



STERLING
MONTESSORI

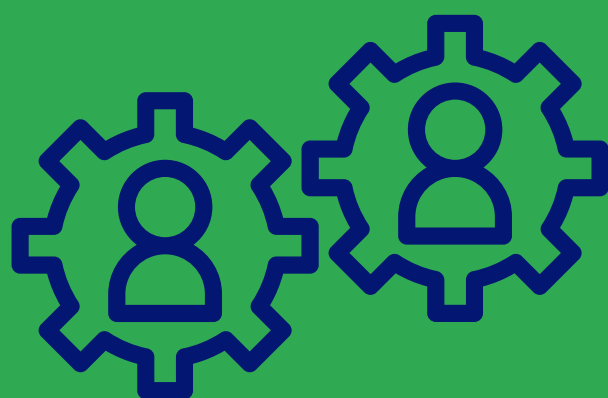
EST. 1997

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

UPDATED 05/22/24

The mission of Sterling Montessori is to create a diverse educational community, grounded in the Montessori philosophy and teaching practices, that fosters curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking in its students. We strive to empower each student to become life-long learners who respect themselves, others and their environment.

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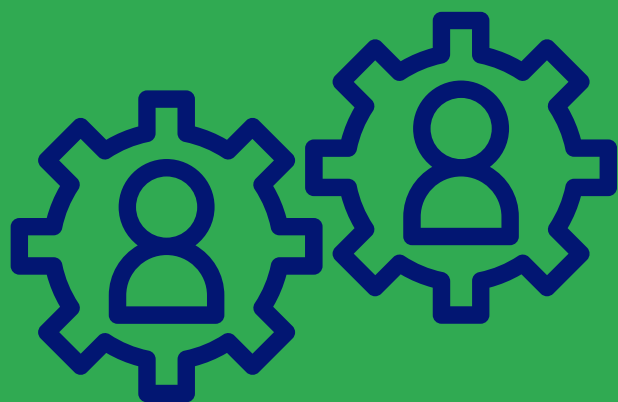
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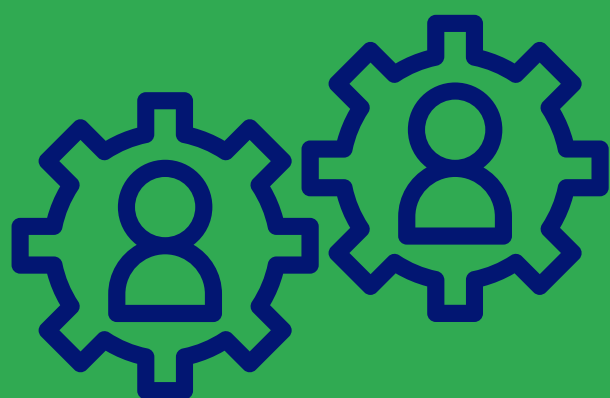


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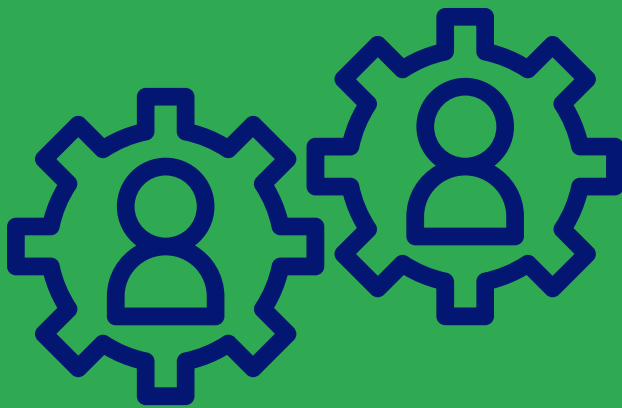
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Welcome

Welcome to Sterling Montessori. You are now an important member of a team of educators who have dedicated their professional lives to children.

This employee handbook is a summary that provides information regarding employee rights and responsibilities related to your time of employment at Sterling Montessori. To access the full copy of this employee handbook, please click [here](#). After you've completed the reading, please initial, date, sign and return the receipt for this handbook to the school office. This receipt will become a part of your employee record.

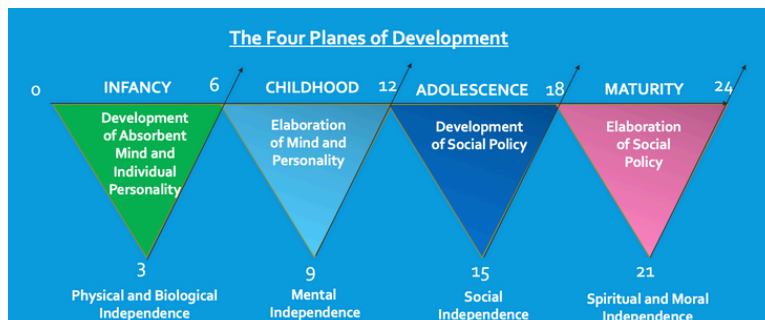
EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY



Sterling Montessori follows the philosophy and teaching practices based on the Montessori Method developed by Dr. Maria Montessori (1870- 1952). Montessori education emphasizes learning through all five senses.

Children learn at their own pace with a goal of nurturing a natural desire for knowledge, understanding, and respect. A child's work at Sterling Montessori is an exciting process of discovery leading to concentration, motivation, self- discipline, and a love of learning.

Montessori classrooms have three-year multi-age groups (ages 3-6, 6-9, 9-12, and 12-15) together, forming communities in which the older children spontaneously share their knowledge with the younger children. The Montessori method of education is a child-centered educational approach based on scientific observations of children. Children develop physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively in order to thrive in the real world.



STERLING MONTESSORI ACADEMY IS...

- an American Montessori Society (AMS) Member school. Sterling Montessori follows the AMS educational guidelines.
- licensed by the State of North Carolina, Division of Child Development and Early Education, as a childcare and preschool facility.
- a full day, Montessori preschool program which offers an optional summer camp.
- overseen by the LHU Board of Directors, a non-profit organization.
- committed to offering parent education in Montessori methods and philosophies.

STERLING MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL IS...

- an AMS (American Montessori Society) Member school. Sterling Montessori follows the AMS educational guidelines.
- a full day, ten-month, Montessori kindergarten, elementary and middle school educational program.
- chartered by the State of North Carolina as a public charter school. Sterling Montessori meets or exceeds all North Carolina State Standards.
- overseen by the LHU Board of Directors, a non-profit organization.
- committed to offering parent education in the Montessori method and philosophies.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

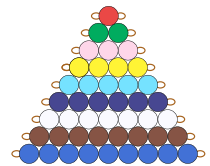
Sterling Montessori...

- nurtures in its children a lifelong love of learning and respect for themselves and others, in a peaceful environment
- follows the philosophy and curriculum of Maria Montessori as the cornerstone of the educational programs. The Montessori curriculum is scientifically based and meets the requirements of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and the Office of Charter Schools
- has an aesthetically pleasing campus and is an interactive extension of the classroom by offering a prepared and sustainable environment for children
- has prepared environments that are developmentally appropriate and provide hands-on learning, freedom of choice, a mixed-age classroom, the absence of rewards and punishments, uninterrupted work periods, and individualized instruction that supports each child's growth
- views diversity as a strength where every individual is welcomed, treated with respect, and supported in their own educational journey. Our diverse population is celebrated and enriches our students' cultural education so that they learn to value differences and listen respectfully to a variety of ideas as a step towards supporting a more peaceful world
- understands that to follow a child with learning differences might require additional expertise and implementing a specialized learning plan in addition to the Montessori curriculum
- is a community where the voices of children, parents, and staff are valued and all members are active participants in creating an ideal learning environment for all
- in pursuit of our mission and goals, is a financially sustainable institution, whose leadership models transparency, accountability, and professionalism for its staff



VISION

Sterling Montessori is a model charter school that demonstrates how the Montessori Method and a commitment to academic excellence helps students reach their full potential. We envision a sustainable, accessible, and diverse institution that graduates thriving students who are engaged in lifelong learning and are empowered to become positive, contributing members of their immediate and global communities.



HISTORY & ACCREDITATION

On June 20, 1989, special education teachers Andrea Faurot and Charles Uzzell opened Cary Montessori in their home with one preschool student and their daughter Molly. From this humble beginning, Sterling Montessori Academy and Charter School was born. By December 1990, Cary Montessori had grown to 90 students and 14 teachers. This rapid growth necessitated a move to larger facilities – first moving into 201 High House Road, then in 1993 – 1994 moving into two additional spaces in Cary.

As demand for a quality Montessori education grew, Andrea and Charles were challenged to find land or facilities in Cary large enough for the growing school. The first six acres in Morrisville were purchased and construction began on A & B buildings, using “natural lighting” concepts. Shortly after completion of the private school in 1996, North Carolina passed laws enabling the creation of Charter Schools. Sterling Montessori Academy and Charter School became a private preschool and public K-8 charter school in 1997.

EMPLOYMENT AT STERLING MONTESSORI

Sterling's founders, Andrea Faurot and Charles Uzzell, are teachers and visionaries committed to the quality of the Montessori education the school provided. The non-profit Laura Holland Uzzell (LHU) foundation was started in 1993 to raise money for teachers to acquire Montessori certification, and for students to have access to a Montessori education. Named after one of Sterling's early supporters, the [LHU Foundation Board](#) operates, and is the governing body of, Sterling Montessori Academy and Charter School (SMACS).

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

It is the policy of Sterling Montessori to provide all applicants for employment with equal employment opportunities and to provide current employees with training, compensation, promotion, and other attributes of employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, citizenship status, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation, except where sex, age, or physical requirements are essential occupational qualifications. All candidates will be evaluated on their merits and qualifications for positions.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) POLICY

In keeping with Sterling Montessori's commitment to equal opportunity employment, Sterling Montessori will ensure compliance with the ADA. All otherwise qualified employees and applicants with a "disability" (as defined by law), will be afforded "reasonable accommodation" in accordance with ADA, as long as accommodation can be provided without undue hardship at Sterling Montessori. Any individual who requests accommodation must contact the Human Resources (HR) Manager who will comply with the requirements of the ADA.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS PHILOSOPHY

We are committed to providing the best possible climate for maximum development and achievement of goals for employees. Our practice is to treat each employee as an individual. We seek to develop a spirit of teamwork; individuals working together to obtain a common goal. In order to maintain an atmosphere where these goals can be accomplished, we provide a workplace which is comfortable and progressive. Most importantly, we have a workplace where communications are open, and problems can be discussed and resolved in a mutually respectful atmosphere, considering individual circumstances and the individual employee. We firmly believe that by communicating with each other directly, we can continue to resolve any difficulties that may arise, as well as develop a mutually beneficial relationship.

EMPLOYEE PRACTICES

SCHOOL STRUCTURE

Our school is composed of two separate educational entities. The Academy services children ages 3-5 and is a tuition-based program. The Charter School services children ages 5-14, which includes Kindergarten through 8th grade.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

All employees, immediately upon acceptance of employment but prior to starting work, shall undergo a criminal records check. Sterling reserves the right to withdraw its offer of employment to any new employee based on the results of the criminal records check. Note that all employees must truthfully and accurately complete all required employment application forms. Any untruthful statement and/or misrepresentation by an employee on their employment application shall be grounds for immediate termination.

As a condition of employment, several requirements must be met prior to beginning employment. These requirements include, but may not be limited to:

- Employment Application/References/Resume
- Criminal Background Check resulting in a Qualification Letter obtained from DHHS. This background check must be renewed as specified in Policy 41: Criminal History and Background Checks
- Tuberculosis (TB Skin Test)
- Medical Staff Report
- Emergency Information Sheet
- Confidentiality Statement
- Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9)
- Documentation of Orientation
- Employee Information / Health Questionnaire



Requirements

01 Required Trainings for All Employees

The following trainings are required for initial hire and will be retaken as specified by the Executive Director or designee.

- CPR Training/Certification
- Wright Specialty Insurance Online Trainings
- Active Shooter Response for K-12 Employees
- Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention for K-12 Employees (Yearly)
- Sexual Harassment Prevention for K-12 Employees
- Workplace Bullying and Violence Prevention

02 Lead Teacher Employment Requirement

- MACTE Montessori Certification for the level at which the teacher is employed
- A Bachelor's Degree
- State licensure (at least 50% of teachers must meet this requirement)
- All teachers will be required to obtain their teaching license within 3 years of the date of employment.



03 Assistant Teacher Employment Requirements

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Embrace Montessori theory and practice, or be willing to attend Professional Development on how it relates to the Assistant Teacher's job responsibilities.

04 Additional Requirements for Academy Children Employees

- Child Abuse and Neglect Statement
- Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma Staff Acknowledgement
- In-Service Training Requirements
- Health and Safety Pro Solutions Training:
- Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases (Including Immunization)
- Hand-washing: Clean Hands = Better Health
- Blood-borne Pathogens
- Infectious Disease Control: Kick Those Germs to the Curb!
- Administration of Medication
- Medication Administration in the Child Care Setting: Using Proper Practices and Procedures
- Prevention of and Response to Emergencies Due to Food and Allergic Reactions
- Food Allergies: Recognizing Allergic Reactions and Meal Planning in the Child Care Setting
- Building and Physical Premises Safety
- Ensuring Building and Physical Premises Safety
- Essentials of Outdoor Safety
- Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma
- Brain Development: Amazing Brains, Amazing Babies- Physical Well- Being, Stress and Trauma
- Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Response Planning
- Emergency Preparedness: Better Safe Than Sorry!
- Responding to Medical Emergencies
- Handling and Storage of Hazardous Materials and the Appropriate Disposal of Bio-Contaminants
- Essentials of Indoor Safety
- Recognizing and Responding to Suspicions of Child Maltreatment

Professional Development

Continuing education funds can be made available to employees. Professional development should be geared towards educational opportunities that are relevant to your classroom's philosophy and curriculum.

Employees interested in pursuing such funds should submit a Professional Development Request Form to their Section Director for approval.

