

UPPER ELEMENTARY FIELD TRIP GUIDELINES

“When the child goes out, it is the world that offers itself to him. Let us take the child out to show him real things instead of making objects which represent ideas and closing them in cupboards.”

Maria Montessori (From Childhood to Adolescence, 18)

- Exploring the world outside the classroom is an integral component of the Upper Elementary experience. Children participate in an array of field trips each year.
- As students mature and display appropriate levels of responsibility, they are expected to “go out” to complete their work.
- Maria Montessori’s ideal for the elementary experience was a purposefully limited environment where key lessons provide jumping-off points for additional exploration outside the classroom.
- “Going out,” as it is known in Montessori terms, is designed to foster independence and resourcefulness, and give children important real-life experiences.
- These lessons include independence, exploring the outside world, problem-solving, and collaboration with other students.
- Children who do not participate in curriculum-based “going out” experiences will complete an alternative assignment in keeping with the subject matter.

How are parents involved in “going out” experiences?

- From time to time we enlist the help of parent chaperones to add to the supervision and safety of the trips.
- For some trips, a limited number of parents may chaperone.
- The number of chaperones is based on needs, which include class size, students attending, and the specific trip.
- The number of parent chaperones for each trip is established to provide safety for the children without overwhelming the group with adults. Too many adults detract from the purpose of the trip and the lessons we want the children to learn.
- Allowing the child to experience the trip on his or her own allows the student to become more independent. He or she learns to respect and take direction from other adults in a safe environment.

Updated Chaperone Guidelines

In order to preserve the goals and benefits of “going out” experiences, and to accommodate the needs of the students, the following guidelines will apply:

- All parents who are interested in chaperoning an Upper Elementary trip must submit:
 1. Current Department of Human Services clearance (these are updated every two years)
 2. Upper Elementary Chaperone Application
 3. Chaperone Request Form, indicating interest in attending specific trips. This form must be returned to the teacher by the due date.
- Decisions about chaperones will be made by DHMC personnel, based on the needs listed above. In order for the students to fully benefit from authentic Montessori “going out” experiences, chaperones will be assigned to student groups that do not include their own children.
- Chaperones will attend a mandatory chaperone training meeting prior to camp and year-end trips.
- Teachers, students, and designated chaperones will attend the trip. Additional parents may not join the trip or pay to attend.