards. Teachers must conduct summative assessments by evaluating students on the skill through a different method or work extension than how it was originally introduced to them, and deemed to be mastered. Summative assessments are to be entered into the application at least quarterly.

Students in the Primary and 1st Grade studio will be required to take the Fall and Spring MAPS Reading Fluency Assessment.

Students in Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, and Lower Secondary will be required to take the Fall and Spring MAPS Growth Assessment and the Spring Forward Exam each year to validate their mastery in understanding Wisconsin State Teaching Standards.

While we do not teach students for the purpose of being good test takers it is important that our testing gathers accurate data for our school report card and to maintain our charter contract.

## Progress Reports

New Leaf maintains a progress report via the Transparent Classroom software on each student. Children are never graded, or compared to each other, rather reports show the individual growth of each child through written narratives and portfolio samples.

## Homework

Students will bring traditional homework from school sparingly as meaningful family-based projects, or extended absence work as outlined in the truancy section.

We do however send home meaningful academic practice work, which is crucial for foundational academic skill development, as well as make-up work to ensure your child is progressing at a developmentally appropriate pace within the classroom and understands that work avoidance will not be tolerated.

Additionally, we expect that students will work on practical life skills and are responsible contributing members of their households as according to the teachings of the Montessori Method.

Examples of academic practice work:

1. Reading 20 minutes each night and recording in your planner
2. Practicing multiplication math flashcards and recording in your planner



Examples of family-based projects that could be assigned include:

1. Finding and preparing a meal based on a new recipe.
2. Creating a blueprint of your house, yard, community, including geometric features such as perimeter and area.
3. Researching and determining the history of a specific household item.
4. Interviewing family members on a specific topic.

## Take-Home Folders & Work Planners

Each student is required to use a plastic folder for a take-home folder, and will be supplied with a work planner. Your child will place this folder & their work planner into their backpack at the closing of the school day. It is the parent's and student's responsibility to empty this folder each evening and return it to school empty or with completed forms in their backpack/ locker, as well as sign their child's planner each evening. Artwork, classroom announcements and other important paperwork will be placed in this folder. Important documents will come home on colored paper and will go home with the oldest sibling.

- Blue Paper- This is a reminder to stick on your fridge
- Red/Pink Paper- This is important and needs to be sent back to school

If a take home folder or student planner is not returned for two consecutive school days you will be charged for a replacement planner or folder. These are items required for your child to be successful. Planners cost \$18 for replacement.

Students utilize work planners as a tool to ensure that they are actively setting goals and working on meaningful challenging work across all subject areas. These will be used consistently and filled out by students every day. Your child's teacher will ensure that your child is utilizing their work plan in a consistent manner as a tool to set goals, challenge themselves, and develop intrinsic motivation.

## Controversial Topics

Much like our individualized approach to academics, we feel it is important to address student concerns and curiosities individually. We seek to create a space where children feel they are safe to ask questions and their teachers will assist them in getting answers when they have concerns. Oftentimes this may include reaching out to include parents in the discussion. This will never include group conversation or ignoring student concerns. When controversial topics naturally arise that are outside of our curriculum, teachers will defer student's concerns and address them individually rather than discussing the topic with, or in front of, other students. The child will be asked to hold the topic/questions and pulled aside later for a one-on-one conversation. The information that naturally came up within the studio will be shared with parents to further discuss with their child. The list of topics, below, are seen as controversial and will be handled according to the Controversial Curriculum Topics Document. Teachers will not engage in a group conversation on these topics. Topics that are considered controversial and will not be spoken about in group conversations include:

- Divorce, custody, or marital disputes
- Relationships between students
- Gender identity or sexual orientation
- Comparisons between students or families
- Critical Race Theory
- Sexual Health beyond human anatomy

Please see the Controversial Curriculum Topics document for additional information.

## Transportation

At this time New Leaf Prep Academy will be unable to provide bus transportation for any student. All students must be dropped-off in the drop-off lane, or if late or with a preschool sibling, escorted inside to be signed in. Please see the Arrival & Departure section for further details.

***Please note that the parking lot is reserved for late drop-offs, early-pickups, and preschool families. If you have a charter school student with no preschool siblings you are expected to utilize the pickup/drop-off lane only.***

## Arrival & Departure

Students must be dropped off in the drop-off lane between 7:40 AM and 7:50 AM. Please refer to the map of the school. If drop-off procedures are not being followed, a letter will be sent home to notify families of non-compliance.

If a student is dropped off after 7:50 AM, parents are required to park in the parking lot, walk their child into the front office, and sign them in before going to class. Students may never enter the building without being greeted by a drop-off lane staff member or being escorted by a parent.

Students are expected to arrive at school on time. It is a distraction to the class when they do not arrive on time. Parents must email [absence@newleafprepacademy.org](mailto:absence@newleafprepacademy.org) whenever their child will be out for the day or arriving late to school.

Our parking lot is reserved for late drop-offs, early pickups, and preschool families. Please help us to maintain a safe parking lot by only utilizing the parking lot when appropriate.

4K PRESCHOOL FAMILIES:

4K Primary students must be walked in the school during drop-off time (7:40 AM to 7:50 AM) each day and released to their teacher greeting outside their studio doorway.

## Pick-Up Policy

Each student must be picked up by their legal guardian(s) unless prior notice is given and the individual picking up your child is on the approved pick-up list on file in the office.

Children are expected to be picked up from school on time. Late pickups often create anxiety for the child who is picked up late. If a parent has not picked up their child at the conclusion of the pick-up line cycling through students will be walked to the front office where their parent will be contacted. If child is not picked up by 4:00pm the child will be sent to afterschool care and the family will be billed accordingly.

Regular school days end at 3:15 pm. This is the time that students are released from class to gather their belongings, as it is the end of instructional hours for the day. Students must be picked up in the drop-off lane except students enrolled after school care. Students who are enrolled in after-school care should be picked up from the gymnasium. Children who are staying at New Leaf for after-school care are to be picked up no later than 5:00 pm.

If students will be picked up early, please notify the office as early as possible to ensure that your student is onsite and ready for early pickup. Parents must enter the office and sign their child out. **We do not allow student pickups from 2:30 to 3:15 due to congestion. If you come during this time without notice you will be kindly asked to utilize the pickup lane.** Please notify the office by 10:00 am of early pickups so we can have your child ready in the office for your arrival.

## Separation

The building of a relationship between parents and teachers is the foundation for each student's positive experiences in school. For this reason, we ask parents to visit your child's new classroom and attend student orientation events with your child. During this time, their teacher will ask questions to enable them to better know your child before the school year and full separation begins. Please leave all treasured items at home, unless otherwise specified. These items will be confiscated from a child's locker if they become a distraction in the classroom. A routine with a clear goodbye helps children to understand what to expect and become comfortable with saying goodbye.