Licensure

Sterling Montessori Lead Teachers are required to obtain State Licensure within three years of being hired. Professional Educator's Initial Licenses are intended for teachers with 0-2 years of teaching experience, and are valid for three years. To be issued a Professional Educator's Initial License, an individual must have:

- Completed a state approved teacher education program from a regionally accredited college or university
- or
- Completed another state's approved alternative route to licensure and earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college.

To be issued a Professional Educator's Initial License, teachers must also have:

- Praxis II Testing - for middle grades (6-9), secondary (9-12), and K-12 (including Exceptional Children: General Curriculum) license areas
- and
- Pearson Testing for North Carolina: Foundations of Reading and General Curriculum - for Elementary Education and Exceptional Children: General Curriculum licenses only.

Professional Educator's Continuing Licenses are intended for teachers with 3 or more years of teaching experience, and are valid for five years. Teachers who are fully licensed in another state who have three or more years of teaching experience AND who meet NC State Board of Education approved licensure exam requirements, OR have National Board Certification, are issued the Professional Educator's Continuing License.

Teachers who hold a current license to teach in the state of North Carolina are required to complete continuing education credits (CEUs) in order to maintain and renew their professional teaching license. More information on state licensure can be obtained from DPI. Teachers are responsible for fulfilling their CEU requirements as well as payment.

Licensure

All Lead teachers will receive an email reminder of their licensure obligations 12 months before the license renewal date.

Probationary Period

The probationary period for new employees lasts 90 days from the contracted date of hire. You are eligible for health benefits after 30 days if your average hours per week are at least 30 hours.

During the probationary period, you have your first opportunity to evaluate Sterling Montessori as a place to work and we have our first opportunity to evaluate you as an employee. A New Staff Orientation is required for all new employees. As part of this orientation the administrators will provide an on-the-job-review of Sterling Montessori's procedures and policies. When necessary, employees will be given a job performance review after the 6 weeks' employment anniversary, and again after 10 weeks. These reviews will be conducted by your Direct Supervisor. Upon successful completion of this probationary period, you will become a permanent employee.

Personnel File

Pursuant to North Carolina law, personnel files shall be available for the employee's inspection at all reasonable times. Any pre-employment information may be kept in a file separate from the personnel file and need not be made available to the employee for inspection.

Contract Renewal

All employees who receive written employment contracts will receive an offer of re-appointment, or notification of the status of their re-appointment in the spring before the next school year. When you receive an offer of re-appointment, you have 10 business days to sign and return your contract to the Executive Director or designee. If your contract is not returned within that time, the offer of re-appointment expires automatically, unless the Executive Director or designee elects to extend that time limit.

Outside Employment

Any outside employment must not conflict in any way with your responsibilities at Sterling Montessori.

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

All staff are required to work their specified contract hours. When late or absent for work, notify your Section Director, teaching partner and office administrator as soon as possible and prior to the start of your work day. Ten days advance notice and approval from your Section Director is required for personal leave. If the required advanced notice is not given, you may be denied your request for time off. This helps to ensure safe and adequate coverage for the children.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

When school is in session, employees are required to respond to parent emails within 48 hours.

If a parent has a question related to instruction or that relates to the classroom in any way the classroom teacher should be the first person whom the parent would go for information and/or resolution. If after a period of problem solving the parent does not feel their concern has been resolved by the teacher, they should ask the teacher for a meeting with the appropriate director.

When setting a meeting directly with the director, parents/guardians should have already tried to address the issue with the teacher and should feel comfortable asking the teacher for an administrative conference. If the parent feels the teacher and director have not sufficiently resolved their concern, they may bring their concern to the Director of Student Affairs.

TEACHER HOURS & BREAK

The standard work day for full time employees is from 8:00 am -4:00 pm or as stated in the annual employment contract. Teachers and assistants are expected to work the same hours on professional development days, conference days, and teacher work days.

It is expected that staff attend meetings as stated in the annual employment contract. Lead Teachers shall attend any staff meetings, professional development, trainings, parent workshops, and annual open house outside of standard working hours as requested by the Section Director and as stated in the annual employment contract. Throughout the year, Sterling Montessori will conduct school functions, such as festivals and performances. Sterling Montessori encourages participation by all its employees during these functions as part of their employment with the school.

BLACK-OUT PERIODS & CAPPED DAYS

Due to the importance of full coverage there are certain “black-out” periods when leave is typically denied. These include conference and teacher work days, one week before the opening of school, the first and last week of school, during EOG testing and the day before or after a vacation period or holiday.

Leave may be denied if days are capped due to high number of leave requests or lack of substitutes on any particular day.

PARKING

Employees are required to park within the designated areas. The school is not responsible for loss, damage, or theft to your vehicle.

FACULTY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT & EVALUATION PROCESS

Sterling Montessori is dedicated to supporting the professional growth and development of each faculty and staff member. In order to accomplish this support, Sterling follows an annual comprehensive professional growth and evaluation process for its faculty and staff.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH FOR INDIVIDUALS AND THE REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Sterling Montessori is a school that nurtures and develops its staff to be a reflective, child centered community. Each Director plays a vital role in creating a space where teachers feel safe to reflect upon their daily practice in the classroom with the children. The school and directors support the teachers in alignment with AMS standards in the following ways:

- Prepared Environment: Directors help remove obstacles for the adults to maximize their potential. Teachers will prepare their environments to be beautiful, organized and well maintained.
- Role of the Adult: Directors support teachers in ways that will cultivate each teacher to demonstrate Grace and Courtesy, the ability to listen, be honest, respectful, show patience and kindness to the children, parents/guardians, colleagues and administration.

- Professional Development: Directors will help identify professional development goals for teachers to help them meet their highest potential and meet the needs of the children they serve in their classrooms.
- Directors will support their team members in the work of the shared mission by observing on a regular basis and meeting 1:1 to discuss the observations and see what is working and what are areas of growth. This is an opportunity for teachers and directors to practice the reflective process:
- Looking over the Observation (data collection) form
- Discussing what trends the teacher sees (children not working in Practical Life and only in Math and Language)
- Develop a plan on how to address any issues that they may see in their classroom
- Evaluate: How will you know if the plan is working? What will you see as a result?
- Continue the process and refine goals and action items when necessary

CODE OF ETHICS AND STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

Employees of Sterling Montessori hold positions of public trust and are responsible for the education of our children, which includes being a good role model. Each employee at Sterling Montessori is a professional who is dedicated to the education of our children according to the [AMS Code of Ethics and NC Educators Code of Ethics](#).

All staff are expected to conduct themselves according to the highest standards of honesty, integrity, fairness, and respect for themselves and others at all times. All staff are responsible for both the integrity and the consequences of their own actions. Conduct that interferes with or adversely affects the operation of the school, brings discredit on the school, or is offensive to others will not be condoned or tolerated and is grounds for disciplinary action by your Section Director or Executive Director. This may include, but is not limited to, a verbal or written warning, a suspension without pay, immediate termination, or non-renewal of an employment contract. The infraction and what actions were taken to resolve the issue will be documented and filed in the employee's file.

Each employee has an obligation to observe and follow the School's mission, policies, the Guiding Principles and maintain proper standards of conduct at all times.

Guidelines and Strategies for a Montessori Approach to Education: Sterling Montessori cultivates a rich diversity of backgrounds and opinions and shares a commitment to the values underlying the [AMS Code of Ethics and NC Educators Code of Ethics](#). In a climate of mutual respect and support, we each play a significant part in developing and supporting these values in ourselves, our children and the community at large.

Perspectives Related to Attitude Toward Self and Others

Attitude: recognize oneself as being a unique individual.

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to exhibit unconditional positive regard for each child as a person of worth and dignity, regardless of his or her behavior. Children in a classroom of mixed ages are encouraged to show mutual respect and empathy for others by working together toward common outcomes. These ongoing experiences develop social skills as a response to conditions, rather than through direct teaching intervention.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The strategy for the Sterling employee is to exhibit positive regard for each individual as a person of worth and dignity, is sensitive to cultural differences and is respectful in communications with families, staff, community members, and other stakeholders.

Attitude: to be self-evaluative, to have a realistic knowledge of one's own strengths and weaknesses.

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to provide constant encouragement and support for each child by responding to their individual needs and interests. When discouraging situations arise, the teacher approaches all situations with a solution-oriented framework. The teacher is expected to be positive and respectful to the child.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The strategy for the Sterling employee is to display a realistic appreciation of his/her strengths and weaknesses, and delegate responsibilities based, in part, on that awareness. Employees manage their time effectively, remain calm in the face of stress and understand their emotional triggers and take steps to mitigate their impact on the organization.

Attitude: to work in alignment with Sterling's Code of Ethics and to remain true to those values under emotional or group pressures.

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to develop a community consensus as well as specify guidelines for acceptable behavior, Grace and Courtesy, and restorative practices. The emphasis of these guidelines is mutual respect and acceptance of individual differences. They provide concrete and consistent rules for the class. The group enforces these standards of behavior.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The strategy of the Sterling employee is to put the needs of the organization as a whole above individual preference or self-preservation. They take a consistent stand for the integrity of the school's mission and sustainability. Sterling employees are meticulous about promoting open, honest and direct communication across the school community, taking care to avoid triangles, splitting or other dysfunctional patterns of conflict or avoidance.

Attitude: *to be able to work with others to set and meet reasonable goals by learning how to contribute ideas, listen to others and to compromise.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy of the teacher is to widen the learning process for the child by offering a variety of collaborative opportunities. The spirit of cooperation is encouraged through mixed-aged mentoring.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The strategy of the Sterling employee is to understand the feelings and perspectives of others and assumes the best intentions of all. The employee is an excellent listener, giving full attention to those who are speaking and makes working collaboratively a priority.

Attitude: *to develop a sense of responsibility and be accountable for their choices.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to apply the principles and strategies of Positive Discipline.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The Sterling employee seeks feedback from all members of the community, asks questions, and listens authentically to multiple points-of-views. The employee finds value in and actively reflects on one's self and willingly takes responsibility for errors and will take risks in order to improve practice. They are resilient and able to recover from setbacks. When at school, employees direct their full attention to the growth and development of children.

This is evident in behavioral norms such as: arriving on time to school and to meetings, refraining from checking email while in meetings, refraining from cell phone use, etc.

Attitude: *to be well rounded in their physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to apply the Montessori approach to education, which does not isolate subject matter, but rather incorporates and demonstrates the interrelationship of all knowledge.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The Sterling employee deliberately demonstrates curiosity about what goes on in the life of the student and seeks to build a deeper knowledge base of Montessori theory and practice. They embody the core values of the school with all community members-children, trained and untrained staff, families, and other stakeholders. They are intentional about caring for their physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

Perspectives Related to Attitudes Towards Society

Attitude: *to understand the interdependence of humans, animals, plants and the natural resources of the Earth.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to provide knowledge, which demonstrates the interdependencies of man with nature, and shows the child his place in preserving and protecting the ecological balance.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling Montessori is dedicated to incorporating our stakeholders in school-wide functions and educational opportunities.

Attitude: *to have knowledge of and respect for the different ways humans have met their physical and spiritual needs over the ages.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to provide a wide scope of history that shows that humankind has been meeting the same basic needs throughout time. The child has a rightful place in this contribution to the greater good. Faculty will use the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them; they teach to and through student's strengths.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling Montessori's faculty and staff value diversity. Faculty and staff are accepting of all backgrounds and respect the different cultural backgrounds and customs, different ways of communicating and different traditions and values. We strive to be culturally self-aware. We have an understanding and an awareness that culture is the sum total of an individual's experiences, knowledge, skills, beliefs, values, and interests—it shapes a person's sense of who they are and where they fit in their family, school, community, and society.

Attitude: *to recognize personal choices.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to respect and listen to each child's individual choices and guide them to build confidence and self-worth by providing a variety of choices throughout their day.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling's staff provide parent education for the practice of independent choice and the student led work cycle.

Attitude: *to be able to communicate clearly and comfortably with individuals of all ages and backgrounds.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to model and interact respectfully with all community members in all situations.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling staff are direct, specific, and consistent in communicating expectations about social interactions, care of the environment, and purposeful work. The tone of voice and body language are calm, soft and pleasant.

Attitude: *to learn courteous, caring, and respectful behavior.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to set a positive tone: be confident, fair, consistent, and respectful. The classroom community will establish clear expectations and enforce reasonable and well-defined rules.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling's faculty and staff intentionally practice Grace and Courtesy when interacting with all stakeholders.

Attitude: *to be able to use a variety of effective positive techniques for resolving conflict.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to reinforce desirable behavior through the Positive Discipline principles and strategies and to apply Restorative Conflict practices.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling employees resolve conflicts and questions through in-person conversations. They regard those with whom they have difficulty as their greatest teachers.

Perspectives Related to Attitudes Towards Work and Learning

Attitude: *to be self-directed, to be able to initiate activities, organize time, and complete projects reflective of their potential.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to monitor and guide the child from one activity to another when necessary. The teacher will assist the child towards independent learning by setting positive expectations and reinforcing success. The teacher or child will keep records of their work and progress, and these will be reviewed on a regular basis. Expectations and strategies for growth will be shared with the child.

Strategy with Stakeholders: Sterling Montessori is dedicated to providing Professional Development opportunities for faculty and staff. The school provides ongoing opportunities for family education, including information sessions, discussion groups, observation of classrooms, and parent-teacher- student conferences

Attitude: *to develop critical thinking skills.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to provide a wide scope of information and learning tools for the child to evaluate information and perspectives.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The Sterling employee develops strong partnerships between home and school which is evident in all formal and informal communications.

Attitude: *to be creative, using imagination to generate fresh and new ideas in all areas.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to provide a climate of acceptance that sponsors creative thought and allows for freedom of imagination. The child is encouraged to do so in their own way, without predetermined standards.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The Sterling employee continually strives to realize their own human potential, and look toward the students and each other for inspiration.

Attitude: *to develop and maintain a love of learning.*

Strategy with Students: The strategy for the teacher is to embrace and model a love of learning and demonstrate a growth mindset.

