Cypress Grove
MONTESSORI
Academy

Handbook for Eligibility
2019 – 2020

Cypress Grove Montessori Academy
Post Office Box P (Mailing Address)
2461 North King Avenue (Physical Address)
Lutcher, Louisiana 70071
(225) 258-5400 (Office)
(225) 258-5406 (Cafeteria)
www.stjames.k12.la.us

Becky Louque, Director
Ashley Boyd, Lead Teacher

Academy Colors

Sky Blue and Green

Academy Logo

Tree of Life

Academy Motto

"Free the child's potential, and you will transform him into the world."
-Marie Montessori

Academy Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a warm, loving, and nurturing environment that supports individuality and compassion for all.

Academy Vision Statement

Our vision is to create an academy where we foster a child's natural desire to learn.

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Cypress Grove Montessori Academy!

The faculty and staff are looking forward to becoming acquainted with you during the academic year through conferences, open - houses, and other academy activities. We invite you to discuss with us any concerns, which you may have about your child and the academy experiences provided by Cypress Grove Montessori. We also invite you to join our excellent family through family activities, and become an active part of your child's education. We need your talents, time, and support. Research shows that children whose parents play an active role in their education are more apt to succeed in the academy.

This handbook has been prepared so that you will have important academy information. The successful implementation of these guidelines requires that each person involved – faculty, staff, students, and parents – recognize and carry out the guidelines set forth. Please read it carefully, review it with your child, and keep it for reference throughout the year. We hope that working "together" we will have a great year.

Sincerely,

Administrative Staff

Cypress Grove Montessori Academy

Purpose

The purpose of Cypress Grove Montessori Academy is to provide a carefully planned, stimulating environment, which will help the child develop an excellent foundation for creative learning. Cypress Grove Montessori Academy will provide an application and lottery selection process that assures fair and equitable accessibility to all students, with first priority given to students residing in the Lutcher Attendance Zone, subject to racial equality requirements as outlined in the Desegregation Consent Order.

The St. James Parish School District will work consistently with Cypress Grove Montessori Academy to create a diversified environment made up of fifty percent black and fifty percent non-black students. If the student enrollment does not reflect this ratio, the district and academy will work collaboratively to modify its marketing and recruiting strategies.

Objectives

- To develop a positive attitude toward school
- To help each child develop self confidence
- To assist each child in building a habit of concentration
- To foster an abiding curiosity
- To develop habits of initiative and persistence

Eligibility Criteria

Any St. James Parish resident, age 4 – 9, who is interested in Cypress Grove Montessori Academy, is eligible to apply. Only those 9-10 year old students who have received previous Montessori Training are also eligible to apply.

Applicants must provide all documentation required as outlined below at the time the application is submitted. Applications will not be accepted without the supporting documentation.

Application Process

Applications will be available on December 10, 2018 at the following locations:

- St. James Parish School Board Office and website,
- Cypress Grove Montessori Academy and website,
- Sixth Ward Elementary School,
- St. James Parish Libraries,
- Convent Court House-Programs Office.

Applications will be published in the *News Examiner-Enterprise* on the following dates:
December 13, 20, 27, 2018 and January 3, 10, 17, 24, 2019.

Only one application per student will be accepted.

If you are applying for more than one child to attend Cypress Grove Montessori Academy, please complete a separate application for each child.

Completed applications, accompanied by the required documentation as outlined below, must be submitted by the deadline to either Cypress Grove Montessori Academy (East Bank) or Sixth Ward Elementary School (West Bank) with all appropriate documentation. Please note that applications will not be accepted without the accompanying documentation.

The appropriate documentation must include:

- two (2) proofs of residency in the name of the student's guardian (see below),
- immunization record,
- birth certificate,
- Social Security Card.

In addition, Pre-K students must also include the following for grant funding:

- Proof of income
  - ____Two (2) consecutive check stubs for EACH PARENT or CAREGIVER IN THE HOUSEHOLD for the current year (within 2 months from the date filling out this application).
  - ____An official letter from your employer stating all of the following:
    - Where parent/guardian is employed
    - Hourly rate of pay
    - The average number of hours a parent/guardian works per week.
  - ____Snap /Food Stamps-must include the child's name and valid effective dates.
  - ____A statement from the Social Security Administration verifying that the child listed on the application is a recipient of SSI benefits, which must be accompanied by two current check stubs.
  - ____Current foster care placement agreement from DCFS
  - ____Families who claim zero income of any kind must submit a Statement of No Income form.