## Daily Attendance

Attendance will be kept in each studio. When students arrive late or leave before the end of the day parents are responsible for signing their children in or out on the sign-in/out sheet located in the main office.

## Attendance & Truancy

School achievement begins with regular attendance. New Leaf Prep Academy is committed to providing a quality education for every student. We firmly believe that consistent attendance teaches students responsibility. Through regular attendance, students learn the value of being punctual and prepared. Frequent absences and tardiness result in a loss of continuity of instruction and are also disruptive for students and teachers.

Parents/guardians are expected to take a proactive role in ensuring their children attend school. We recommend families plan their vacation schedule around the existing school calendar. When possible, medical and dental appointments should take place outside of

school hours, and parents should notify New Leaf Prep Academy in advance of any absence. Parents and students are responsible for obtaining work expectations for the time in which the student is absent when it is pre-planned and exceeds 2 days.

## Definitions

**Absence:** A student's nonattendance at school for one school day or part of one school day.

**Excused Absence:** An absence resulting from:

1. An illness
2. Death of a family member
3. A documented medical appointment (i.e. doctor, dentist, etc)
4. A family emergency
5. Court appearance
6. Religious holidays
7. A pre-approved extended absence for a family activity or travel. Must submit an absence form to the front office 3 weeks in advance of travel.

**Truant:** An absence from school without a valid excuse.

**Unexcused Absence:** An absence that is not accepted by NLPA Administration, such as

1. Sleeping in or missing alarm
2. Errands
3. Personal grooming appointments (i.e. haircuts, etc)
4. Family vacations that have not been pre-approved by NLPA Administration

## Policies

### Excused Absences

All absences require a written explanation from the parent/guardian within one day of return from the absence. Written explanation of absences must include the student's name, parent/guardian name, dates of absence(s), and documentation of the reason for the absence.

**Absences in excess of fifteen (15) days per year will not be considered excused even with a parent/guardian note unless they are accompanied by official medical or legal documentation.**

Students who have more than fifteen (15) **unexcused** absences in one school year may be considered for retention at their grade level. Ex. A student has 15 excused absences, and 15 unexcused absences missing 30 days of school total and is now at risk fo being retained at their grade level.

### Pre-Approved Extended Absence

Any absence not specifically covered by another section, such as family vacations, college visits, or other extended absences, must complete a pre-arranged absence form to be

excused. This form must be submitted at least three weeks prior to the scheduled absence. In order for an absence to be excused, the student must meet the following conditions:

1. is in good academic standing
2. has no unexcused absences
3. has four or fewer excused absences in a semester.

This form is located on our website under resources and should be turned in to your student's teacher. <https://www.newleafprepacademy.org/resources> (Student vacation)

## Travel Home Work

Pre-approved extended absences will require the completion of take-home work.

Take-home work includes:

- Daily Reading: Reading in an appropriate level book. 20-45 minutes are required. For younger students, this can be a parent reading to the child.
- Daily Writing: Writing done in a single "travel journal", primary students can copy a parent's written sentence. Elementary students, Lower and Upper, should be writing a minimum of 1 to 2 paragraphs, and Secondary students should write in cursive and have a minimum of 2 paragraphs. Paragraphs are 4 to 5 full meaningful sentences.
- Location Study: Students should complete an interest-driven location study based on their travels. Location study projects could include history, geography, culture, science, etc., and should be presented by bringing in artifacts, a prepared oral presentation, a poster board, and/or recorded observations via a nature portrait journal.
- Follow-Up Presentation: Parents are welcome and encouraged to accompany their students for the presentation of their travel study. While parents are encouraged to help their children with areas they may find difficult, all components of the work should be completed entirely by the student when developmentally appropriate.

## Tardiness

A student is tardy if he or she is not in their assigned classroom by 8:00 AM meaning they must be checked in before doors lock at 7:50 AM. Students must be on time at the beginning of the school day. Schools are required to admit students regardless of their arrival time although tardiness is extremely disruptive to the learning environment. Students who report late are required to report to the office, accompanied by an adult, to obtain a late pass and be signed in before being admitted to any classroom or other school area. Reporting to the office is very important in making sure that the student is recorded as present. Students are required to follow their school's tardy policy.

In general, tardiness will be handled on an individual basis with the teacher. If a student is chronically tardy, the student will be referred to administration. Students are allowed 5 tardies per quarter. If the maximum limit for unexcused tardies is reached, the Head of School will attempt to schedule a meeting with the parents to review the situation and will outline the appropriate corrective action.

Late students must be walked in by a parent or guardian and signed in. If any student arrives late to school and is not physically walked in and signed in by a parent or guardian, a letter will be sent home to the family from office staff. Recurrence after receiving a letter will result in a meeting with the Head of School.

### Grounds for Appeal

Parents who believe that all or part of their absences and/or tardies (up to 15) should be considered excused may provide a written request to the administrator to review their case. \*\*Documentation for each of the absences will be requested from administration.

## Accrual of Unexcused Absences

NUMBER OF ABSENCES	SCHOOL RESPONSE
1	Marked Absent
4	Phone call made to parent/guardian to discuss the academic and social impacts of irregular attendance, possible obstacles, appropriate supports, and goal setting to improve attendance.
10	In-person meeting with parent/guardian, teacher, and admin a discussion of the academic and social impacts of irregular attendance, possible obstacles, and appropriate supports. An attendance intervention plan will be developed during this meeting.
15	A formal letter is sent home to parents/guardians.

## Accrual of Tardies (Excused & Unexcused)

NUMBER OF TARDIES PER SEMESTER	SCHOOL RESPONSE
3	Contact family alerting them of their child's updated rate of tardiness, including the total number of tardy arrivals.
5	Phone call with parent/guardian to develop a plan to support a timely arrival to school.
8	Mandatory in-person meeting with parent/guardian, teacher, and administration to develop attendance intervention plan.

## Guiding Behavior

Student's behavior will be guided by setting clear limits and rules within the school and

classrooms. Students may always work freely within the consistent rules of their classroom. We will talk with students about expected behaviors and model those behaviors consistently for them. We will state positively what children can do and undesirable behavior will be redirected to another activity when possible. Behavior management will be for the purpose of helping children develop self-control, self-esteem, and respect for the rights of others. Students are redirected to safe physical activities and are involved in a discussion about safety concerns, when necessary. Students will utilize a work planner to ensure that they have proper direction to keep engaged with material that is meaningful for their academic success and development.