Strategy with Stakeholders: The strategy for the Sterling employee is to stay up-to-date on the latest research on human development, and best practices, including new insights on neuroscience and cognition and their relationship to Montessori theory and practice.

ANTI-HARASSMENT AND ANTI-BULLYING

Sterling Montessori acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and employees and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. Sterling Montessori prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age. Sterling Montessori will not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying in any of its educational or employment activities or programs. Any violation of this policy will be considered serious and the school administration shall promptly take appropriate action to address the violation. *Our complete Prohibition against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (P.9) can be found in the Policies document.*

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is conduct of a sexual nature that creates an unwelcome environment; it does not require physical contact. It is our policy to prohibit sexual harassment of any kind. *Our complete Sexual Harassment Policy (P.30) can be found in the Policies document.*

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

An employee's primary duty is to represent the school at all times to the best of his or her ability. To this end, an employee should not become involved in any situation which may create a personal interest or place the employee under any obligation that may interfere with this primary duty.

Each employee has a duty to be free from any influence which might conflict or appear to conflict with the interest of Sterling Montessori or which might deprive the employee of his or her undivided loyalty and business.

A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual has competing interests or loyalties. No employee should directly or indirectly engage in conduct which is disloyal, disruptive, competitive, or damaging to the school. *Our complete Conflicts of Interest Policy (P.31) can be found in the Policies document.*

NEPOTISM

Nepotism is favoritism based on kinship. The purpose of our nepotism policy is to protect the interests of Sterling Montessori when it is contemplating entering into an arrangement with an immediate family member or a member of the LHU Board of Directors or an employee of Sterling Montessori. *Our complete Nepotism Policy (P.32) can be found in the Policies document.*

TOBACCO USE

Sterling Montessori prohibits the use or display of any tobacco product by any person on school property. For the purposes of this Policy, "tobacco product" is defined to include cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. "Tobacco use" includes smoking, chewing, dipping, or any other use of tobacco products. "Display" is defined as having any tobacco product in a location or position that is visible to children or school personnel.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

Sterling Montessori complies with state and federal laws maintaining a drug-free workplace. This policy will govern each employee while on school property and at any time during which an individual employee is acting within the course and scope of his/her employment or at any other time that the employee's violation of this policy has a direct and adverse effect upon the performance of his/her job. *Our complete [Drug-Free Workplace Policy \(P.32\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*

WEAPONS

No weapons of any sort, whether or not concealed, are permitted on Sterling Montessori campus or school-sponsored events or activities.

DRESS CODE

All employees are expected to maintain the highest standard of professional cleanliness and present a neat, professional appearance at all times. As employees they are integrated parts of the classroom environment, serve as role models for the students with whom they work and as leaders in the community. Consistent with these roles, all faculty and employees shall dress in a manner and have an appearance that is appropriate and professional in light of the environment in which they work, the duties of their jobs and the impressionable students they serve. We understand that working with children can be messy work, so there is a balance to be struck. Employees are to wear clothing that is neat and clean. Employees are not to wear clothing that is revealing, torn, tattered, dirty and excessively faded, or with visual, written, or implied messages that are likely to disrupt the school environment. Employees are not to wear attire prohibited in the student dress code. Sweatpants and ripped jeans are prohibited. *Our complete [Dress Code Policy \(P. 56\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Sterling Montessori prohibits the use of corporal punishment. No school employee or volunteer may use corporal punishment to discipline any child. Corporal punishment is defined as all forms of physical punishment including, but not limited to spanking, paddling or slapping. *Our complete [Discipline Policy \(P. 61\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*

CARE OF ENVIRONMENT

All Sterling Montessori employees are expected to use proper care when using Sterling Montessori's property and equipment. No school property may be removed from the premises without proper authorization. If any school property is lost, broken or damaged for any reason whatsoever, it must be reported to a supervisor immediately. Sterling Montessori has the right to charge an employee for any damage they cause to property or equipment.

The Prepared Environment: Preparation of the "prepared environment" is an ongoing task in the Montessori class. It remains the responsibility of all those who use the class. Children are encouraged to return the materials in such a way that the materials will be ready for others to use. At the end of the day, all chairs must be stacked or placed on the tabletops in order for floors to be cleaned. Students should also help to clean up the floor. Sink areas are to be kept clean and clear to give the custodians access to the surfaces for cleaning.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATING TO EMPLOYMENT

Policies and Procedures: All Sterling Montessori employees are responsible for knowing and understanding the policies and procedures outlined in the Employee & Parent Handbook.

Protecting School and/or Child Information: It is the responsibility of every employee to protect the school's and child's confidential information and all employees share a common interest in making sure that such information is not improperly or accidentally disclosed. The business affairs of the school or child's confidential business should not be discussed outside the organization except when required in the normal course of business. Access to any sensitive school or child information and operating procedures will be limited to those employees on a "need to know" basis. Any employee in the possession of confidential information is responsible for its security and extreme care must be taken to ensure that this information is safeguarded to protect the school, its children, and its employees. In the event that the media reaches out to any school employee, refer them to the Executive Director. Do not respond to any media inquiries. Confidential child information is protected by state and federal law, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

GRIEVANCE

Sterling Montessori strives to encourage harmony among its employees, faculty, children, and parents/guardians. When disagreements arise, Sterling Montessori always tries to find equitable solutions through open and honest communication. All grievances should be resolved as close to their source as possible. Any grievance should only move to a higher level of authority after direct communication between those initially involved has failed to produce a resolution.

Faculty Grievance: For those cases in which more informal attempts at a resolution of a problem have not been successful, Sterling Montessori is committed to providing employees a fair procedure for prompt consideration of the complaints. *Our complete [Grievance Policy \(P.33\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*

VOLUNTARY SEPARATION / INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION

In the event an employee's employment with Sterling Montessori is voluntarily or involuntarily terminated, the code of ethics and standards of behavior and all procedures are expected to be followed until the last day of employment at Sterling Montessori. Involuntarily or voluntarily terminating employment may forfeit any bonus or pay raise to that employee for that contracted year.

Voluntary Separation: Individuals who leave employment with Sterling Montessori are expected to provide adequate notice, return school property, and satisfy outstanding financial or other obligations before their last work day. Until all financial matters or other obligations are settled the last paycheck will be held. Sterling Montessori may pay employees for unused accumulated paid leave per this policy.

Involuntary Termination: Occasionally, it becomes necessary to terminate an employee involuntarily. The Involuntary Termination Procedures are to be employed to ensure due process for all employees and that all employees are treated in a just and equitable manner. *Our complete [Involuntary Termination Policy \(P.35\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*

TELEPHONE USE

Classroom Telephone Use: Faculty and staff are expected to use the school's telephone system to conduct school business and to only make personal local calls when it is absolutely necessary.

Employee Use of Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices: Employees are permitted to possess cell phones on campus. Cell phone use must take place outside of the presence of students. This includes checking emails from personal devices.

All parent communications shall be made through school phones and devices. Taking photos or videos of students using personal devices is prohibited. *Our complete [Employee Policy on Cell Phones \(P.36\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Responsible Use of Technology: Sterling Montessori attempts to provide an extensive technology infrastructure toward the purpose of improving the School's educational, administrative, and clerical functions. The significant ongoing investment in technology prepares students for life and work and increases the productivity of current faculty and staff. Sterling Montessori intends that children and employees will remain within the bounds of safe, legal and responsible use of technology. *Our complete [Use of Technology Policy \(P.#37\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*

Parental Consent: Sterling Montessori recognizes that parents/guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards their children should follow when using media and information sources. Accordingly, before a child may independently access the Internet, the child's parent must be made aware of the possibility that the child could obtain access to inappropriate material while engaged in independent use of the Internet. The parent and child must consent to the child's independent access to the Internet and to monitoring of the child's Internet activity and e-mail communication by school personnel. In addition, in accordance with Sterling Montessori's goals and visions for technology, children may require accounts in third party systems for school related projects designed to assist children in mastering effective and proper online communications or to meet other educational goals. Parental permission will be obtained when necessary to create and manage such third-party accounts.

USE OF PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY

Personal Websites and Social Media: The Executive Director or designee may use any means available to request the removal of personal websites and social media accounts that substantially disrupt the school environment or that utilize Sterling Montessori school names, logos, or trademarks without permission.

Children: Though school personnel generally do not monitor children's internet activity conducted on non-Sterling Montessori devices during non-school hours, when the child's online behavior has a direct and immediate effect on school safety or maintaining order and discipline in the school, the child may be disciplined in accordance with school policy and applicable federal, state and local laws.

Employees: Pictures that show children should not be uploaded to an employee's social media account or personal website without the parent or guardian's consent. All parent communications shall be made through school phones and devices. Taking photos or videos of students using personal devices is prohibited.

Use of Personal Technology on Sterling Montessori Property

Sterling Montessori assumes no responsibility for personal technology devices brought to school. To prevent the introduction of malicious code and protect the integrity of Sterling Montessori's information resources, Sterling Montessori's technology team may restrict the use of any hardware or software it deems inappropriate.

EMPLOYEE PAY

PAYROLL

Sterling Montessori has one (1) pay period per month: the pay period ends on the last day of the month and is payable on that day. Employees can view pay stubs on the Employee Linq Portal. If you have questions about the direct deposit program, please contact the HR Manager.

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Two types of deductions are made from each employee's gross pay. Mandatory deductions required by federal or state agencies and voluntary deductions.

Mandatory deductions will be made automatically in accordance with legal requirements. Your records provide accurate information within legal limitations as a basis for these deductions. Attachment made to an employee's paychecks by legal authority of wage garnishment, regardless of cause, will be treated as a mandatory deduction in the amount and for the time specified by such authority. Voluntary deductions will not be made without your written authorization.

SALARY POLICY

It is the goal of Sterling Montessori to offer fair and competitive compensation for all employees.

Lead Teachers: All lead teachers will be compensated according to the salary scale for licensed and non-licensed teachers published by the State of North Carolina, with any additional salary supplements offered by Wake County. This salary scale includes additional compensation for teachers with advanced degrees and National Board Certification.

It is the goal of Sterling Montessori that all lead teachers possess a valid North Carolina Professional Educator's License, appropriate for the grade level they are teaching. Lead teachers hired after January 2018 will be required to obtain their teaching license within 3 years of the date of employment. All teachers who are hired without a teaching license are to be initially paid on the NC Salary Scale. If and when they obtain their license, they will be moved to the Wake County Scale. If a teacher is unable to obtain a license during that time period, their salary scale will revert to the scale published by the State of North Carolina, without the additional salary supplement offered by Wake County.

Lead Teachers - Masters Degree Completion

All Lead teachers will be compensated the following pay period of Sterling Montessori receiving the official college transcript confirming completion of the MA degree.

Retro-Pay

All Lead teachers will receive retro-pay the current year when the license has been updated and Sterling Montessori receives confirmation of the employee's updated licensure (Employee must provide an updated license).

Teaching Assistants: Sterling Montessori has developed its own, internal salary scale for Teaching Assistants. Most notably, for teaching assistants hired after January 2018, Sterling Montessori will not pay an additional bonus for teaching assistants with Master's degrees.

Administrative Personnel: Sterling Montessori has a set salary scale for administrative personnel based on the educational level and experience of each employee.

CHECK REQUEST

Please allow 30 days to process the check request. Check request forms not accompanied by proper documentation will not be processed.

Reimbursement checks that are not cashed/deposited by the employee within 6 months will be voided.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS MUST ACCOMPANY THE REQUEST FORM:

- Invoice/statement/receipt
- A copy of your Field Trip Approval Form (if applicable)

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Items that cannot be purchased online or ahead of time can be reimbursed, however, purchases over \$100 must have prior approval from your Section Director.
- Once you have your receipt, please submit the receipt that shows that the field trip / other expenditure was paid for along with the check request form.
- Please staple all receipts to the back of the check request form.

FIELD TRIP CHECK REQUEST

- Funds must be available in your field trip account.
- Accounting will NOT provide checks for your field trip or other class expenditure if your account has insufficient funds.
- Checks cannot be processed without supporting documentation for either a payment to a vendor or for reimbursement.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Health benefits are available for all employees who work 30 or more hours per week. There is a 30-day waiting period for new employees.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Sterling Montessori pays 100% of the NC State Employee Coverage plus \$15 of the State subscribers co-pay.

Health Insurance: The NC State Health Plan, administered by Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC, offers two PPO plans to eligible employees:

- Enhanced 80/20 PPO
- Traditional 70/30 PPO

Eligible employees are permanent full-time employees working 30 or more hours per week;

Insurance premiums: Your cost will depend on the plan and coverage you choose. Coverages include Employee Only, Employee + Child(ren), Employee + Spouse and Employee + Family. Eligibility does not guarantee employer contribution towards your premiums. To view 12-month rates, visit the NC State Health Plan at www.shpnc.org or call (888) 234-2416.

Enrollment: Eligible employees and dependents may enroll within 30 days of hire or qualifying life event Open enrollment is available as determined by Sterling's Insurance Plans.

DENTAL INSURANCE

Sterling Montessori pays for the employee's coverage.

VISION INSURANCE

Sterling Montessori pays for the employee's coverage.

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT

Sterling Montessori offers a Flexible Spending Account for employees to withhold amounts for medical and child care expenditures.

RETIREMENT PLAN

Employees who work 20 hours or more/week can have amounts withheld to invest in a 403b retirement plan. Sterling Montessori will contribute 50 cents on the dollar up to the first 6 % of the employee's contribution.

VESTING

A year of vesting service is earned when 1,000 hours have been worked in a contract year (July 1 - June 30). Generally, an Hour of Service is earned for each paid hour of work but there are exceptions that may apply.

LIFE INSURANCE

Employees are covered for life insurance in the amount of their annual salary. (Reduced benefits for advanced age of employee).

SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE

Supplemental Insurance is also available to Sterling Montessori employees.

