



PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

The Renaissance International School
MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of The Renaissance International School is to provide children with an international center of learning and culture that is open, supportive and multidisciplinary, where children can develop and achieve their highest potential.

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OUR GOALS

Our goal at The Renaissance International School (“**TRIS**”) is to provide an environment that will allow for the full development of each and every child as an individual and as a contributing member of society. The Montessori environment promotes this development, since the approach is one of respect.

It is our goal to help each and every child find:

- Independence
- Confidence
- Imagination
- Creativity
- Self-direction
- Sense of belonging
- Responsibility
- Self-discipline
- Self-acceptance
- Self-expression
- Love of learning

Once a child has achieved these characteristics, he is ready to discover and learn on a more developed level.

THE CURRICULUM

The Montessori classroom provides an environment conducive to the development of the “whole child.” The aim is to observe and aid the child in her physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development. It is as important to nurture the gross motor development, as it is to develop the emotional. The multiple subject areas found in the classroom are appropriate to meet the needs of all the children. Each area addresses a different task.

At TRIS, we are committed to:

- Guiding the child towards the development of skills necessary for group participation and life.
- Developing the child’s self-image through practical life exercises (care of self and the environment, including exercises in grace and courtesy necessary for caring interactions with others).
- Developing perceptual acuity through sensorial materials (refinement of sensory perception).
- Developing communication skills through language arts in three languages.
- Introducing the child to meaningful mathematics.
- Introducing the child to natural sciences (botany, geology, and zoology) and physical sciences, thus forming the basis for appreciation of our beautiful world.
- Introducing the child to art, music, and dance.
- Introducing the child to different cultures through the study of cultural geography and languages.

Dr. Maria Montessori found that children, who work in an environment that is interesting and inviting to them, do so in harmony and mutual respect. Problems of discipline occur rarely, and, if they do, a gentle, yet firm, reminder is all that is needed. This environment also encourages the development of concentration, perseverance, and thoroughness, which produce a confident and competent learner.

When we refer to the “environment” in a Montessori classroom, we must not forget the keeper of this beautiful environment, for without him the “environment” does not exist. The Montessori teacher, referred to as the guide, is the link between the prepared environment and the child. The guide must have a very special disposition seeking satisfaction in inspiring the child rather than “teaching” him. She must also be a keen observer. It is through the observation of the child that the teacher knows when to guide the child to the next step or when to introduce a new concept that will interest her. The Montessori guide is the invisible force that facilitates the development of the child by arousing and maintaining the interest of the child and by removing any obstacles that appear along the way. It is because of the qualities that a Montessori teacher must possess, that Dr. Montessori called her teachers, “guides.”

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Application & Admission

TRIS currently admits children from age two through Junior High. At our Oakland Campus, we welcome and serve children between the ages of two and six years of age and at our Piedmont Campus we serve children from first through sixth grades. Our Jr. High students find their home in both the Oakland and Piedmont campuses. Students of any race, color, religion, sexual orientation, and national or ethnic origin are welcome. Parents of prospective students are asked to schedule an appointment for a two-hour tour given by the Head of School, Associate Head of School, or the Program Coordinators. They will discuss TRIS' philosophy of education and the curriculum, answer your questions, and take you on a visit to the classrooms. We ask that parents attend without their children so that they may focus on the environment and the information. Parents are welcome to visit a second time for a class observation (pending COVID restrictions). An appointment is necessary for any of these visits; we avoid having more than one visitor in the classroom at a given time. They are also welcome to contact the Admissions Coordinator to receive information about the admissions process or the Program Coordinator, Associate Head of School or the Head of School to ask any questions they may have about the program.

At the time of the first visit, parents of prospective students receive an application. We require a non-refundable \$75.00 application fee at the Pre-Primary and Primary levels and a \$125.00 fee at the Kindergarten, Elementary and Junior High levels. The fee must accompany the completed application form.

Parents may mail the application to TRIS or drop it off in our mailbox, at any time, at either campus. Upon receiving the application, we will contact you to arrange an admission interview with the Head of School, Associate Head of School or the Program Coordinators. The interview will take about two hours. Both parents are required to attend. They will want to hear about what makes your child unique, what your dreams are for your child, and how you feel s/he will thrive in our program. They will be happy to answer any further questions you may have at that time. For children coming from another school, we request that one of the student's current or past teacher(s) complete a form telling us about the child. For students applying to our Elementary or Junior High programs, we will also need a copy of the student's full records for the last two years and any test scores available. Students starting at age four, who are applying for the Primary, Elementary or Junior High levels must visit TRIS for two days for assessment and observation prior to the admission interview.