When a student is distraught, teachers will work to calm and comfort the student, in ways that are appropriate for his/her age and personal disposition. If the redirection is unsuccessful students will take a break from working freely within their classroom to evaluate their behavior. This break will be used to remove a student from a situation that has gotten out of control before they can hurt themselves or others. When used, the break time will immediately follow the behavior. Teachers will speak with the student about why the behavior was unacceptable, and what else s/he might have done or said instead.

We recognize that no single technique will work with a student every time. If a student exhibits unacceptable behavior, teachers will request a conference with parents to consider how to deal with the behavior. If the behavior continues, administration will determine further actions. Actions that are aversive, cruel, humiliating, and actions that may be psychologically, emotionally, or physically painful, discomfoting, dangerous, or potentially injurious are prohibited at New Leaf Prep Academy. Prohibited actions include spanking, hitting, pinching, shaking, slapping, twisting, or inflicting any other form of corporal punishment on the child; verbal abuse threats or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family; physical restraint, binding or tying the child to restrict the child's movement or enclosing the child in a confined space such as a closet, locked room, box or similar cubicle; withholding or forcing meals, snacks or naps; punishing a child for lapses in toilet training. These forms of punishment will never be used, even at a parent's request.

## Good Standing Policy

Freedoms are earned with appropriate responsibility for oneself, others and the environment. Below are the four components of New Leaf Prep Academy's good standing policy and the requirements to maintaining good standing:

Financial Standing	Your family must maintain proper financial standing with no unpaid dues including but not limited to payment for field trips, broken items, and snack fees when applicable.
Academic Standing	Your child must be putting in time and effort academically, and be progressing at an individualized yet developmentally appropriate pace as determined by their teacher and overseeing assistant head of school.

Behavior Standing	Your child must maintain good behavior standing. Students who accumulate multiple behavior write-ups will be evaluated to determine good behavior standing based on severity of infractions. Staff will evaluate behavior standing based on severity and frequency of behavior infractions.
Attendance Standing	Your child must maintain regular attendance, both excused and unexcused to ensure they are meeting instructional hours for their success. Students who have reached truancy are not in good standing. Furthermore, students must arrive on time on the days of field trips for whole-day attendance to participate unless prior approval is given.

The following are freedoms that are lost for students when good standing is not maintained.

## Freedoms associated with Good Standing

### **Athletic & Extracurricular Early Departure**

Your child will be permitted to regularly miss school for athletics or extra curricular that are not offered at New Leaf Prep Academy. The early pick up must correlate directly with the activity, and regular pickup before 2:00pm will not be permitted. Students in good standing will be permitted to participate in one season of sports/extracurriculars per school year requiring early departure up to 3 months in duration with 2-weeks notice an appropriate information provided to the school including the type & time of sport or extracurricular, the group running the sport/extracurricular, the duration and days of early departure.

### **Field Trips**

Our schools mission and vision encompasses being an active member of the community, and learning about the world around us. We take regular walking, onsite and bussed field trips. In order to participate in field trips students must be in good standing, to ensure they have the proper skills and tools to remain safe and respectful during these special activities. This includes walking trips and special onsite visitors.

*Please ensure that you are actively communicating with parents when their student is not in good academic standing, especially when approaching a field trip because they will not be allowed to attend. All other components of the good standing policy can be handled by the office.*

## Discipline

Please refer to the Discipline Matrix for disciplinary action for students in K-8th grade.

### **School Initiated Discharge**

5-year-old primary and above students follow the Discipline Matrix procedures. Should the school decide to terminate a child's enrollment, the parents will be notified in a



face-to-face meeting. The governance board holds the final say on expulsion. Determination will be made in closed session, although parents are welcome to submit a comment for board consideration. Parents will be told verbally as well as in writing of their child's termination.

### **Behavior Related Discharge**

Acting out, inability to follow classroom rules, inability to follow teacher's directions are all examples of reasons why a child could be discharged due to behavior. Discharge for these behaviors will be made for students following the Discipline Matrix Procedures.

### **Prior to Discharge**

All efforts will be made to work out a plan for behavior management between staff and parents to see if problematic behaviors can be managed and/or corrected. The teacher will ask for a parent/teacher conference to discuss the behaviors in detail. Input from parents/guardians on behavior management is vital. A behavioral improvement plan will be created for the student. If the behaviors have not improved, another conference will be scheduled to either revise the behavioral improvement plan or to terminate placement and refer the child to other services. All meetings, behavior plans and outcomes will be documented and placed in the child's file.

### **Outside Agency Involvement**

Prior to any child being terminated, efforts may be made to seek additional services from other care providers to address the problem. For example, children may be referred to a physician for a vision or hearing screening.

## **Holidays**

New Leaf Prep Academy observes and is closed for major holidays. Please refer to the current year school calendar.

## **Care of Property**

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. NLPA will not be responsible for loss of personal property. Valuables such as jewelry or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. NLPA may confiscate such items and return them to the students' parents.

Damage to, or loss of, school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayer's money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student damages or loses school property, the student or his/her parents will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will also be subject to discipline according to the Code of Conduct, and may be referred to law enforcement.

## Dress Code

Our Dress code works to create a safe educational environment that embraces modesty and limits distractions. Students should come to school dressed in clothing that is comfortable and allows for full-body activity. Please consider that students will be involved in many hands-on activities, and spend a large majority of their time outside exploring, and serving within their community, and may get dirty. Our dress code is regularly enforced with no less than weekly dress code checks by the administration.

***All clothing and other belongings that are brought to school should be clearly labeled with your child's name. If you do not wish to label items directly on the tag please label them with a piece of masking tape.***

If your child brings home clothes to be laundered please send a new set of clean clothes in their place the next day. Any soiled clothes will be placed in your child's locker in a plastic bag to be taken home and laundered.

Additionally, we ask that students come in clothes that are not distracting to themselves or their peers. If a student has selected a manner of appearance that is beyond mere freedom of expression and disrupts the educational process or presents a risk to themselves or others, they may be removed from the educational setting or sent home for the remainder of the school day.

### Footwear

All students are required to have closed-toe shoes with a back strap or closed heel. No flip-flops or slide-on shoes will be permitted. Students should wear Street Shoes to school each day and change into their indoor shoes before entering their studio at the start of each day.

### Indoor Shoes

All students will be required to wear a pair of indoor shoes when they are in their studio.. All indoor shoes must stay onsite for the duration of the school year in your child's locker and must follow the footwear requirements detailed above.