SCHOOL RELATED EMPLOYEE DISCOUNTS

- Full time Employees receive 60% off Annual Children's House tuition for their children. Application fee and new student fees are waived.
- Employees receive free Before/After/Staff Care while the employee is working including on professional development days.
- If the employee is working at Sterling Montessori camps, their children will receive free tuition for camps. There is no discount for employees not working at Sterling Montessori camps.

For these discounts, "children" are defined as biological children, adopted children, foster children, step children, children for whom you stand in the place of a parent, or children for whom you are a legal guardian. Proof of guardianship by way of a Court Order is required.

ADMISSIONS FOR CHILDREN OF EMPLOYEES

Sterling Montessori will offer priority enrollment for children of full-time Sterling Montessori employees, not to exceed 15% of the school's total enrollment. The tuition for the Academy will be reduced by 60% and the New Student Fee is waived.

Before and After Care for children of employees is offered at no additional cost. Employees must fill out all required applications and child information sheets.

Our complete policy on [Charter Admissions \(P.39\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.

Sterling Montessori Retirement Savings Plan

ASPIRE Smart Retirement Solutions

Eligibility

You are eligible to participate in the plan immediately upon hire, unless you are an employee who normally works fewer than 20 hours per week or are a student performing services for the company described under IRS CodeSection 410(b)(3)(c).

Manage Your Retirement Account and Ongoing

To enroll in the plan or go over investment options regarding any of the 403(b) plan's provisions or the investments offered within the plan, please contact:

Christopher Norlund to enroll in the plan or go over their investment options@
christopher.nordlund@nfp.com 800-826-7859 ext. 6398 or 301.214.7088.

Kadedra Warran to discuss the Plan, the transition, how to logon, how to make investment election changes, make deferral changes @ kadedra.warren@nfp.com or 800-826-7859 ext. 6192.

Investments

You may change the future investment direction for new contributions and/or transfer existing amounts in your account among a variety of investment options that have been approved by the plan's trustees. To access your account for the first time:

- Please log onto <https://investlink.aspireonline.com>
- Create Login Link
- Enter your Plan ID: #**34682**
- Complete all five of the mandatory fields and click Submit
- Create your personal Username and Password
- Login using the Username and Password that you have created

***For assistance with resetting your password, please contact ASPIre Financial at 866-634-5873 option 1.**



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE STERLING MONTESSORI RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN

Effective Date of the Plan

July 1, 2006

Plan Year

July 1st – June

Eligibility

30th

You are eligible to participate in the plan immediately upon hire, unless you are an employee who normally works fewer than 20 hours per week or are a student performing services for the company described under IRS Code Section 410(b)(3)(c).

Participant Contributions

For 2018, you can contribute up to \$18,500 to the plan on a pre-tax basis or on a ROTH (after-tax) basis. If you will be at least 50 years old by December 31, 2018, you can contribute an additional “catch-up” contribution of \$6,000.

Employer Discretionary Matching Contributions

Any eligible employee who is over 21 years of age, has completed 1 year of service, for which that work at least 1000 hours will be eligible to receive the discretionary matching contribution. This amount is determined by the Plan Sponsor and is given on a uniformed percentage basis of an employee’s elective deferral into the plan.

Rollover Contributions

The 403(b) Plan accepts most rollover contributions.

Vesting (ownership)

You are always 100% vested in the contributions you defer into the plan. Employer discretionary matching contributions shall be 100% vested upon the vesting schedule below:

Years of Vesting Service Percent Vested

Less than 1 yr.	0%
1 but less than 2	20.000%
2 but less than 3	40.000%
3 but less than 4	60.000%
4 but less than 5	80.000%
5 or more	100.000%

Retirement

Normal retirement age is age 65. Early retirement age is age 55.

LEAVE POLICIES FOR TEN (10) MONTH AND/OR TWELVE (12) MONTH EMPLOYEES

CALENDAR

Every Winter, upon approval of the LHU Board, the Executive Director or designee publishes a school calendar for the upcoming school year. This calendar is composed of 173 school days.

Our complete policy on [Holidays and Vacations for 10 Month Employees](#) can be found in the Policies document.

PERSONAL LEAVE

Unless otherwise specified in the employment contract, Personal Leave may not be used during the first or last week of the school year and is subject to blackout periods as identified by the Executive Director or designee. Requests for Personal Leave must be made at least 10 days in advance, and approvals are subject to the needs of the school and are in the sole discretion of the Executive Director or designee. Personal Leave may be taken in increments as small as one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) day, and, unless due to illness or family emergency, must be approved by the Executive Director or designee.

Full-time employees shall accrue a maximum of twelve (12) days per year of Personal Leave. *Our complete [Leave for 10 Month Employees Policy \(P.13\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*

ADDITIONAL LEAVE POLICIES FOR TWELVE (12) MONTH EMPLOYEES

Unless otherwise specified in the employment contract, Vacation and Personal Leave may not be used during the first or last week of the school year and is subject to blackout periods as identified by the Executive Director or designee. Requests for Vacation and Personal Leave must be made at least 10 days in advance, and approvals are subject to the needs of the school and are in the sole discretion of the Executive Director or designee. Vacation and Personal Leave may be taken in increments as small as one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) day, and, unless due to illness or family emergency, must be approved by the Executive Director or designee.



VACATION LEAVE

Full-time 12-month administrator employees may accrue Vacation Leave as specified in the employment contract. In no event shall any employee accrue more than fourteen (14) Vacation Leave days in a calendar year.

Our complete [Leave for 12 Month Employees Policy \(P.42\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.

PERSONAL LEAVE

Full-time employees shall accrue a maximum of twelve (12) days per year of Personal Leave. Personal Leave is accrued at the rate of one (1) day per month worked.

Our complete [Leave for 12 Month Employees Policy \(P.42\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.

VOLUNTARY SHARED LEAVE POLICY

The purpose of voluntary shared leave is to provide economic relief for Sterling Montessori employees who are likely to suffer financial hardship because of a prolonged absence or frequent short-term absences caused by a serious medical condition of the employee or of a member of the employee's immediate family.

Our complete [Voluntary Shared Leave Policy \(P.43\)](#), including eligibility requirements, can be found in the Policies document

UNPAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leaves of Absence without pay may be granted to employees for personal leave at the discretion of the Executive Director or designee. The maximum term is for a three-month period which may be renewed in some cases, if deemed warranted, at the sole discretion of the Executive Director or designee for an additional period of up to three months. The request for such leave must be submitted to the Executive Director or designee, in writing, clearly stating the reasons for such a request. This leave is not to be used for an employee seeking alternative employment opportunities.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles eligible employees unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons. FMLA also includes certain military family leave provisions.

For more information on FMLA eligibility and to see our complete [Family and Medical Leave Policy \(P.45\)](#), please see the Policies document.

JURY DUTY

The school recognizes jury duty as a community obligation and the responsibility of a citizen. All employees who are summoned for jury duty will receive benefits/ pay required by law. You should make appropriate arrangements for leave as soon as you have received your jury duty notice, of which a copy must be submitted to the school.

MILITARY LEAVE

All employees who are required to serve in any branch of the armed forces of the United States will be given the necessary time off, without pay. This includes those employees serving in any of the reserves, National Guard or entering into active military service.

The employee must provide the school advance written notice of the date of his or her departure and expected return. Upon providing the school with notification of the satisfactory completion of his or her duties, employees still qualified to perform the duties of their position will be reinstated to their former position or to a comparable position with the same status, pay and seniority.



SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Sterling Montessori will employ substitute teachers as deemed appropriate by the administration. Human Resources will coordinate the recruitment and selection of substitute teachers, recommending qualified applicants to the Executive Director or designee.

Substitute teachers must complete all onboarding documentation in order to be placed on the substitute list.

BREAKS AND PLACEMENT

Substitutes are notified either by phone or by text through the substitute phone system (984-220-1497). Substitute jobs may be for either full or half days.

Sterling will provide substitute teachers working a full day, an unpaid 30-minute break.

Employees who need a substitute teacher when absent are required to follow the Leave Request procedures in place.

It is in the discretion of the school to place the substitute in a classroom or where there is a greater need within the school due to the lack of substitute teacher coverage.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To enable substitute teachers to provide better services to students during planned and/or emergency absences, all lead teachers (including lead exceptional teachers) must prepare an emergency substitute teacher folder. This folder must be kept in the classroom at all times and updated periodically as necessary.

As applicable, the folder should include the following information for each class/ group:

- Attendance procedures and an up-to-date class roster
- Lesson plans
- Instructions for using electronic equipment
- Daily schedule for students and teacher (pull-out programs, etc.)
- Classroom management procedures (group and/or individual plans)
- Medical plans and/or procedures for students
- Lunch procedures
- Accident procedures, reports
- Any extra duties that the absent teacher may have (carpool, lunch duty)

LONG TERM SUBSTITUTES REQUIREMENT AND EXPECTATIONS

Long term substitute teachers need at least a bachelor's degree in education or in a related field. A long-term substitute teacher is a qualified individual who steps into a classroom and takes over a position for a prolonged period of time. The long term assignment must be for 4 weeks (20 days) or more. For long-term substitute teachers, if the teacher has not left adequate information for the substitute, the responsibility falls upon the individual teams, department chairs and other staff members to provide the necessary lesson plans, interim reports, grades, IEP meetings, teacher/parent conferences, etc.

COMPENSATION

Substitutes are paid \$16 per hour, \$18 per hour, or \$20 per hour for their service and time. Substitutes in their first two years of service are paid \$16 per hour. Substitutes who are in their third or higher year of service are paid \$18 per hour. If any substitute agrees to fulfill a long term substitute role by Sterling Executive Director that substitute will be paid \$20 per hour. The definition of a long term substitute is any substitute who agrees to fill a vacancy of any kind or who fills the same vacancy for longer than 2 weeks on a full time basis (full school day, five days per week). Examples include maternity or paternity leave of a staff member, a long term illness, FMLA absence, a sudden staff departure, unexpected illness, or a not yet filled vacancy. In the event that a substitute is in a position that becomes a longer term vacancy, that substitute will be paid retroactively at the long term substitute rate.

“DO NOT USE” REQUESTS

In the event that a substitute does not work out, the school administrator may submit a “Do Not Use” request to Human Resources requesting that the substitute’s name be removed from the list of available substitutes. The school administrator or designee must inform the substitute teacher of the reasons for the “Do Not Use” request in person or by phone. If a substitute teacher receives a “Do Not Use” request and is terminated from employment, s/he may submit a written appeal to the Executive Director or designee within 30 calendar days. A substitute teacher will not be able to work during the appeal process. Once the appeal process has been completed the substitute will be notified by phone of the decision.

WORKER’S COMPENSATION

An employee who has been injured while on the job performing work functions is responsible for reporting his/her injury to their director immediately and must submit the statement of injury form as soon as possible or within 24 hours of the accident. Please submit a statement of injury form to Denise Kimball, Director of Operations at Sterling Montessori. The form must be filled out entirely, including a complete description of the injury, and signed by the appropriate director. If the employee’s director is not available, the employee must reach out to the Director of Operations, the Executive Director, or the HR Manager. This form should be turned in, in person, to the Sterling HR office prior to leaving campus after an injury.

If the employee is unable to return to work due to the injury, they must complete a leave form request. There is a seven (7) day waiting period during which the employee can elect to use appropriate accumulated leave, 103 voluntary shared leave, or elect to go on leave without pay. The employee must specify on their leave request what election they are choosing.

Finally, all medical documentation must be turned into the Sterling HR office, including, but not limited to, return-to-work release notices and any restrictions pertaining to the ability to perform one’s job. All necessary paperwork should be emailed to hr@sterlingmontessori.org.

Once an insurance adjuster is assigned and the employee’s claim has been approved, the insurance carrier will be in contact with the employee regarding the payment of medical bills and lost time wages. Employees may choose to supplement their Workers’ Compensation benefit with leave accumulated prior to going out on Workers’ Compensation approved leave. Use of sick and annual leave for this purpose must be requested in writing and shall not result in compensation greater than the usual full salary.

CLAIM REPORTING PROCEDURES

Sterling Montessori feels that as a responsible employee you should notify administration of any unsafe conditions which you feel could lead to or contribute to an employee being harmed.

Information regarding the school's Worker's Compensation policy is posted in the Main Office. Please contact the Human Resource Manager if you would like further information regarding Worker's Compensation Insurance.

1. Each employee injured on the job, no matter how minor, should report the incident to their immediate Supervisor and HR Manager.
2. If seeking medical assistance, the employee will go to a local urgent care on the day of the incident. A post-accident drug screen is required. Leave time will not be deducted when an employee leaves work on the day of an injury to seek medical assistance for an on the job injury; however, the employee must provide Sterling with a work note from their local urgent care provider.
 - a. The employee will be provided with the "Initial Employee Form" to give to the medical provider's office.
 - b. The employee will be provided with the "First Fill Card," a prescription card which is approved for a single RX-fill.
3. The Supervisor and/or HR Manager will complete a Supervisor's Accident Investigation Report and determine from the employee, what happened, what body part was injured, and who witnessed the incident.
4. The employee will complete the Employee's Report of Injury Form with the HR Manager. The employee should sign off on the form acknowledging the information is true and accurate.
5. If the employee identified a witness to the incident, the witness should complete the Witness Report of Injury Form by the end of the day and return to the HR Manager.
6. In cases of emergencies, the employee can see a health care provider at their local hospital emergency room. However, any follow-up treatment must be by a pre-approved health care provider.
7. If follow-up visits are needed the employee will contact the Supervisor and HR Manager after each visit to their health care provider. The employee will provide the following information:
 - a. The length of his/her disability period or related time off.
 - i. Provide a medical leave of absence slip from the health care provider. If the employee is to remain out of work during any length of time. It is the employee's responsibility to get the disability/medical leave slip to the HR Manager. A copy of the slip should be maintained in the employee's Workers Compensation file.
 - ii. The date and time of employee's next health care provider's visit (if applicable).
 - iii. A telephone number where the employee can be reached.
8. Once the claim has been submitted and entered, a Workers Comp Adjuster will be assigned to you. The assigned Adjuster will contact the employer, employee and medical provider to begin the claims process.



GENERAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

REQUIRED SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Safety can only be achieved through teamwork at the school. Each employee, supervisor, and administrator must practice safety awareness by thinking defensively, anticipating unsafe situations and reporting unsafe conditions immediately.

Please observe the following precautions:

- Understand your job duties fully and follow instructions. If you are not sure of the safest procedure, don't guess, ask an administrator.
- Know the locations, contents and use of all first aid and firefighting equipment.
- Call Maintenance and Facilities Manager to repair machines and equipment.
- Get help when lifting or pushing heavy objects.
- The violation of any safety precaution is in itself an unsafe act.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Sterling Montessori must be prepared to respond to an emergency or traumatic event in an organized and timely manner. This section includes procedures that are designed to handle a number of emergencies and crises that could occur. These procedures do not cover every condition that might develop, and it may not always be possible to follow every procedure.

General Emergency Plan for Teachers: In the event of a life-threatening emergency, call (911) and immediately notify the main office. The Executive Director or designee will report to your room immediately. Teachers should remain calm and in control at all times, especially in front of children. Take appropriate actions to care for the children at the scene. Send child(ren) to get help if you are the only adult present. Verbal communications should not be overheard or misinterpreted by children or other non-responders. Always account for children that you are responsible for during that time.

Requirements for Contacting Law Enforcement: When a reasonable belief that any of the following acts of crime and violence have occurred on school property or at school sponsored events, you are required to call law enforcement (911). If you should have a question whether or not an incident should be reported, consult with the Executive Director or designee. These crimes are: assault on school personnel not resulting in serious injury, assault resulting in serious injury, assault involving the use of a weapon, homicide, kidnapping, possession of a controlled substance, possession of a firearm, possession of a weapon, rape, robbery from the person, robbery with a dangerous weapon, sexual assault, sexual offense, taking indecent liberties with a minor, alcohol consumption, possession, sales or purchase, willfully burning a public school and bomb threats/bomb hoaxes.



SEVERE WEATHER

The Executive Director or designee will monitor weather reports to determine if action must be taken. If a warning is issued, an announcement will be made over the public address system (PA) with all relevant information.

Weather Watch: Weather conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop during the next 24-36 hours. No severe weather currently exists within the county; therefore, no action other than preparation is required at this time.

Weather Warning: Weather conditions have produced severe weather within Wake County. Actions should be taken to protect lives and property.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning: If outside, return to the building for protection and shelter. If inside, stay away from windows.

Tornado Warning: Follow the protocols as outlined in the Emergency Procedure Guidelines.

If outside, return to the building in predetermined safe areas of the building. Take shelter in predetermined safe areas of the building. Use "head tuck" position when appropriate to protect from flying objects.

Winter Storm Warning: Issuance of a Winter Storm Warning indicates some form of frozen precipitation (snow, sleet, freezing rain, etc.) is occurring within Wake County, which will provide significant accumulation of frozen precipitation on the ground. Remain indoors and calm children. The school administration will provide direction on the handling of children and/or transport of children to their homes.

UNSCHEDULED SCHOOL CLOSINGS/DELAYS/EARLY DISMISSAL

Severe weather, including hurricanes and winter storms, is a normal part of the school year. A determination will be made on a case by case basis by the Executive Director or designee in the event of an unscheduled closing, delay or early dismissal.

Sterling Montessori will not provide Before Care when operating on a delay and will not provide After Care when operating with an early dismissal. Staff may not use weather related closings as an optional teacher workday.

All weather closings, delays and early dismissals will be posted on WRAL and the school's website. Sterling Montessori families will also receive alerts via text messaging, email and/or voicemail. Contact information is taken from the Child Information Sheets and is the responsibility of the family to keep this information updated. Families and staff are expected to make their own judgments and use their discretion about the safety of the roads during inclement weather. Families and staff should inform the school if they are not able to make it to school. *Our complete policy on Severe Weather (P. 63) can be found in the Policies document.*

Toxic Substances

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SPILLS

Spill(s) of hazardous materials can occur at any location and at any time.

If the spill is outside, the Executive Director or designee should contact off-site emergency services (911). Move upwind away from the spill area. If you are outside, return to the building. Close all exterior windows, doors and vents.

If the spill is inside, contact the Executive Director or designee. The Executive Director or designee should contact off-site emergency services (911). Avoid direct or indirect contact with materials spill. Go to a safer location inside the building. Evacuate the building if the situation requires.

NATURAL GAS LEAKS

Gas leaks are identified by an odor similar to rotten eggs. If a gas leak is detected, the following steps should be taken:

If the gas leak is inside, open exterior windows to vent building. Contact the Executive Director or designee. The Executive Director or designee should contact off-site emergency services (911). Utilize evacuation procedures to evacuate the area/building upon direction of the fire department.

Do not turn on or off any electric device including light switches.

If the gas leak is outside, move upwind of gas odor. Turn off ALL automobile engines in the area. If you are outside, return to the building. Notify the Executive Director or designee. The Executive Director or designee should contact off-site emergency services (911). Keep exterior windows and doors closed.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

For the protection of all occupants of the building, it is important that everyone is informed and understands what to do in the event of a fire, gas leak, or other type of emergency requiring the evacuation of the building.

The following evacuation procedures should be discussed with each class:

- Occupants should remain silent. Directions and important instructions cannot be heard if teachers and children are talking.
- Occupants should clear the building immediately through a predetermined exit and report to a predetermined area. Teachers should take the Red Emergency Bag with them. Ensure that all children are evacuated safely from the building. Relocate as far from the building and the emergency vehicle access areas as possible to the previously designated area.
- Attendance should be taken to account for all children.
- The Executive Director or designee will give a verbal or manual "all clear" to return to the building after all areas have been determined safe.
- If an evacuation exit route is blocked, the next nearest exit should be used. If relocation to another site is necessary, the relocation will be facilitated by the Executive Director or designee.

FIRE

Follow the protocols as outlined in the Emergency Procedure Guidelines. These will be followed for handling actual fire or smoke situations, automatic system activations, or a false alarm. *Our complete [Fire Policy \(P. 47\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*

BOMB THREAT

In the event a bomb threat is received by telephone, the individual receiving the telephone call should attempt to obtain and record as much information as possible. Immediately record the call ID number located on the caller identification screen (if applicable). Record all information on the Bomb Threat Information Sheet.

The person receiving the call should immediately notify the Executive Director or designee. The Executive Director or designee should immediately call law enforcement officials (911). Our complete [Bomb Threat Policy \(P.47\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

LOCKDOWN / LOCKDOWN CODES

A Lockdown is a protective action employed to safeguard children, faculty, and staff when there is an imminent threat (i.e. armed perpetrator) approaching the school, on school grounds, or in the school. Lockdown is employed to keep people away from a violent perpetrator while law enforcement engages the suspect. The procedures will minimize the risk of harm by limiting the opportunity for any perpetrator to gain access to children, faculty or staff. They are also designed to reduce the anxiety levels. Familiarize yourself with the system that will be used to warn you to lockdown.

Follow the protocols as outlined in the Emergency Procedure Guidelines.

HOSTAGE SITUATION

A Lockdown is a protective action employed to safeguard children, faculty, and staff when there is an imminent threat (i.e. armed perpetrator) approaching the school, on school grounds, or in the school. Lockdown is employed to keep people away from a violent perpetrator while law enforcement engages the suspect.

The procedures will minimize the risk of harm by limiting the opportunity for any perpetrator to gain access to children, faculty or staff. They are also designed to reduce the anxiety levels. Familiarize yourself with the system that will be used to warn you to lockdown.

Follow the protocols as outlined in the Emergency Procedure Guidelines.

FIRST AID AND SICK PROCEDURES

CPR & FIRST AID

Members of our faculty are trained in CPR and first aid, and have knowledge of blood-borne pathogens. The faculty is permitted to perform the following procedures for first-aid: wash or direct a child to wash an abrasion or cut with soap and water, apply a bandage, take an ancillary temperature, offer ice for bumps and bruises and call the parents/guardians or other adults on the child's emergency contact list.

Faculty Members are NOT permitted to remove splinters or ticks. They can only administer non-prescription medication, ointments and sunscreen with a signed Medication Administration Permission Form signed by parent/guardian. Parents/guardians will be called if their children get splinters or ticks or need other first aid which the faculty is unable to offer. *Our complete [Student Medical Support Policy \(P. 63\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

All accidents and incidents requiring first aid require an Incident Report to be filled out and given to parent(s) or guardian(s) the day they occur. Serious injury policies are regulated by the state. If a child requires treatment beyond what Sterling Montessori can administer, the office will attempt to contact the parents/ guardians.

If parents/guardians cannot be contacted, emergency contacts listed in the child's child records will be called. In an extreme emergency, the school will call 911.



SICK PROCEDURES

Sick children are brought to a designated area in order to keep others healthy. Parents/guardians are then contacted to come to school to pick up their children as soon as possible. Children are to be kept out of school if any of the following symptoms develop at home:

- Fever is determined by a thermometer reading 100.4 or higher or by subjective signs such as flushed cheeks, fatigue, extreme fussiness, chills shivering, sweating, aches, headache, not eating or drinking.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has started.
- If the child has vomited within a 24-hour period.
- Pink eye with white or yellow discharge, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Scabies or lice (a child with any nits in their hair will be sent home until they are nit-free).
- Chicken pox, or a rash suggestive of chicken pox.
- Tuberculosis or Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Pertussis, until five days after the appropriate antibiotic has been taken.
- Hepatitis A, viral infection, until one week after onset of illness or jaundice.
- Sudden onset of diarrhea characterized by an increased number of bowel movements compared to the child's normal pattern.
- When a physician or other health professional issues a written order that the child should be separated from other children due to a contagious illness.
- Open sores that cannot be covered, until a health professional states that the child is not infectious.
- Any COVID symptoms according to CDC and DHHS.

When necessary, classroom communities will be notified of a spreading illness. CDC and DHHS requirements for reporting to the health department will be followed at all times.

Children may not return to school until they are fever, vomiting or diarrhea free for 24 hours without needing any medication.

In addition, we may ask that you come to pick up your child if they are unwell and unable to participate in community routines. This includes, but is not limited to: extreme irritability, fatigue, and incessant coughing.

Our complete Sick Policy (P.50), including guidelines for when children may return to school, can be found in the Policies document.



CHILD HEALTH

CHILDREN WITH CHRONIC HEALTH ISSUES

Parents/guardians are to notify faculty/staff directly if children have a chronic health condition. Chronic health conditions include asthma, allergies or anything that requires continuous medication or special considerations. Sterling Montessori complies with FERPA regarding matters of confidentiality.

MEDICATION

All medicines are stored in and administered from the Main office, with the exception of inhalers and EpiPens and antihistamine which are kept in a secure area of the child's classroom. *Our complete Student Medical Support Policy (P. 63) can be found in the Policies document.*

CONCUSSIONS

This policy is mandated by North Carolina Statute GS 115C-12(12) titled Return- to-Learn After Concussion.

After a head injury, 911 should immediately be called for any incident resulting in loss of consciousness, significant neck pain, significant changes in mental state, severe headache, or uncontrolled bleeding or vomiting. A seriously injured child should not be moved.

All parents/guardians must inform their child's teacher and Section Director when their child has/had a concussion.

The complete mandated Concussion Policy (P.48) can be found in the Policies document.

THREATS OF VIOLENCE

Take ALL threats seriously. Notify the Executive Director or designee of any threat. Protect children at the scene. School administration and/or personnel conduct a preliminary interview with the children. If an imminent danger is perceived, contact law enforcement (911). Notify the parent(s) and have them report to the school. Document all actions taken, noting the names of those involved and the date actions were taken.

REPORT OF SUICIDE THREAT

Take ALL threats seriously. Notify the Executive Director, Section Director or school counselor. Take necessary steps to keep the child safe in school. Confiscate pills/weapons. Search locker. Do not leave child alone at any time. Do not permit child to leave campus without adult supervision. *The complete Suicide Intervention Policy (P.48) can be found in the Policies document.*

THREAT OF RUNAWAY OR CONFIRMED RUNAWAY

Take ALL threats seriously. Notify Administration immediately. Interview the child/witnesses. Take appropriate action based on the results of the interview. Notify the parent(s). If a runaway occurs, notify law enforcement and the Administrative Team. Do not allow the child to leave campus unsupervised. Have appropriate school personnel monitor the child after the incident. Document all actions taken, noting time and names of those involved in actions taken. When necessary, use your walkie talkie to ask for assistance.

MISSING CHILDREN

MISSING CHILD PROTOCOL

If a child is missing from campus remain calm. Notify the Administration Team or designee immediately of the situation. Provide as many details as possible, including: name, nickname, aliases; race, gender, and nationality; identity of missing child's friends; detailed description of clothing; time when the child was last seen; location where the child was last seen and who they were last seen by. Advise Executive Director or designee of any problems that are known to you regarding the child.

If a thorough search of the school and its perimeter fails to locate the child, the Administration Team or designee should contact the parent/guardian of the missing child. A determination will be made whether it is necessary to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency.

If media contacts Sterling Montessori for a statement, all media inquiries will be referred to an administrator or designee.

MEDIA PROCEDURES

The Executive Director or designee shall be the only spokespersons to respond to the media. Television, radio, and newspapers provide an excellent conduit for getting information to large numbers of people. As a result, information shared with the news media should be both timely and accurate. Employees and children should avoid speaking with the press. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) precludes school staff from disclosing a child's name, grade or other personal identifying information. Reporters and photographers should be kept off campus until specific photo and briefing opportunities have been scheduled.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Children may begin entering classrooms at their designated arrival time. Attendance will be taken no later than 10:00 am. Those children who arrive after the arrival window are considered tardy and must be signed in at the Main Office before going to their classroom.