- ____Parents or guardians who are employed intermittently, self-employed, or who do not have tax forms, W-2 forms, check stubs, or applicable DCFS printouts to verify their income must submit a Declaration of Income for Irregular Employment form.
- ____ Families in temporary living arrangement due to loss of housing or economic hardship (homeless). Community Network should follow LEA-defined procedures for verifying homeless status.
- ____Other: _____
  (May be subject to review. Note: 2018 tax documentation is allowable only if no other form of income verification documentation exists. Previous tax years are not allowed.)

- Copy of Parent 's Louisiana Driver's license or State –issued ID Card

Acceptable forms of proof of residency include two of the following:

- an Act of Sale/Mortgage for home or lease agreement/rental contract on company letterhead,
- a Voter's Registration Card (showing name and address),
- Tax Assessor's bill, and
- a water or electric bill.

Any other form of documentation for residency will not be accepted.

Completed applications are due on Friday, January 25, 2019 by 3:00 p.m.

Selection Guidelines

1. Any St. James Parish resident, age 4 – 9, is eligible to apply. Only those 9-10 year old students who have received previous Montessori Training are also eligible to apply. All eligible students will be divided into two groups: those students who reside within the Lutcher Attendance Zone and those outside of the zone.

2. Students who reside within the Lutcher Attendance Zone will have first preference in the selection process. These applicants will be sub-divided into two groups: black and non-black. The applicants residing within the District Attendance Zone will also be sub-divided into two groups: black and non-black.

3. Cypress Grove Montessori Academy teachers will have the opportunity to enroll their children. Any St. James Parish School Board Employee's child is allowed to apply for the lottery by following the guidelines outlined in the enrollment process.

4. Students who are currently enrolled at Cypress Grove Montessori Academy who have a sibling, the sibling will be given preference. Siblings are defined as biological brothers and/or sisters living in the same household.

5. In the event that the number of Lutcher Attendance Zone applicants exceeds the number of open seats **or** there are not enough applicants from the Lutcher Attendance Zone to fill all open seats, an open lottery will be held on February 7, 2019 at Cypress Grove Academy at 4:00 p.m. The applicants divided into the Lutcher Attendance Zone Black and Non-Black categories will be selected first. A computerized selection program will be used to pull one Lutcher Attendance Zone Black and one Lutcher Attendance Zone Non-Black. If the applicant selected has siblings, the siblings will automatically be placed in the age appropriate class. *Additional documentation with regards to siblings will be required. Siblings are defined as biological brothers and/or sisters living in the same household.

6. If after, all Lutcher Attendance Zone applicants have been assigned a seat and there remain open seats, the District Attendance Zone Students will be selected by using the selection process outlined above.

7. Each applicant will receive a number by the lottery date. Parents and guardians will be notified of their number.

   Example:
   Lutcher Attendance Zone Black—LB1,
   Lutcher Attendance Zone Non-Black—LNB1,
   District Attendance Zone Black—DB1,
   District Attendance Zone Non-Black—DNB1.

   All numbers will be placed into the divided categories:
   Lutcher Attendance Zone Black, Lutcher Attendance Zone Non-Black,
   District Attendance Zone Black, District Attendance Zone Non-Black.

8. Parents/Guardians will be notified of their students' selection via written correspondence that will be mailed to the address on the student's applications. Parents/Guardians must sign and return the acceptance letter to Cypress Grove Montessori Academy no later than February 15, 2019. If the acceptance letter is not received within the deadline, the student will lose their placement. If a student leaves the school or declines placement, they will be required to reapply and go through the selection process again.

Once all acceptance letters have been received, if there are any remaining seats, students will be admitted in the order they are placed on the wait list as determined at the time of the Lottery. If there is no one on the wait list then the school and district will recruit to ensure a diversified group of students.

Appeals

Parents have a right to appeal. However, the following are NOT considered grounds for appeal:

- Residing outside St. James Parish Public Schools attendance zone
- Board approved priority
- All documentation required or notification of acceptance was not submitted by deadline

Appeals Process

1. A conference must be scheduled at the request of the parent/legal guardian in an effort to clarify factors involved in the decision in attempt to resolve (at the school level – lead teacher/recruiter).

2. If not resolved by the conference, parents/legal guardians may submit a letter stating reasons for the appeal with documentation.

3. The director will review the letter.

4. Parents/legal guardians will be notified in writing whether the appeal was granted or denied by the director.

5. If parents/legal guardians do not agree with the decision, they have five working days from the time notification is received to appeal to the superintendent or designee. This will be the last and final step in the process.