### Indoor Shoe Procedure

Students are required to change into their indoor shoes upon arrival to school before entering their studio. Street shoes should be stored in the bottom of the student's locker. Indoor shoes should also be worn in the fenced outdoor work environment. The outdoor work environment will be swept and kept clean for this reason.

### Physical Education Shoes

All students must have white-soled/non-skid athletic shoes for Physical Education with velcro or laces. Shoes for physical education should remain onsite for the duration of the school year in your child's locker. Physical education shoes will be used inside and outside so if a separate pair of physical education shoes are not kept onsite your child must wear athletic street shoes that are white-soled/non-skid.

## Rain Boots

We do a great deal of exploring the outdoor environment and therefore require that a pair of rain boots also be present at school during all months when there is no snow on the ground.

## Tops

1. Solid color, no graphics or logos (other than the NLPA school logo)
2. T-Shirt, polo, blouse or similar
3. Shirt straps must be 2" wide, no spaghetti or narrow straps
4. Shirts must have full coverage of the torso including the midriff

## Male Bottoms

1. Solid color, including denim
2. No rips, cuts, holes, or tattered clothing
3. Can be pants or shorts
4. No Leggings- tight-fitting pants with no back pockets
5. Shorts must have no less than a 4" inseam

## Female Bottoms

1. Solid color, including denim
2. No rips, cuts, holes, or tattered clothing
3. Can be pants, skirts, shorts, or dresses
4. No Leggings- tight-fitting pants with no back pockets, unless under a dress or skirt
5. Dresses, skirts, shorts, and skorts cannot be shorter than the tips of the student's fingers with relaxed shoulders

\*Students must wear shorts under skirts or dresses if they wish to participate in activities on the playground which risk their undergarments showing such as hanging on the climbing dome or riding a tricycle.

## Accessories

- Kindergarten- 6th Grade: No makeup
- 7th & 8th Grade: Makeup must be modest and natural-looking
- No perfumes or fragrance sprays are allowed on campus or heavy use of fragrance due to known associated health problems
- Kindergarten- 6th Grade: No fake nails
- 7th & 8th Grade: Fake nails may not extend more than 1/8" beyond the fingertip and may not limit the student's ability to participate in any activities
- No headbands with horns or ears or that are otherwise distracting
- No Hats, scarves, gloves, sweatbands or sunglasses
- No more than 2 piercings per ear. Jewelry and piercings must be small and discreet. Facial piercings are not permitted

## Hairstyles

Reflect moderation and careful grooming. Examples of inappropriate hairstyles:

- hair that is unkempt or dirty
- hair that is not a natural color

## Hats

Hats and hoods are not permitted to be worn within the school. Students are expected to remove hats and keep them with their personal belongings upon entering the school.

Personal expression is permitted within the guidelines. If a student has selected a manner of appearance that is beyond mere freedom of expression and disrupts the educational process, is immodest or presents a risk to themselves or others, they may be removed from the educational setting. For affordably purposes outdoor and weather gear including sun hats, jackets, and shoes may include patterns and logos, although discouraged.

## What Stags Wear:

	PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED
TOPS		
FEMALE BOTTOMS		
BOTTOMS		
OTHER		

## Dress-Up Days

All dress-up days are completely optional for students. If students do choose to participate we ask that all dress code criteria is met except for the solid color requirements. All modesty components of the dress code will be enforced on dress-up days. Specific Dress Code criteria for Halloween will be clearly communicated with families.

## Non-Permitted or Limited Items

### Gum and Mints

Gum and mints are not permitted on school premises. If a student is caught with gum or a mint they will be asked to throw it out.

### Cough Drops

Cough drops are treated as a medication and must be kept in the office with a form filled out indicating how often they should be administered.

### Essential Oils

Fragrance is not permitted to be added into the air at NLPAC because of the knowledge that it is a known carcinogenic hormone disruptor. For this reason, teachers are permitted to diffuse essential oil, as a safe alternative, in their classroom within the confines of the following criteria:

- Essential oils may only be diffused, never applied topically, or ingested.
- The diffuser must be kept mainly to one side of the studio.
- Oils will be stored out of sight of children.
- Only child-safe oils, or blends containing only safe oils are to be used.
- Oils will always be diluted properly.

If a child cannot escape the smell of the essential oil being diffused and voices a displeasure it will be turned off for no less than the remainder of the day. We will work to use scent as a powerful tool for a multi-sensory educational experience, and never as a negative distraction to a child's learning environment.

## Personal Electronic Devices

Personal cell phones, smart watches, digital devices and other wifi/Bluetooth enabled devices will not be used or kept on person at New Leaf Prep Academy. Students are highly encouraged to leave these items at home. Staff and students will not be allowed to wear smartwatches on our school campus, or any type of similar device with wifi or Bluetooth technology. Only Analog watches will be permitted to be worn for telling time.

If students wear or bring their cell phones, smart watches, wifi/Bluetooth capable devices, or digital devices of any type to school with them, they will be asked to remove, power off, and secure items in their locker or backpack. If a student continues to bring these items to school and policies are not followed, teachers will confiscate the items and they will be placed in the office for parent pick up only.

Cell phones may only be permitted on a case-by-case basis for use on special projects requiring the use of a cell phone such as a community project requiring video media.

## Outdoor Time

We believe that the outdoor environment is just as important as the indoor space. It is healthy for children to get fresh air, aids in the development of social and gross motor skills, and helps to strengthen a child's body and mind by allowing them to establish a bond and understanding of the living world around them. Outdoor exposure is proven to reduce anxiety, reduce stress, improve focus, increase creativity, and lessen sickness! Students will spend no less than 35-45 minutes outside each day.

Students will be allowed free time for large muscle and gross-motor development on a variety of developmentally appropriate fixed play equipment and portable equipment to allow mastery of balance and coordination & peer engagement. Our outdoor campus seeks to give children a place to explore and learn about nature through sensory experiences. Alternative large-muscle indoor activities will be offered when the weather does not permit going outside. As a nature-based school, we rarely consider weather severe enough to stay indoors. Children will go outdoors when the weather permits, therefore please dress your child appropriately for weather, and monitor clothing frequently to ensure that proper outdoor gear is always present at school. Children in Primary studios must have a yellow Muddy Buddy coverall and all students must have rain boots onsite during wet months.

On the third infraction a child is missing an item, the discipline matrix will begin to be followed as a dress code violation.

In summer and fall months, when weather appropriate, students are to be allowed to utilize their outdoor work environment for the duration of their work period. Teachers are to utilize the outdoor environment at least once per week to plan a special nature-based activity. This could include a science experiment, working in the garden, picking up trash at the park, or using a book outside to learn a new concept.