Early Dismissal: Parents/guardians must sign out their child at the Main Office in order to pick up their children early but no later than 3:00 pm. Parents/guardians of A building must then walk over to their child's classroom to pick up their child from the classroom. Parents/guardians of Elementary and Middle School must wait in the office for their child to come to them.

Late Dismissal: Charter School children who are still on campus at the end of dismissal must go to the Main Office or their designated after school activity. Late charges may apply. All children must be supervised at all times by an adult.

STUDENT RELEASE

Parents or guardians must provide the school with a list of people authorized to pick up the child on the Student Information Sheets. No child will be dismissed to any unauthorized person at any time.

CARPOOL SUPERVISION

During dismissal, children will wait in their respective classrooms. Each arriving family will have a carpool tag on their dashboard with a unique number. Using an iPad, staff at curbside will select the arriving families' numbers in a shared google spreadsheet. The classroom teachers will have a view of their own class' roster in the same google spreadsheet. When a child's family is selected, the teacher will see the child's name indicated in the roster and will send them out. For this carpool process to work efficiently, it is essential that classroom teachers respond immediately to prepare their children to leave when the Main Office makes the announcement to prepare for carpool over the PA system. Please see the most updated carpool document for more information.

CUSTODY AND CHILD WELFARE

VERIFICATION OF CHILD CUSTODY

It is the responsibility of Sterling Montessori to determine that any person appearing at the school requesting permission to take a child from the school be properly identified and approved before allowing that person to do so.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Sterling Montessori complies with all local and state laws regarding any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect. All employees are required to report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the appropriate local and/or state authorities. Best practice of mandatory reporting is to also notify the Executive Director or designee.

CHILD OR STAFF DEATH

DEATH IN CHILD'S IMMEDIATE FAMILY

When a death occurs in a child's immediate family, inform the school counselor, administration and all of the child's teachers. Develop a plan on how to inform the child's peers and to talk to them regarding the death; including how to welcome the child back to school. Appropriate school personnel should contact the family. Prepare to have support for the child when they return to school (outside specialist) and monitor the child as needed.

CHILD/STAFF DEATH

Notify the Executive Director or designee and the School Crisis Intervention Team. Verify the child's/staff member's death. A school counselor should be brought in to assist children and staff. Communicate known facts to school Crisis Intervention Team members according to the school's crisis plans. Notify staff and families as soon as possible. Schedule a staff meeting and develop a crisis plan for the day (Refer to Crisis Intervention Team Manual). The administration and the Crisis Intervention Team will update information concerning death(s). They will follow a crisis plan by making announcements and counseling children. Additionally, they will make arrangements for appropriate staff to attend funeral, identify and monitor children/staff most affected by the tragedy and plan for an appropriate memorial.

CHILD SUPERVISION

It is important children are supervised indoors and outdoors while at school. Elementary and middle school children may run errands in pairs. Children's House students must have an adult with them at all times. Upper elementary and middle school children may go to the restroom in their own building alone. When exiting the classroom in a line, one teacher should be at the beginning of the line and one at the end. If one teacher is escorting a smaller group, they should be at the back of the line. Have children stop at the corner and wait for the teacher to join them so the teacher can monitor the front and back of the line at all times.

CHILD SUPERVISION IN THE CHILDREN'S HOUSE

In the Children's House, state law requires two adults with a group of 25 children. If there is only one adult present with Children's House children, the ratio must not exceed 1 to 15. It is each individual teacher's responsibility to make sure the appropriate ratio is maintained at all times. During nap time, the ratio requirement changes. As long as children are on their nap mats, there only has to be one adult in the room at a time. When any child gets up and assumes their normal activities, a second adult must be present. Children must be where they can be seen and heard at all times. They may not be left alone with volunteers in hallways or spare rooms unless that volunteer meets licensing requirements. Children may work on the patios or hallways if the windows and doors are open, so they can be properly supervised.

PLAYGROUND RULES & SUPERVISION

The Sterling Montessori playground has been thoughtfully constructed and maintained for the purpose of enriching the school experience for our students. It is important that during outside time, teachers and students model appropriate behaviors in problem-solving skills and conflict resolution strategies through the use of the Grace and Courtesy curriculum, Positive Discipline techniques and Restorative Practices. According to state law, children may not lose their playtime as a consequence. Texting, talking, and browsing on a cell phone while supervising children is prohibited unless there is an emergency. At Sterling, we believe in the importance of safe, unstructured free play. It is the job of teachers on the playground to keep the big picture at all times. Teachers should be aware of the location of all children and should be up and moving at all times. The play areas are large, and it is important that teachers spread themselves out to ensure child safety. If a teacher has to leave the playground to take a child to the bathroom, they must let other adults know and remain within ratio.

CHILDREN'S HOUSE PLAYGROUND SAFETY RULES

- Rocks, sand and wood chips are to stay on the ground. The wood chips belong in the wood chip area. The sand and the digging tools stay in the sandbox.
- Students are to stay on the inside of climbing structures.
- The clubhouse is for walking through. Its windows are for looking through.
- For safety, students are to go down the slide feet first. Only one person may use the slide at a time.
- Students using the swing should sit on their backside, keep their bodies in the seat until the swing comes to a complete stop, swing back and forth only.
- Adults must check that the gate has been closed after anyone goes out or comes in as it is not spring-mounted.
- The tricycles are to be ridden on the sidewalk by seated students. There should only be as many students on the tricycle as there are seats. Non-riders should keep their hands to themselves. Tricycle traffic goes clockwise at all times. Riders are expected to be respectful of other tricycles, people or
- structures when passing. Pedestrians have the right of way. All tricycles are to be parked on the porch outside of A-10 when any group leaves the playground. Students unable to follow these rules lose the privilege of using the bikes for that play period.

ELEMENTARY PLAYGROUND & OUTDOOR SAFETY RULES

- Balls are to be used on the designated fields only.
- Treat the plants and trees with care.
- Students need to have an adult's permission to be outside the classroom or on the playground.
- Shoes are to be worn at all times.
- Students should play away from entrances/exits and recycling areas.
- Ask an adult for help if there is a problem or if someone is hurt.
- All wood chips and rocks are to be kept on the ground.
- Use the stairs to access the slide. When sliding, the student must be seated in a forward position. Slide down feet first while sitting up. When they reach the bottom, students need to get off and move away from the slide.
- Up to three (3) people allowed on the tire swing at a time. Students must be seated on the tire swing with hands and feet inside. Only one student pushes the tire swing.
- No twisting and/or standing on swings. Students are not to jump off swings. Only one student on a swing at a time
- Gaga courts must follow the same set of rules.
- Tag games should be played in an open space away from all playground equipment.
- Students must obtain permission from the teacher before retrieving balls from the parking lot.
- Patios and gardens are extensions of the classroom and students on the playground must refrain from playing on them while at recess.

PROCEDURES FOR AFTERCARE PROGRAM

Safety is one of the highest priorities at Sterling Montessori. In order to ensure that all children are making their way to the designated aftercare classroom in a timely efficient manner, please abide by the following procedures:

- At 3:30 PM (Academy/K) or 3:45 (Grades 1-8) all children that are enrolled in the After Care Program are taken to their designated aftercare classroom.
- At 3:30 PM (Academy/K) or 3:45 (Grades 1-8), any child NOT enrolled in the After Care Program but whose parents/guardians have NOT picked them up are brought to the aftercare classroom (Academy/K) or to the office (Grades 1-8). The teacher is to sign the child into the aftercare classroom and bring the completed Late Child Form with them.
- Children who are picked up after 3:30 PM (Academy/K) or 3:45 (Grades 1-8) will be charged applicable late fees. (Note, teachers who offer tutoring or any other services after school to a child must stay with the child until the parent picks them up to avoid late fees).

When someone other than the parent is picking up a child, please alert the aftercare staff. Remember to make sure all persons picking up children are on the authorized pick up list on their emergency cards and Child Information Forms.

OFF-CAMPUS FIELD TRIPS

Off-campus field trips apply to kindergarten through middle school-aged children. The purpose of this policy is not only to ensure the safety of all children, staff, and volunteers, but also to enhance the classroom educational experience. All off-campus field trips require pre-approval from the Executive Director or designee. Only curriculum-related study and trips in adherence to the safety precautions outlined in the policy will be approved. *Our full policy on [Off-Campus Field Trips](#) (P.50) can be found in the Policies document.*

ANIMALS

PETS



For the safety of everyone, personal pets are not permitted on campus at any time. Class pets with the exception of approved reptiles and amphibians are not allowed. Teachers are responsible for the care of the class pets over weekends, and when school is not in session. *Our complete Policy on [Classroom Pets \(P.61\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*

SERVICE ANIMALS POLICY

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Rehab Act"), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), and state law, Sterling Montessori may be required to accommodate an otherwise qualified individual with a disability by making a reasonable modification in its services, programs, or activities. Sterling Montessori acknowledges the health and safety interests of the general community. *Our complete [Service Animals Policy \(P.49\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*

FACILITIES

HOUSEKEEPING

Good housekeeping, good work habits, and a neat place to work are essential for job safety and efficiency. All employees are expected to keep their place of work organized and in good order at all times. All employees are expected to report anything that needs repair or replacement to Maintenance.

PESTS

Email the Maintenance and Facilities Manager with any pest-related requests. Red ants require an immediate request. Please keep children clear of the nest. Mouse droppings are to be reported ASAP as well. Please do not clean up their droppings or have the children clean them up.



FOOD WASTE

Please instruct the child to put all food waste in the lidded trash unit assigned to the classroom. Using the trash can instead of an open one helps with pest reduction. Please do not leave food out overnight or for any extended period of time. All food kept in the classrooms must be in air-tight storage containers.

DUMPSTER USE

The Maintenance and Facilities Manager and the Custodian are the only people who may enter the dumpster areas. All cardboard must be broken down before the cleaning crew will remove it. Place it alongside the trash can. At no time should children be taking trash to the dumpster without supervision.

MAINTENANCE REQUESTS

For non-emergency facility needs, email the Maintenance and Facilities Manager.



AFTER HOURS USE

In an effort to increase community involvement, Sterling will allow the use of its property after school hours when certain criteria are met. *Our complete [Policy on After Hours Use \(P.53\)](#) can be found in the Policies document.*



STERLING MONTESSORI APPENDICES CONTENTS

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- [2023-2024 Academic Calendar](#)
- [2023-2024 Receipt Employee Handbook](#)



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APPENDIX



**STERLING
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Appendix A

Employee Insurance Reference Guide			
Provider	Products	Customer Service	Website
NC State Health Plan	Health Insurance	888-234-2416	www.shpnc.org
Humana	Dental	1-877-282-5654	www.humana.com
Humana	Life Insurance	1-877-672-4946	www.humana.com
United Healthcare	Vision	1-800-638-3120 (call to get your member ID)	www.myuhcvision.com
Savers Admin	Flex Spending	336-759-3888	www.saversadmin.com Click Forms and Logins, FSA/HRA/HSA, Employee Portal Login.
Aspire	Retirement Plan	Christopher Nordlund, CPFA christopher.nordlund@nfp.com Kadedra Warren-Jones Plan Administrator (800) 826 - 7859, ext. 20013 kadedra.warren-jones@nfp.com	www.aspireonline.com

- United Healthcare does not provide employees with dental cards. Employees will need to contact United for their ID number and log in to the account and print off the card or use the reference card that can be retrieved from HR.

APPENDIX



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Appendix B

Guide to Commonly Used Initialisms and Acronyms	
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AMS	American Montessori Society
CEU	Continuing Education Credit
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
FMLA	Family Medical Leave Act
HR	Human Resources
LHUF	Laura Holland Uzzell Foundation
NCDPI	North Carolina Department of Public Schools Instruction
WCPSS	Wake County Public School System



Appendix C

Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) Plan

Overview

Sterling Montessori has established a Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) in accordance with the State Board of Education Policy TCED-016 (formerly TCP-A-004/LICN-004). The BTSP at Sterling Montessori was designed to support the professional learning and development of beginning teachers as well as their mentors. Sterling Montessori is committed to helping both Mentors and Beginning Teachers (BTs) succeed through a shared vision, integral BTSP plan, and consistent, constructive feedback from a supportive network of colleagues and administrators. The BTSP plan was developed to align to the Beginning Teacher Support Program Standards.

- **Standard 1: Systematic Support for High Quality Induction Programs-** This standard is designed to promote the commitment of all stakeholders in seeing mentoring and induction programs succeed. Key program elements include the creation of an institutional plan, demonstrating institutional commitment, and support and principal engagement.
- **Standard 2: Mentor Selection, Development and Support-** This standard articulated the process and criteria for mentor selection, discusses mentor roles and responsibilities, and delineates foundational mentor training. Key program elements include mentor selection, defining the role of mentors, and mentor professional development.
- **Standard 3: Mentoring for Instructional Excellence-** Mentors are given protected time to provide beginning teachers with support to achieve success in the areas set forth by the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards. Key program elements include providing time for mentors and beginning teachers, ensuring mentoring is focused on instruction, and addressing issues of diversity.
- **Standard 4: Beginning Teacher Professional Development:** Professional development is provided to beginning teachers that orients them to their new career and supports their efforts to meet the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards. Key program elements include structured orientation to the school site, as well as professional development designed to meet the unique needs of beginning teachers that is aligned with the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards, and the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System.
- **Standard 5: Formative Assessment of Candidates and Programs-** New teachers and mentoring programs are monitored and supported using a formative assessment system to guide their work. Key program elements include formative assessment systems and program evaluation.

Identification of Beginning Teachers

The state of North Carolina defines “beginning teacher” as a teacher with fewer than three years of professional experience. Beginning teachers hold initial or lateral entry/residency licenses. All teachers who hold initial licenses are required to participate in a three-year beginning teacher induction period that includes a formal orientation, support from a trained mentor, and classroom observations, prior to the recommendation for the continuing licensure. Lateral Entry/Residency teachers are required to participate in the BTSP program for three years and have three years to complete licensure requirements to obtain the continuing license.

Teachers with three or more years of appropriate professional experience are not required to participate in the BTSP, nor are student service personnel (e.g., counselors, psychologist, and speech language pathologist), administrators, or curriculum instructional specialists.