Upon acceptance, parents will receive an enrollment packet confirming their child's starting date. The Parent's Agreement, the Fee Worksheet, the Traffic and Parking Guidelines & Regulations and the Volunteer Policy, included in the packet, must be returned as soon as possible and no later than the date stated in the acceptance letter. TRIS reserves a tentative place for the applicant from the time the application is received until the date stated in the acceptance letter. The above stated documents together with a check for the amount stated in the Initial Billing must be received by the date mentioned above in order for TRIS to consider the applicant as enrolled and that a place is guaranteed for the student for the date stated in the acceptance letter. A set of additional forms will be sent to the parents either with the acceptance package or at a later date depending on the timing

of the enrollment. **ALL** forms must be completed and returned to the office at least a week before the child's first day of school. For a child to start transitioning into our Pre-primary or Primary program, the following forms must be on file in the office:

- Application for Enrollment
- Parent Agreement
- Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form
- Fee Worksheet
- Traffic and Parking Guidelines & Regulations
- Emergency/Disaster Information Form
- Authorization for Student Pick-up
- Medical and Dental Consent Form
- Extracurricular Activities Release Form
- Vehicle Registration Form
- Volunteer Policy
- Parent's Report
- Child Sexual Abuse Pamphlet
- Notice – Parent's Rights
- Personal Rights
- Copy of Immunization Record
- Physician's Report

Registration

TRIS ensures a place for a student from the moment the signed Parent Agreement and acknowledgement of receipt and consent to this handbook is received, accompanied by a check for the deposit (equal to one tuition installment or 10% of tuition). This deposit will be applied to the family's account **to be used for the last calendar month that the student attends TRIS**, not the last month of that particular school year. **This deposit is non-refundable.**

Tuition and Monthly Billing

For the **10-month option**, tuition is based on the cost of the academic school year starting in September and ending in June. The tuition may be paid in one lump sum due in June (with a 5% discount) or in ten monthly installments. Each tuition installment represents 1/10th of the total cost, **NOT** the cost of one month of schooling.

For the **12-month option**, tuition is based on the cost of the year-long school year starting in September and ending in August. The tuition may be paid in one lump sum due in June (with a 5% discount) or in twelve monthly installments. Each tuition installment represents 1/12th of the total cost, **NOT** the cost of one month of schooling.

As a courtesy, you will be billed monthly for your tuition installments, including any fees incurred

during the previous month. Bills are sent on the 15th of each month. Tuition payment installments are due **on or before** the 25th of every month including any charges incurred during the previous month. After the 25th, tuition is overdue. Payments not received by the first of the following month are subject to a finance charge of 2% per month. If payment is not received by the fifth of the month (including the finance charge), the child's place will become available for a new enrollment. Please contact the Admissions Coordinator immediately if you have any unforeseen problems.

In the case when more than one parent is responsible for the payment of the tuition, it is the responsibility of the parents to agree on the terms that will work for them. TRIS will **not** be responsible for the collection of payments from multiple parties. TRIS will require the parents, jointly, to be responsible for the timely payment of tuition and other charges regardless of their personal allocation of responsibility for payment or appointment of a designated payer.

Tuition is not adjustable or discounted for illness, absence, family vacations, holidays, school holiday breaks, unforeseen natural disasters, a pandemic or as a result of a change in method of delivery of instruction such as from in-person to online. A 5% discount is given to siblings of the same family enrolled at the same time.

Families are encouraged to select the schedule that fits their needs as changing of the schedule is not allowed after contracts are signed.

Tuition for any given school year is announced with re-enrollment documents that are sent out to parents during the first quarter of a given year for the fall term of that year.

Occasional daycare charges are incurred as they are used and the monthly billing will reflect charges incurred for the previous month.

Tuition and other payments can be paid online or checks can be mailed or dropped off in the black mailbox by the primary campus gate in Oakland or the black mailbox in front of the office in Piedmont.

Commitment

Each enrollment is understood to be a moral commitment to expose the child to the program for at least a three-year cycle.