Children may be kept indoors during inclement weather such as any of the following:

- Heavy rain- Children should be going outside in light-normal rain for 15 minutes
- Temperatures above 90 degrees F.
- Wind chills of 0 degrees F. or below for children aged 2 and above
- Wind chills of 20 degrees F. or below for children under age

## Outdoor Rules

All outdoor rules stem from our 3 core rules: Respect for oneself, respect for others, respect for the environment.

1. Chalk must stay on the sidewalk, and may only be used on the sidewalk.
2. Students are not allowed in any construction areas, parking lots, or out of teacher view.
3. Equipment must be used for its intended purpose. (including jump ropes)
4. No hanging on the soccer nets.
5. Hands are to be kept to yourself.
6. Items are to be put away after use, only take out one item at a time.
7. Teachers are responsible for ensuring all items are picked up and returned inside.
8. Rocks are to stay on the ground.
9. Stumps should not be moved.
10. Sand & sand toys stay in the sandbox.
11. Mud kitchen items stay by the mud kitchen. Dirt may be used, sandbox sand may not.
12. Only Primary and above students are allowed on the climbing dome, limit of 3 students.
13. The hammock chairs are for sitting, 1 person at a time.
14. One person at a time on the slackline. If you fall off, go to the back of the line to try again.

## Inclement Weather

Any extreme weather closings will be announced on our Facebook page, via our school application and email no later than 6:00 am the morning of closing, as well as on WBAY.

## Lost & Found

With so many children working on their independence skills, it is sometimes difficult to keep track of clothing and other belongings. It is important that each article of your child's clothing and all personal belongings is clearly labeled to prevent losing items. A lost and found area will be located outside of the main office. Items that are not claimed after a reasonable amount of time may be kept for school use or donated.

## Nutrition Program

We regard healthy and organic food and nutrition education as major components of our school. Our Nutrition Program provides a focus on food preparation and quality organic made from scratch Eatery options unlike those at any other school. Additionally, we offer our same quality lunches at free and reduced prices for those students who qualify. To see our gourmet rotating menus head to the resources tab on our website. Organic 2% milk is served with all breakfast and lunch meals to students enrolled in the hot-lunch nutrition program. Milk is also an option for students bringing cold lunch. Please see the chart below for cold lunch milk pricing details.

Morning snack through NLPA is **not optional**. This meal helps students to fuel their bodies and brains for a successful educational experience. Students who have allergies may refer to our allergy policy below. Morning snacks are provided at free or reduced prices for students who qualify.

School Hot Lunch is **optional**. Students who are not participating in our hot lunch program may bring a parent-provided packed lunch. Lunch items that are brought and do not meet the Nutrition Program criteria will be confiscated. New Leaf Prep Academy serves a 4-week rotating menu of nutritious local lunches. Please see the nutrition program page on our website under the parents tab to learn more and see our brand new menus!

Vitamins, including gummies, are not allowed in student snacks or lunches. Vitamins are considered a supplement and should be consumed outside of school hours. If supplements or medications of any type need to be consumed during school hours we must have proper documentation to administer and medications must be kept in the school office.

## School Lunch

Due to our small school size, at this time, we are unable to serve high-quality fresh & organic lunches to students in unfixed or constantly changing quantities. Doing so would not be financially possible and would also create unnecessary food waste. For this reason lunch will be prepared based on opt-out periods that occur every month. Parents may opt out of the lunch program approximately 2-weeks before each month period, on the 15th or nearest business day the month prior. Lunch status for each month period will be indicated to supervising staff at the time of self-service in the lunch line. Body fueling and filling lunch quantities will be determined for students based on their age, and serving size recommendations.

Students who do not opt out of the lunch program following the detailed process below will be billed for hot lunch for the month period regardless if their student consumes lunch or not. Students who opt-in (meaning those who do not opt-out of NLPA provided lunches by the dates indicated below) may still bring cold lunches that follow our guidelines but lunch charges will not be waived at any point throughout the full month period.

Please see the following information regarding hot-lunch program periods & pricing.

	Service Dates	Opt-Out Due Date	Lunch Amount	Cold Lunch Milk Only
August/ September	August 26 - September 30	August 15th	\$179	\$18
October	October 1-31	September 16th	\$149	\$15



November	November 1-29	October 15th	\$127	\$13
December	December 2-20	November 15th	\$112	\$12
January	January 2-31	December 16th	\$149	\$15
February	February 3-28	January 15th	\$135	\$14
March	March 3-31	February 14th	\$112	\$12
April	April 1-30	March 14th	\$149	\$15
May/June	May 1-30	April 15th	\$149	\$15

Free and Reduced Lunch Program is available to qualified students. Please contact the main office to fill out paperwork and for reduced lunch cost pricing. Organic 2% milk is served with all breakfast and lunch meals to students enrolled in the hot-lunch nutrition program. Milk is also an option for students bringing cold lunch.

A forgotten lunch fee of \$8.50 will be charged to each student who opts-out of hot lunch and forgets a packed cold lunch with required components. We will contact parents to bring in a cold lunch if proper notice is given by the student of their forgotten lunch. The habitual occurrence of forgotten lunch cannot be accommodated and will result in a meeting with the Head of School to remedy.

Meal	Time	Meal Options	Monthly Cost	Payment
Breakfast	7:00 am-7:30 am	Provided	Included	Included*
Morning Snack	9:00 am-10:00 am	Provided	\$38.00	Required
Lunch	11:15 am-12:45 pm (3 periods)	Provided or Bring Cold	See Chart Above	Optional
Afternoon Snack	3:30 pm-4:30 pm	Provided	Included	Included*

\*Breakfast is included only for students enrolled in before-school care and afternoon snack is included only for students enrolled in after-school care.

## Student Packed Lunch Criteria

Parent-provided cold lunches must follow the criteria below:

### Required Components:

1. Contain a full serving of vegetable
2. Contain a full serving of fruit
3. Contain full serving of protein
4. Contain a full serving of grain

### Required Criteria:

1. Remove pre-packaging, no single-use packaging is permitted (including water bottles & plastic bags)
2. Must come to school in a reusable bento box or reusable food storage containers (Plastic is discouraged to glass, silicone, and stainless steel options)
3. No beverages other than water or approved milk substitute (Organic 2% milk is provided to all students during lunch as well as infused water)
4. No items with sugar as the first or second ingredient, or would otherwise be considered a dessert or appears as a dessert
5. No High-Fructose corn syrup in ingredient lists

Cold lunches that do not follow nutrition guidelines may be disposed of or confiscated.