Completion of the BTSP requirements in one teaching area satisfies the BTSP requirements for all other teaching areas. Once a continuing license has been earned in one teaching area, additional teaching areas do not require participation in BTSP.

The BTSP Coordinators work collaboratively with the Director of Licensure Renewal, the Executive Director, and Section Director to verify beginning teachers’ eligibility for continuing licenses, in accordance with state-mandated requirements and will follow NCSBE requirements for all required licensure tests.

After successful completion of the three-year BTSP, beginning teachers with three years of successful experience (who meet all licensure criteria, including “proficient” or higher ratings on all standards on the most recent Teacher Summary Form), notification will be sent to the Licensure Division of the NC Department of Public Instruction by the Director of Licensure Renewal.

New Staff Orientation

New Staff Orientation is the responsibility of the Executive Director and the Section Director(s). Orientation will be provided, attended, and documented prior to the first day of the teacher work days in August. Topics will include, but are not restricted to:

- Sterling Montessori’s mission, policies, procedures (including those directly affecting students)
- Meet members of the Administrative Team
- Review of the Employee and Parent Handbook
- Campus tour
- How to ask for technical assistance or resources.



Orientation of Beginning Teacher Within Two Weeks of the BT's First Day of Work

Orientation of Beginning Teachers in the Beginning Teacher Support Program will be the responsibility of the BTSP Coordinators. Orientation will happen within two weeks of the BT's first day of work, preferably during the teacher work week in August. The Beginning Teacher Orientation topics include, but are not restricted to:

- The teacher will receive a rubric for evaluating NC teachers, the evaluation policy, and the schedule for completing all components of the evaluation process
- Review of Sterling Montessori's mission, policies, procedures (including those directly affecting students)
- Include an overview of the BTSP plan, process and BTSP calendar/schedule for the year
- Review and update all BTSP binders
- Reiterate that meetings and observations will be spaced out throughout the year
- Answer questions Beginning Teachers may have about the workplace, duties, school programs, etc., and address any concerns
- Provide assurance that Beginning Teachers are paired with Mentors who are trained, knowledgeable, trustworthy, and eager to help them succeed
- Provide assurance that the BTSP Coordinator will help maintain optimum work conditions, and make Beginning Teachers aware of NCDPI policies that support them
- Explain ways in which the BTSP Coordinator supports both Beginning Teachers and Mentors
- Review teaching criteria/policies of the State of North Carolina
- Review NC curriculum standards
- Discuss mission and goals for the State Board of Education
- Discuss the process for achieving a continuing license
- Overview of the resources and supports available to assist beginning teachers in acclimating to the classroom setting (including the role of a mentor)
- Documentation that each beginning teacher attended orientation

Required Working Conditions for Beginning Teachers:

The Executive Director, BTSP Coordinators, Section Directors, Mentors and peers are instrumental in supporting beginning teachers. It is the expectation of Sterling Montessori that administrators be intentionally involved in the professional development

and growth of beginning teachers by adhering to optimal working conditions for beginning teachers:

- **Assignment of area of licensure:** A critical factor in determining an applicant's eligibility for hire is the determination that he/she holds (or is eligible to hold), a North Carolina teaching license in the content area for which he/she has been recommended. The Executive Director or designee, in close collaboration with the Director of Licensure Renewal, reviews all certified hiring recommendations and application materials to ensure that the applicant's teaching license accurately corresponds to the teaching position for which he/she is being considered.
- **Mentor assigned early, in the licensure area, and in close proximity:** The Beginning Teacher Support Coordinator works with the Executive Director and Section Directors to match beginning teachers with effective, nurturing, and committed teachers who have been trained as mentors. While every effort is made to ensure that mentor teaches in the same licensure area and is in close proximity to the beginning teacher's assigned location, in some instances, when a trained mentor does not exist in the same licensure area, or the teacher is a specialist in the school, a mentor will be assigned from a different location.
- **Limited preparations:** Section Directors will work to create the best possible schedules for the new teachers in their buildings. Specialists who serve all students in a school should have ample planning time each day to prepare lessons for the various grade levels that they teach.
- **Limited non-instructional duties:** Section Directors will monitor the number and type of duties and committees assigned to beginning teachers. These assignments are restricted by State Board policy QP-A-004 to those that all teachers on the staff are required to complete and to committees on which all staff members are assigned.
- **Limited number of exceptional or difficult students:** Decisions related to class assignments and teacher schedules are to be made with an intentional focus on setting beginning teachers up for success. To that end, the Executive Director, Section Directors, EC Coordinator, and EL Coordinator will work together to balance the number of EC, EL, and/or difficult students assigned to beginning teachers.
- **No extracurricular assignments unless requested in writing by the beginning teacher:**

In accordance with North Carolina GS 115C-47, which calls for local boards of education to adopt policies to eliminate extracurricular duties for teachers in their first three years of teaching, beginning teachers who elect to serve in extracurricular roles are required to sign Time to Teach Waivers. This waiver documents the beginning teacher's voluntary assumption of the extracurricular assignment. Possible examples of extracurricular duties include: club sponsor, sports coach, academic team coach, class sponsor, and assistance at sporting/cultural events.

- **Developing building-level consistency and continuity:** To allow beginning teachers the chance to grow and develop, mentors must have worked with Sterling Montessori for a minimum of three years. This practice seeks to encourage continuity for the beginning teacher and to facilitate the development of strong professional relationships between beginning teachers, their mentors, colleagues, and administrative support teams.
- **Completion of surveys:** In accordance with Policy TCED-016, completion of the recent graduate survey by the Beginning Teacher (BT) and the employer survey by the principal of the school during the BT's first year of teaching as part of the requirements to measure the performance of Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) stated in GS 115C-269.35. The surveys must be completed at the end of the first year of teaching.



Mentor Assignment

In collaboration with the Executive Director, and BTSP Coordinators, Section Directors recommend mentors for their schools' beginning teachers. The Executive Director or designee will sign off on the mentor recommendation and the BTSP Coordinator will assign the mentor to the beginning teacher.

Eligibility will be based on SBE policy and GS 115C-296€ requirements concerning Mentor's NCEES evaluation.

The selection of mentors is a critical component in developing beginning teachers, growing teacher leaders, and increasing student achievement. Mentor Assignment Guidelines shall follow Beginning Teacher Support Program Standard 2:

- Selection criteria, including mentors' range of roles and responsibilities, include input from a variety of stakeholder groups, are well-defined and clearly communicated to all stakeholders by program leadership.
- The selection process is transparent and uniformly implemented.

Mentors support Beginning Teacher orientation and provide logistical and emotional support. They focus their primary support on improving instruction and learning. Mentors provide ongoing support and encouragement for the Beginning Teacher. They must want to help others by sharing ideas, materials, knowledge, and experience. Being a Mentor is an opportunity to continue the cycle of learning, and to give back to the teaching profession by working collaboratively with Beginning Teachers. Mentors will be volunteers who are intelligent, prepared, creative, and determined to help the Beginning Teachers who depend on them for support. Mentors will have the experience to know how demanding teaching is; e.g. establishing positive connections between home and school, balancing responsibilities, keeping up with paperwork, communicating with faculty and teachers, managing stress, making time to take care of themselves, and always "following the child" in accordance with the needs of each individual student. They should be lifelong learners who love children and the work they do within the teaching profession and Sterling Montessori.

Mentor selection criteria include:

- Rated at least "proficient" level on NCEES (Ratings of proficient or higher on all five standards on the most recent summative evaluation, or on Standards 1 and 4 on an abbreviated evaluation) refer to Sterling's Evaluation form
- Submission of the mentor application, including Executive Director's and Section Director's endorsement
- Teaching in the same or similar teaching area or performing similar duties;
- Mentors need to be in relatively close proximity to their Beginning Teachers so they are accessible for observations, check-ins, and routine support;
- Completion of a minimum of three years of successful teaching experience;
- Successful completion of the required mentor training;
- Committed to working with beginning teachers as needed to promote professional growth based on identifiers defined in the NC Teacher Evaluation System;
- Demonstrated ability and willingness to observe the beginning teacher and offer objective, constructive feedback;
- Skilled at modeling effective teaching, professional, and administrative behaviors;
- Participation in ongoing training and professional learning related to mentoring.
- Retired teachers are eligible to serve as mentors

The BTSP Coordinators with the Executive Director or designee's approval shall determine which mentor teacher best meets the needs of each new teacher and shall assign the most appropriate mentor teacher to the new teacher, with priority consideration for mentors rated as "distinguished" or "accomplished". If the BTSP Coordinators and/or the Executive Director or designee determines that a teacher rated "proficient" or a retired teacher is the most appropriate mentor for a new teacher, the Executive Director or designee shall maintain records of the reasons for that determination.

LEAs may use the most recently available evaluation for teachers who lack an evaluation from the prior year. Teachers without evaluation data for two or more consecutive years shall not be eligible to serve as mentor teachers, unless the mentor is a retired teacher. Any teacher who is assigned to be a mentor to a Beginning Teacher must meet eligibility requirements in the year of assignment. No mentor whose evaluation falls below the "proficient" level may continue to serve as a mentor to a Beginning Teacher, regardless of existing mentor-mentee relationships. A teacher may be a mentor at a different school building from which the mentor is assigned if the Executive Director (Principals) of each school and the mentor teacher approve the assignment, the mentor is rated at least "accomplished" (received ratings of accomplished or higher on three of five standards including Standard 4 on the most recent summative, or on Standard 4 on an abbreviated evaluation), and the Beginning Teacher's Executive Director or designee maintains a record of the reasons for selecting the mentor from a different school building.

When mentor selection necessitates deviation from the criteria above, the BTSP Coordinator can advise and approve alternative solutions that best meet the mentoring needs of the beginning teacher. Occasionally, when a mentor must be relieved of his or her mentor responsibilities based on feedback from the mentee and/or Section Director, the BTSP Coordinators will work collaboratively with the Executive Director or designee to identify and assign a new mentor.

The BTSP Coordinators will assign Mentors to Beginning Teachers as early as possible during the first three weeks of school (including the teacher work week prior to students returning to school), and take an active role in the development of their successful relationship within the program.

Mentor Assignments will be made based on the needs of the Beginning Teachers, the area of expertise of the Mentors, and the compatibility of the Beginning Teachers and Mentors.

Training Based on NC Mentor Standards and Support is Provided for Mentors: Teachers who meet the previously detailed criteria and who are endorsed by their Section Director and Executive Director are eligible to complete mentor training. Selected mentors have the option to complete mentor training through an annual face-to-face training, or via online modules that are aligned with the state's mentor standards and the corresponding NC Teacher Evaluation Standards. Offering multiple training opportunities provides options for teachers and enables Sterling Montessori to select and train new mentors throughout the school year.

**Training will include the following:**

- Knowledge of how to satisfy the mandated requirements for Beginning Teachers.
- Examples on how to serve as role models, coaches/helpers, and collaborators.
- Use of reflective processes (e.g. journaling and self-evaluation). Mentors will need to examine and reexamine their beliefs about the teaching profession and mentoring, including Montessori philosophy and methodology, and any problems that may arise in the course of mentoring. They need to devote time to developing their mentorship skills, which requires the support of the BTSP Coordinator and Sterling Montessori.
- Opportunities for professional development as they become available. Through online resources, Sterling Montessori will inform Mentors about instructional tools and ongoing professional development regarding mentor training, current issues affecting Beginning Teachers in the workplace, webinars about how the BTSP program can make a critical difference in how successful a Beginning Teacher is or perceives himself/herself to be.
- Information about regional meetings for Mentors, as it becomes available.
- Opportunities to participate in annual peer reviews.
- Links to information and support resources that Mentors can share with their Beginning Teachers.
- Monthly meetings with the BTSP Coordinator where Mentors feel nurtured, supported, encouraged, and appreciated.

Annual Development of a Professional Development Plan (PDP) in Collaboration with the Section Director, and the Assigned Mentor:

There are two aspects to consider when developing a Professional Development Plan with a beginning teacher at Sterling Montessori i.e. goal setting with Section Directors and Licensure Renewal with Director of Licensure Renewal. During the BTSP process, a Beginning Teacher's Professional Development Plan will be created and take these two things into account.

An annual PDP must be developed collaboratively between the Beginning Teacher, the assigned Mentor, and the Section Director by the end of October each year. The PDP is based on the NCPTS and must include goals, strategies, and assessments of the PT's progress in improving professional skills. They could include standards adopted by the NC Board of Education, as well as Montessori pedagogical principles. The creation of the PDP will be documented, placed in the binder and will be signed by the beginning teacher, the mentor, and the Section Director. The teacher's progress (formative assessment conferences) on his/her PDP goals will be reviewed a minimum of two times during the school year (mid-year and at the end of the year) by the assigned mentor and the Section Director. Signatures of Beginning Teacher, Mentor and Section Director are required for each formative assessment conference. The Beginning Teacher will provide tangible evidence of growth during both the mid-year and final review. It is the responsibility of the BTSP Mentors to help/support Beginning Teachers to meet these goals.

Section Directors/Executive Director will conclude PDP discussions during the Beginning Teacher's summative evaluation conference.

The Director of Licensure Renewal will provide Licensure Renewal support by tracking licenses, linking faculty to professional development opportunities, securing Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and Licensure Renewal Credits, and informing faculty members about state requirements regarding Professional Licenses. Ways to meet the requirements for Licensure Renewal will be part of the Professional Development Plan of Beginning Teachers in the BTSP process. The BTSP Mentor is responsible for helping Beginning Teachers plan and follow through with their Licensure requirements.

CEUs are granted for study that matches Sterling Montessori's priorities and/or each teacher's Professional Development Plan. Approval should be sought and granted prior to enrollment in Professional Development opportunities. Licensure Renewal Credits for Licensed Teachers may be granted for:

- Professional Development provided by Sterling Montessori
- Professional Development offered by NCDPI
- Relevant workshops and conferences offered by national, state, or local professional organizations including (but not limited to) the teacher's area of licensure, instruction methods, Montessori pedagogy, cultural diversity, global education, use of technology in the classroom, effective communication (with colleagues, parents, students), learning disabilities, classroom management, and behavior management.
- University or college courses in an accredited program. The teacher must present the course description to their Section Director or Director of Licensure Renewal for approval prior to enrolling in the course; and upon completion of the course, the teacher must present to Director of Licensure an original transcript with the course listed and grade received.
- Teaching experience, with one unit granted for each year of full-time teaching. Teachers who teach less than full-time will receive prorated credit.
- Participation as a mentor for beginning teachers, mentor training, and monthly mentor support meetings. Mentors will receive .5 CEU for every year of mentoring.

Formal Process for Conducting Observations and a Summative Evaluation on all Beginning Teachers:

Sterling Montessori follows the comprehensive evaluation schedule to complete the four beginning teacher observations and summative evaluation required by the state each school year. All teachers, principals, and peer evaluators must complete training on the process. A Beginning Teacher will be informally observed at least five times throughout the year (for BT1s and BT2s at least 2 observations must be conducted within the first semester, and if practicable, at least one of those observations will be within the first grading period), with scheduling based on the specific needs of him/her:

- Two formal observations by Section Director:
 - The first observation to be conducted in October
 - The second observation to be conducted in March that evaluates the Beginning Teacher's cumulative performance of the school year
- The observations must last 45 minutes or entire class period, the first observation must have a pre-conference and all must have a post-conference within 10 days

- Two formal observations by the assigned Mentor (to be scheduled by BTSP Coordinator):
 - The first observation to be conducted by mid-October
 - The second observation to be conducted in April that evaluates the Beginning Teacher's cumulative performance of the school year
- The observations must last 45 minutes or entire class period, the first observation must have a pre-conference and all must have a post-conference within 10 days
- One formal observation by Section Director completed at the beginning of May that evaluates the Beginning Teacher's cumulative performance of the school year
- The observation must last 45 minutes or entire class period, and must have a post-conference within 10 days
- For BT1s and BT2s, at least one of the three annual administrative observations must be conducted by the Section Director.
- One peer observation
- One summative evaluation annually
- Monitored Growth Plans and Directed Growth Plans must be implemented when necessitated by ratings.

PDP's, observations, and evaluations will be completed and documented in the binder provided during the BTSP orientation meeting.

In an effort to help support Beginning Teachers acclimate to their classrooms and to the community, BTSP Coordinators will schedule informal observations for each Beginning Teacher. There will be two observations per year either at Sterling Montessori or at a location approved by the BTSP Coordinator, scheduled in November and February.

Any teacher who teaches 120 or more days in a school year and who will get a full year experience credit should have six completed observations. Section Director's will aim to schedule six observations when possible for late hires that work less than 120 days, depending on when they were hired, and in accordance with the observation schedule. At a minimum, the peer observation and the observations required from the date hired will be completed. The Section Director, not his/her designee, will complete the initial observation on all first year beginning teachers and any Beginning Teachers with performance concerns.

In accordance with State Board Policy, Beginning Teachers in the third year of employment must be rated as "proficient" or higher on all evaluation standards on the Summary Evaluation to be recommended for a continuing license.

In addition to the scheduled Observation Mentors will meet with their Beginning Teacher bi-weekly or weekly (monthly for BT-3 teachers), and will document the meeting using the meeting log.

Participation in BTSP Monitoring for Compliance with State Board Policy

As mandated by SBE policy TCED-016, the Sterling Montessori Beginning Teacher Support Program is monitored every fifth year for compliance. This monitoring process seeks to document evidence of Beginning Teachers' participation in a three-year induction period. In an effort to meet or exceed the "proficient" rating on each element and standard of the compliance review, Sterling Montessori has established a system of ongoing BTSP support and documentation.

The BTSP Coordinators will hold the following meetings in an effort to be supportive of the Beginning Teachers and Mentors:

- **Beginning Teacher Group** (if there is more than one Beginning Teacher on staff): Informal 45-minute support meetings will be held once a month with just Beginning Teachers during a professional lunch time on campus (in Office A7 or Teacher Lounge). This will be a "support group" of enthusiasm, encouragement, collaborative problem-solving, and constructive feedback for Beginning Teachers. BTSP Coordinators will attend and lead this meeting.
- **Mentor Group** (if there is more than one Mentor on staff): Informal 45-minute support meetings will be held once a month with Mentors and lead by BTSP Coordinators during a professional lunch time on campus (in Office A7 or Teacher Lounge). This will be a "support group" of enthusiasm, encouragement, collaborative problem-solving, and constructive feedback for Mentors as role models, advocates for their Beginning Teachers, and teachers in their own right who require ongoing professional development and support.
- **BTSP Coordinators/Mentor/Beginning Teacher:** Informal 45-minute support meeting held twice a year (Beginning and end of year) with the Mentors and Beginning teachers lead by the BTSP Coordinators. The purpose of these meetings is to work through the BTSP process with sharing. Promote a collaborative environment between all participants.

At the start of each school year, Beginning Teachers and Mentors receive a binder. These binders are accessible by the mentor, the beginning teacher, and the BTSP Coordinators. They are used to organize and maintain all required Beginning Teacher documentation including but not restricted to:

- Calendar/Schedule for the year
- Check sheets for documentation to be added to the binder throughout the year
- Contact Log sheets
- Meeting log documentation forms
- Reflection/Assessment sheets for sessions/meetings
- Mentor observation forms
- Rubrics for observations
- Guide sheet for informal observations
- Teacher responses to observation forms
- Post-Visit Reflection Questions sheet for Mentors
- Self-Assessment surveys
- Teacher Summary Rating forms
- Beginning Teacher Individualized Growth Plan forms
- Professional Development Plan forms
- List of MTSB links
- List of additional resources
- "Motivational" writings about mentorship, and qualities of a great teacher
- "Anticipation Guides" for training and discussion
- Definitions of "administrator," "colleague," "helper," "model," "mentor," "mentee"
- Active Listening helps

It is the responsibility of the Mentors and Beginning Teachers to keep their binders up-to-date and organized with monitoring by BTSP Coordinators, and assistance given as needed. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Beginning Teacher to ensure that his/her documents are completed and presented to the coordinators in full, and on time.



The BTSP Coordinators maintain the following BTSP documentation, either electronically or in a hard copy:

- Mentor contracts
- Mentor Training documentation
- Beginning Teacher induction and orientation sign-in sheets
- Monthly agendas from Novice Teacher Support Group Meetings
- Master list of beginning teachers and mentors
- Comprehensive list of trained mentors
- Monthly Mentor Meeting agendas

Additionally, the BTSP Coordinators and the BTSP Team works to continually improve efficacy of the BTSP by obtaining objective stakeholder feedback. This information is solicited in the form of:

- Annual Peer Review of a paired school (Casa Esperanza, for example)
- Self-Assessment of Sterling Montessori's BTSP Plan
- Timely transfer (within two weeks of transfer request) of all Beginning Teacher files to subsequent employing LEAs, Charter Schools, or non-public institutions within North Carolina.

Beginning Teacher Personnel Files are Filed and Kept Secure

All employee files, including beginning teacher personnel files are securely maintained and housed with the Human Resource Manager's office and the confidentiality of these files is strictly maintained.

Timely Transfer of Beginning Teacher Files to Subsequent Employing LEAs, Charter Schools, or Non-Public Institutions Within the State:

When an employee's cumulative file is requested by another LEA, documentation of participation in the Beginning Teacher Support Program will be provided to the Beginning Teacher Coordinator contact within that LEA. The BTSP Coordinator and the Director of Licensure Renewal will work together to provide the requested information within two weeks.

Conclusion

Sterling Montessori recognizes that one of the most critical factors in predicting a student's academic achievement is the effectiveness of the classroom teacher. To that end, Sterling Montessori is committed to providing the resources, logistical structures, and human capital required to nurture, develop, and retain beginning teachers. The BTSP Plan provides the foundation upon which the comprehensive continuum of beginning teacher services and supports is constructed.

AUGUST 2023						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2

SEPTEMBER 2023						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

OCTOBER 2023						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

NOVEMBER 2023						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2

DECEMBER 2023						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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JANUARY 2024						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3

DATES OF INTEREST
 ♦ School Closed, No Childcare
August
 9-11 Optional Teacher Work Days ♦
 14-22 Teacher Work Week Days ♦
 16 LHU Board Meeting
 23 Open House
 24 First Day of School

September
 4 Holiday - Closed ♦
 5 Teacher Work Day ♦
 20 LHU Board Meeting

October
 18 LHU Board Meeting
 30 Teacher Work Day ♦
 31 Conference Day ♦

November
 10 Holiday (observed) - Closed
 15 LHU Board Meeting
 20-24 Vacation/Holiday - Closed ♦

December
 18-29 Vacation/Holiday - Closed ♦

January
 1 Vacation/Holiday - Closed ♦
 2 Teacher Work Day ♦
 4 Charter Lottery Opens
 15 Holiday - Closed ♦
 17 LHU Board Meeting

February
 2 Charter Lottery Closes
 16 Teacher Work Day ♦
 19 Holiday - Closed ♦
 21 LHU Board Meeting

March
 1 Public Charter Lottery
 6 Teacher Work Day ♦
 7 Conference Day ♦
 8 Teacher Work Day ♦
 20 LHU Board Meeting
 25-29 Vacation/Holiday - Closed

April
 17 LHU Board Meeting
 29 Teacher Work Day ♦

May
 15 LHU Board Meeting
 27 Memorial Day - Closed ♦
 28 Begin EOG Testing

June
 10 Last Day of School
 11 Teacher Work Day ♦
 19 Holiday ♦
 26 LHU Board Meeting

Weather Make-Up Days (in order):
 Banked Day, Banked Day,
 February 16, March 6,

- ★ First/Last Day of School
- ⬆ Open House/Lottery Opens
- Vacation/Holiday
- Teacher/Staff Work Day
- Conference Day
- EOG EOG Testing
- ▲ Camp: 8 am to 5 pm

FEBRUARY 2024						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
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MARCH 2024						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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APRIL 2024						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4

MAY 2024						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	EOG 28	EOG 29	EOG 30	EOG 31	1

JUNE 2024						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
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9	★ 10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

JULY 2024						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3

AUGUST 2024						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

SEPTEMBER 2024						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

OCTOBER 2024						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2

NOVEMBER 2024						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

DECEMBER 2024						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

JANUARY 2025						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

DATES OF INTEREST	
♦	School Closed, No Childcare
August	
7-9	Optional Teacher Work Days ♦
12-21	Teacher Work Week Days ♦
21	Open House
22	First Day of School
September	
2	Holiday - Closed ♦
18	LHU Board Meeting
20	21st Day of School
30	Teacher Work Day ♦
October	
16	LHU Board Meeting
31	Teacher Work Day ♦
November	
1	Conference Day ♦
11	Holiday (observed) - Closed
20	LHU Board Meeting
25-29	Vacation/Holiday- Closed ♦
December	
23-31	Vacation/Holiday - Closed ♦
January	
1-3	Vacation/Holiday- Closed ♦
6	Teacher Work Day ♦
9	Charter Lottery Opens
15	LHU Board Meeting
20	Holiday- Closed ♦
February	
7	Charter Lottery Closes
14	Teacher Work Day ♦
17	Holiday- Closed ♦
19	LHU Board Meeting
March	
7	Public Charter Lottery
12	Teacher Work Day ♦
13	Conference Day ♦
14	Teacher Work Day ♦
19	LHU Board Meeting
31	Vacation/Holiday- Closed
April	
1-4	Vacation/Holiday- Closed
16	LHU Board Meeting
May	
2	Teacher Work Day ♦
21	LHU Board Meeting
26	Memorial Day - Closed ♦
30	Begin EOG Testing
June	
12	Last Day of School - 1/2 Day
13	Teacher Work Day ♦
18	LHU Board Meeting
19	Holiday ♦

Weather Make-Up Days (in order):
 Banked Day, Banked Day, Banked Day, Banked Day, Banked Day, Banked Day, February 14,

- ★ First/21st/Last Day of School
- ⬆ Open House/Lottery Opens
- Vacation/Holiday
- Optional Teacher Workdays
- Teacher/Staff Work Day
- Conference Day
- EOG EOG Testing

FEBRUARY 2025						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	1

MARCH 2025						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
23	24	25	26	27	28	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

APRIL 2025						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3

MAY 2025						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

JUNE 2025						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	EOG	2	EOG	3	EOG	4
5	EOG	6	EOG	7	EOG	8
9	EOG	10	EOG	11	★	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2

JULY 2025						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2



**EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT TO STERLING MONTESSORI
ACADEMY & CHARTER SCHOOL
RECEIPT OF THE SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

This mission of Sterling Montessori is to create a diverse educational community, grounded in the Montessori philosophy and teaching practices, that fosters curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking in its students. We strive to empower each student to become life-long learners who respect themselves, others and their environment.

Sterling Montessori expects all employees to be committed to the workplace and his/her job responsibilities and duties. We are to be engaged in the work and committed to the organization's mission, values, goals and organizational development of the school's practices to meet the educational achievement of the school's success.

I, the undersigned, have this day received a copy of Sterling Montessori School's Employee Handbook.

I understand that this Employee Handbook has been provided to me for guidance purposes only, and that this Handbook is not a contract of employment, nor does it provide me with any contractual rights. I understand that I should consult with the Executive Director regarding any questions not answered in the Handbook.

I understand that this Handbook replaces any and all prior handbooks, policies and practices of the School, and I also understand that the policies and benefits contained herein may be added to, deleted or changed by the School at any time at its discretion, and that the School will provide me with notice of such changes.

I acknowledge that I have access to a copy of the Sterling Employee Handbook, the Employee Handbook was reviewed during the first section meeting of the school year and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this Handbook and any revisions made to it.

Employee's Signature

Date

Employee's Name (Print)

This 2023-2024 Employee Handbook was approved by
the LHU Board