### Breakfast & Afternoon Snack

Students in after-school care will be served an afternoon snack. To eat breakfast students must be enrolled in before-school care and arrive at school no later than 7:30 am.

## Student-Packed Meal Ideas

GRAIN WHOLE WHEAT	Bread or Pita Bread 	Tortilla 	Granola or Granola Bar 	Whole Wheat Crackers 	Pasta 	Bagel 
PROTEIN	Hard Boiled Eggs 	Peanut Butter 	Deli Meat 	Greek Yogurt 	Chickpea Hummus 	Chicken Salad 
VEGETABLE	Avocado or Guacamole 	Cucumbers 	Carrots or Celery 	Peppers 	Broccoli 	Snap Peas 
FRUIT	Banana 	Apple 	Pineapple 	Blueberries 	Cut Grapes 	Watermelon 
SIDES	Tortilla Chips 	Sweet Potato Crackers 	Protein Balls 	Pretzels 	String Cheese 	Trail Mix 

## Ideas to Make Nutrition Fun

- Let your child pick their lunch
- Try cutting items in unique shapes
- Display our guide on your fridge so your child can initiate preparing their lunch
- Allow your child to prepare components as much as possible
- Include your child in making grocery lists & gardening lunch components

## Food Allergies & Special Dietary Needs

If your child has food allergies parents must notify the school in writing, and provide a signed doctor's note indicating the allergy. Food allergies will be discreetly posted in the studio and the kitchen. If the school can not accommodate a child's food allergies parents will need to provide snacks and meals. Snacks and meals must follow the Nutrition Program Guidelines. If meals and snacks are not following our nutrition guidelines a conference with parents will be held.

## Meal Time Socialization

Mealtimes will include meaningful conversation and will promote social interaction, encourage good table manners, and develop sound nutritional habits. Our staff model healthy eating behaviors in the presence of children, eating the same foods as children and refraining from eating or drinking unhealthy foods in front of children. Oftentimes, our staff spend time talking with children about healthy foods and nutrition. Children will be encouraged to clean up after themselves by clearing the table, cleaning the table, and sweeping the floor.

## Menu Requirements & Meal Schedule

New Leaf follows the USDA guidelines when preparing and planning our menus. Any changes or substitutions in the menu will be posted with the original menu. All food is prepared onsite. No child will go without nourishment for longer than 3 hours.

A.M. snack- Served from 9:00 AM-10:00 AM

Lunch A- 11:15 AM-12:00 PM

Lunch B- 12:00 PM- 12:45 PM

Lunch C- 12:15 PM-12:45 PM

## Snack Policies

Snack and food preparation is a unique experience in the Montessori classroom. Snack in our studios is a time of nourishment of several kinds. We share in the community of being together, practice patience and courtesy through preparing snacks, serving, eating, and cleaning up after ourselves, all skills that are a part of our practical life education. All snacks include a fruit or vegetable, grain or protein, and follow our nutrition guidelines.

In a Montessori classroom, snacks are self-serve and available throughout the whole snack period. Our snack period is 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM. Snacks are eaten at a designated snack table that seats three or four. Having limited space encourages children to practice their patience along with being mindful of others waiting their turn. Cards with numbers will be provided, and are to be placed out with each snack item to indicate appropriate serving size. Snacks function as a small serving to fuel the students' bodies through the morning work period, rather than a full meal. A great way to keep track of students who have had snack or are still waiting is to use name sticks. In many rooms, teachers write each student's name on a popsicle stick and place them all in a jar so students can easily keep track of who has eaten snack.

1. Self-Preparation: This is the step when a child chooses they are ready for snack. Is their work or material put away? Is there space at the snack table? If so, the student may take their name tag and place it at an available spot at the snack table. This signifies that the child is ready for snack and the spot is theirs.

2. Self-Care/ Hand Washing: In our classrooms the children use the sink to wash hands before heading directly to the food prep work. This is where the name sticks or name cards

on the table are so beneficial. Generally, in a Montessori studio, a child's independent work is signified by a rug or individual table. Being that food preparation has so many steps away from the stationary table the snack sticks help keep things clear, especially for younger students. The student is not to touch any snack-related items until they have washed and dried their hands and should rewash if they get dirty on the way. We want to emphasize the importance of cleanliness around food especially when being shared as there are high standards we must uphold when offering this responsibility.

3. Food Preparation: While students should always be preparing their snacks to the best of their abilities, teachers are sure to emphasize safe and healthy practices when using shared food. Dips, peanut butter, cream cheese, etc should not go from the original container directly onto a student's plate. Teachers (or an age-appropriate student) should use a clean utensil to scoop these items into a clean dish. The same utensil should not be used to then put peanut butter from said dish onto a student's plate. The student should take a clean utensil and spread peanut butter from the dish onto their plate. Other things to be mindful of are hand placement when using shared utensils, not licking fingers or utensils while still preparing food, and all-around good table manners when doing the food prep work.

4. Serving and Enjoying: Teachers should prepare the environment to ensure all tools needed are fully accessible to students. Students are then to self-serve and only take the allotted amount for each snack component. They should be using age-appropriate utensils to do things such as cut, spread or scoop and doing it independently to the best of their abilities. As always, teachers may step in when a student has actively tried the work without success but should not be stepping in as a means to hurry the work or lessen the mess. We know that sometimes that is easier said than done but letting our students figure things out on their own and make a mess in the process is their way of learning real-life skills that will benefit them in years to come.

5. Clean Up: Once finished the children clean up their mess. This is another real-life skill we want to become a habit for our students. When we make a mess, we clean it up. The students should throw away any trash, rinse, and return any reusable items to the snack area or dirty dish bin then return their name tag. After all students have had the opportunity to eat snacks, make sure that any leftovers are properly stored. This means all opened food is in an airtight container and labeled with the date of opening. There are reusable bags for your use in the kitchen to ensure we are not wasting food. If it is age-appropriate, this is something the children should be learning by doing themselves. For younger students, be sure to vocalize what steps you are taking to close the bag and why doing that ensures freshness and less waste. Any items taken/used from the kitchen are your responsibility to bring back. When returning leftovers, please rinse any unwashed dishes in your studio sink, when applicable, and place them in a dirty dish bin. We expect our school community to function as a team. In instances where messes are made and we do not know who created the mess, students are expected to help clean up, to benefit the community as a whole.

## Illness Policy

We are not authorized to care for mildly ill children. Children who are ill are not to be brought to school. This includes any children who have received fever-reducing medication within the last 24 hours.

The following are examples of children who are ill:

- A temperature of 100.4 degrees F. or higher
- Vomiting or diarrhea has occurred more than once in the past 24 hours
- A contagious disease such as chickenpox, strep throat, or pink eye
- An unidentified rash
- Has not been on prescribed medication for 24 hours or continues to have symptoms of illness
- Has a constant, thick-colored nasal discharge

If a student should become ill or seriously injured while at school, parents will be contacted immediately. Sick children will be isolated within sight and hearing and made as comfortable as possible. Children should be picked up as soon as possible, within 1 hour. If a student is not picked up within one hour, the emergency contact person on the child's enrollment form will be called.

Children may return to school when they are fever and symptom-free, have been appropriately treated, or have been given medical approval to return to school. Children may not attend school the next day unless they have a doctor's note indicating otherwise.

## Masks & Quarantine

The health and safety of our students are of utmost importance and taken into consideration as we plan and execute every aspect of our school. We place a strong emphasis on the health and well-being of our students through our holistic whole-child approach to education. Proper hand washing, hygiene, care for the environment, and consumption of healthy foods are all ways that we can enable students to understand good healthy practices.

NLPA will operate as a mask-optional school regarding safety precautions around Global Pandemics such as COVID-19. If a student tests positive to a virus they may not return to school until they have one of the following:

1. 5 calendar days have gone by since the positive COVID test and 24 hours symptom-free
2. Have two negative rapid tests at least 24 hours apart or 1 negative PCR test and 24 hours symptom-free
3. Have a Doctor's note stating they may return to school

The administration can reserve the right to send a child home again based on symptoms. If we cannot staff appropriately due to the spread of COVID-19 we will shut down studios and alternate educational plans will be provided.

## Medication Policy

A New Leaf Prep Academy Staff member will administer prescription medications as long as parents have completed the appropriate Medication Authorization Form. We will administer over the counter medications when a Medication Authorization form is on file and all rules below are followed.

All medicine must be in its original container, bearing the label with the child's name, dosage, and administration directions. Additionally, prescription medication will bear the name of the doctor and pharmacy. It will be stored in a medication box that is inaccessible to students. Medicine requiring refrigeration will be kept in a covered, labeled container in the refrigerator.

We will not exceed the age-related dosage on the label of any medication without a written doctor's authorization. If a dose is missed we will not double up. You will be notified and the missed dosage will be documented in the medical log.

## Medication Procedures

In no case may any health, school, or staff member administer any medication outside the framework of the procedures outlined below:

1. Our school does NOT provide medication for students to use.
2. Medication should be taken at home whenever possible. The first dose of any new medication must be given at home.
3. Medication Authorization forms are required for each prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medication administered in school.
4. All medication taken in school must have a parent/guardian signed authorization. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medications, herbal remedies, and supplements.
5. No medication will be accepted by school personnel without the accompanying complete and appropriate medication authorization form.
6. All over-the-counter (OTC) medication must be in the original, sealed container with the name of the medication and its expiration date clearly visible. Parents/guardians must label the original container of the OTC with:
  - A. Name of student
  - B. Exact dosage to be taken in school
  - C. Frequency or time interval dosage is to be administered
7. The parent or guardian must transport medications to and from school.
8. Medication must be kept in the school office, or another administrator-approved location, during the school day. All medication will be stored in a locked cabinet or refrigerator, within a locked area, accessible only to authorized personnel, unless the

- student has prior written approval to self-carry a medication (inhaler, Epi-pen). If the student self-carries, it is advised that a backup medication be kept in the office.
9. Parents/ guardians are responsible for submitting a new medication authorization form to the school at the beginning of the school year and each time there is a change in the dosage or the time of medication administration.
  10. A Licensed Healthcare Provider (LHCP) may use office stationery, prescription pad or other appropriate documentation in lieu of completing Part II. The following information written in lay language with no abbreviations must be included and attached to this medication administration form. Signed faxes are acceptable.
  11. All prescription medications, including physician's samples, must be in their original containers and labeled by a LHCP or pharmacist. Medication must not exceed its expiration date.
  12. The student is to come to the office or a predetermined location at the prescribed time to receive medication. Parents must develop a plan with students to ensure compliance.
  13. Within one week after expiration of the effective date on the order, or on the last day of school, the parent or guardian must personally collect any unused portion of the medication. Medications not claimed within the period will be destroyed.
  14. Students are NOT permitted to self-medicate. The school does not assume responsibility for medication taken independently by the student. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis for students who demonstrate the capability to self-administer emergency life-saving medications (e.g. inhaler, EpiPen)
  15. By signing the Policy Handbook Authorization I give NLPA personnel authorization to administer any medications as directed by their authorization form. I agree to release, indemnify, and hold harmless the School Board, the school, school personnel, employees, or agents from any lawsuit, claim, expense, demand, action, etc., against them for helping my child use properly approved medications. I have read the procedures outlined above and assume responsibility as required. I am aware that medications may be administered by a non-health professional.

## Emergency Medical Treatment

If there is a need for emergency medical treatment, 911 will be called. If it is a life-threatening situation, with no time to consult the child's file or parent, the child will be taken to Prevea Howard Health Center, 2793 Lineville Rd. Green Bay, WI 54313, or St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center, 1726 Shawano Ave, Green Bay, WI 54303. Should an ambulance be needed, parents will be responsible for any costs. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible after contacting 911. All staff will have training in infant and child CPR, AED, and first aid. First aid supplies will be stored in each classroom.

## Special Health Care Needs

When a child is known to have special health care needs, that information will be shared with those staff who are assigned to care for that child, but will otherwise be treated with confidentiality. Such special needs, including dietary requirements, will be posted in the studio emergency binder. When specialized equipment is needed, such as a nebulizer or



epi-pen, the child's parent or a medical professional will train staff in the correct procedures.

## Insurance & Requirements

New Leaf is covered by liability insurance which provides coverage that meets or exceeds the amounts specified by licensing rules or law as applicable. Staff will maintain classroom attendance records recording children's arrivals and departures as they occur to ensure an accurate, ongoing accounting of the children's whereabouts at all times. Comparison of the attendance record to the actual children in care will occur at each transition and frequently throughout the day.

## Disability Accommodations

Parents must meet with the Assistant Head of School to discuss their child's specific needs and to review program policies. We will make reasonable accommodations for a child with disabilities as specified under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Accommodations will be made in accordance with the student's IEP.

## Parental Access to School

If a parent or other authorized person arrives to pick up a child and that person appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, all reasonable steps will be taken to prevent the person from leaving with the child, including offering to call a cab or another contact person. While staff cannot legally withhold a child from the legal guardian, we will not hesitate to call the local authorities if we feel the child is in danger. Parents have full access to review their child's records. If a parent requests access to their school records please direct them to the office.

## Concealed Weapons

New Leaf prohibits firearms, ammunition, and other potentially dangerous items on our premises. Premises - means the tract of land on which the School is located, including all buildings and structures on that land. New Leaf does not allow concealed weapons to be carried on persons (any person or employee entering the building), or on the premises of New Leaf. If a person is found to be in noncompliance with this regulation they will be asked to vacate the premises. If a person should refuse to vacate the premises the local authorities will be contacted.

## Contingency Plans

Staff will receive training on contingency plans and procedures at the start of each school year. Please refer to the Safety Codes and Procedures form for further details on our contingency plans. Our school will practice evacuation drills monthly.

## Severe Weather

In the event of severe weather, children will be kept indoors and if necessary the tornado evacuation plan will be initiated.

## Student Orientation

At the beginning of each school year children & parents will have the opportunity to meet their teacher, see their studio, and drop off any personal belongings that will be kept at school.

## Non-Discrimination Statement

It is the policy of New Leaf Prep Academy not to discriminate based on race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, students, families, and volunteers.

## Admission Process

Students are enrolled at New Leaf Prep Academy through our online admission process. Currently enrolled students and students with enrolled siblings will have priority on openings in addition to children of board members and staff.

### 4-Year-Old Primary

4K Primary seats are part of our Private Preschool which is tuition-based. Students may apply for a 4K seat in our Primary studio by filling out an Admission Application on the preschool website: [www.newleafpreschool.com](http://www.newleafpreschool.com)

### 5-Year-Old Primary

Kindergarten Primary is for students who are 5 years old by September 1st. Previous Montessori experience is preferred, but not required.

### Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary & Secondary

Elementary & Middle School grades 1st-8th are to be completed in chronological order after Kindergarten. Previous Montessori experience is preferred, but not required.

## Enrollment Forms

The State of Wisconsin and the school's Board of Directors require that the following information be kept on file for each child enrolled in the program:

1. Parent Handbook Acknowledgement
2. Enrollment Forms:
  - A. Enrollment Form
  - B. School Acknowledgement Form

3. Support Required Forms:
  - A. Copy of Birth Certificate or Approved Alternative
  - B. Medical Statement
  - C. Immunization Record or a copy of students' immunizations
4. Additional Applicable Forms:
  - A. Allergy & Anaphylaxis Form
  - B. Past Public School Records (Grades K-8th)
  - C. IEP information
  - D. Medication Authorization Form
  - E. Meal Contract
  - F. Custody Court Order

## Forms & Paperwork

Important forms will be placed in student's take-home folders for review. Should you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask your teacher or the office for clarification. Forms for the office can be placed in the black drop box located outside the office or handed directly to office personnel. Any changes to address, phone numbers, emergency contacts, etc, should be directed to the office. All paperwork will be reviewed yearly by administrative staff.

## Withdrawal

Parents must give 90 days written notice of their intent to withdraw their child(ren). Parents will be responsible to pay for services for those 90 days whether or not children continue to attend (If applicable). All outstanding fees must be paid, and no refunds will be given. Parents will be asked to fill out a questionnaire to help us better understand their reasoning for withdrawing their child(ren).

If both New Leaf Prep Academy and parents decide to discontinue enrollment a 90 day notice prior to discharge and written agreement must be signed by both parties. Parents will be required to pay for those 90 days whether or not children continue to attend. All outstanding fees must be paid (when applicable).

## Expulsion Process

Students who reach three suspensions or more may be subject to expulsion. Further, any student who commits a serious violation of the Student Code of Conduct may be expelled regardless of the number of suspension incidents. New Leaf Prep Academy shall provide due process for all students, including adequate and timely notice to parents/guardians and students of the grounds for all expulsion recommendations and decisions and their due process rights regarding expulsion and their right to appeal.

## Disciplinary Hearings

When administration recommends expulsion, a student will be provided a disciplinary hearing prior to expulsion. If a student is recommended for a Disciplinary Hearing, the following procedure will be followed:

## 1. Written Notification:

The student and parent will receive written notice of the Disciplinary Hearing within five days prior to the expulsion hearing and will be provided in a manner and language that the parent can understand. The notice will include:

- The facts and circumstances of each incident for which the student is being recommended for expulsion;
- The date, time, and location of the disciplinary hearing;
- A statement of the student's right to be accompanied by the student's parents/guardians; and
- A statement of the student's right to be represented at the disciplinary hearing by an attorney.

## 2. Hearing:

At the hearing, the student has the right to:

- An impartial decision-maker;
- Be present at the meeting and accompanied by parent/guardians;
- Be represented by an attorney;
- Receive the information and evidence that will be presented by the administration;
- Question administration regarding such evidence and recommendation; and
- Present evidence in response to the administration's recommendation for expulsion.

The hearing will be led by the Assistant Head of School in front of an Independent Hearing Officer (IHO) and will be audio-recorded. Within 48 hours of the Disciplinary Hearing, the IHO will notify the student and the student's parents, in writing, of the decision. The student may be expelled from NLPA for the remainder of their educational career, the student may receive conditional re-enrollment, or the student may return to school based on the decision of the IHO. The IHO will also inform the student and parents of their rights to appeal if they so choose. An appeal may be made to the Chief Education Officer and NLPA Governance Board within 30 days of the Disciplinary Hearing in writing.

After the Disciplinary Hearing, if expulsion is not recommended by the IHO and the student returns to the school, a community circle will be expected with appropriate members of the school community. Students will need to repair the harm caused by their actions and work with the individuals most impacted. Students will work on restoring their relationship with others and repairing any damage to the school community.

Some resources used for handbook content include, AMS ([Amshq.org](http://Amshq.org)) and AMI ([Montessori-ami.org](http://Montessori-ami.org))

# Parent & Student Handbook Acknowledgements

## PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have read and agree to all policies and rules indicated in the New Leaf Prep Academy Parent & Student handbook. I acknowledge that the handbook can be accessed at any time by going to: [www://newleafprepacademy.org](http://www://newleafprepacademy.org)

I understand that New Leaf Prep Academy is a choice school and enrollment is at will of the child's parents or guardians. By signing below I acknowledge that I understand the mission and vision of the school and feel that this is a good fit for my child. I am willing to actively participate in the school community to ensure my child's success at New Leaf Prep Academy.

Parent/Guardian (s) Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I understand that New Leaf Prep Academy is a unique school that allows for freedom within limits and that I have a great deal of control over my education. I am willing to try new things, make mistakes, ask questions and even get dirty! I have reviewed and agree to follow all school rules. I acknowledge that I have reviewed this handbook with a Parent or Guardian.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_