When a new student is selected for admission, or a current student is returning, and TRIS has received a signed Enrollment Agreement, TRIS reserves that student's place for the entire year. At that time, concurrent with TRIS' obligations to the student, tuition for the full year becomes the contractual obligation of the parent or legal guardian as set forth in the enrollment agreement, even if the student does not complete the full school year.

There is no reduction in the annual tuition for pupils admitted during the first six weeks of the school year. Those entering thereafter are charged on a pro-rata basis from the date of entrance. All fees (with the exception of the stated tuition for the school year), rules and financial arrangements are subject to change at the discretion of the Head of School.

Re-Enrollment

Parents who would like to reserve a place for their child for the next school year need to sign a new Parent Agreement, acknowledge and consent to the Parent Handbook for that year, and return each to TRIS with the registration fee adjustment. This fee equals the difference between the new deposit and the previous year's deposit. *See Registration.* Re-enrollment will not be offered to any student whose family has a past due balance on his account. Re-enrollment documents are sent out to parents during the first quarter of the year for the academic year starting in the fall of that year. The re-enrollment documents outline annual increases in tuition and other possible increases in fees. Every effort is made to maintain increases in tuition to a minimum, however, parents should expect annual tuition increases between 3% and 10% and occasionally more.

Withdrawals

The commitment for students is for the full academic year as stated in the enrollment agreement and the yearly financial supplement. If TRIS is advised in writing on or before the last Friday in March of the current school year that the student will not be returning to TRIS for the following school year, the Reservation Deposit for that year shall be applied to the last month of the current school year. However, **the Reservation Deposit shall be non-refundable if TRIS is not advised on or before the last Friday in March that the student will not be returning to TRIS for the following school year.**

Registration fees are not refundable for any reason, including illness or family transfer out of the area.

Please direct the withdrawal notice to the office by email or mailing it or by dropping it in one of the black outside mailboxes or in the designated office mailboxes. All withdrawal notices should be addressed to the Head of School.

Dismissals

TRIS reserves the right to dismiss a student if the student or his parents do not abide by school policies, if the student is a disciplinary problem, or if payments are not made according to schedule, including extra fees incurred. Parents and students alike are expected to respect the rights, needs, and property of other members of the TRIS community, including other students, their families, and school staff members. A student will be subject to dismissal if the student or her parents are unable to do so.

Absences

Parents are asked to call TRIS or send an email to their student's teaching team and healthytris@therenaissanceschool.org when their child is going to be absent. It helps the teachers in planning the day, and having peace of mind that the child is well. When ill, it is not necessary to call after the first day, unless it is extensive.

There are two elements that are essential for a student to receive the full benefits of our program, punctuality and consistency. With that in mind, we strongly encourage families to schedule vacations when school is not in session. There are multiple weeks throughout the year that make this possible.

In the state of California, children are expected to be in school every day the school is open. This starts in pre-kindergarten, which is equivalent to our second year in Primary or age 4. Absences of more than ten (10) days, for whatever reason, including illness, are considered to be excessive and require a review of the progress the child has made to establish if the child can move on to the next grade. At TRIS, we don't use grades and we constantly review the child's progress and establish whether the student needs more time at a particular level. Absences of more than ten days may warrant another semester at the level the student is at. Absences will be discussed with parents so as to work together to find a solution. If absences persist, a meeting will be coordinated to discuss whether TRIS is still a good match for the family.

Children of Divorced Parents

State law requires that we release a child to his parent unless there is a court order restraining one of the parents from seeing the child. If a parent is divorced or subject to a pending domestic relations proceeding and they do not wish their child's other parent to have pick-up privileges, we must have a copy of the court order and any subsequent orders affecting custody or visitation of that child.

HEALTH AND ILLNESS

Healthy Hygiene Practices

Hand washing

Proper hand washing can prevent the spread of infections from one person to the next and keep the community healthy. TRIS staff members are expected to follow and instruct children to follow the following steps recommended by the health department:

1. Wet hands with clean running water (warm or cold), turn off tap, and apply soap
2. Lather hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather back of hands, between fingers, and under nails
3. Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds
4. Rinse hands well under clean, running water
5. Dry hands using a clean paper towel or clean reusable towel designated for individual use.
6. We ask that parents provide the same guidance at home to ensure that children experience consistency.

Health Screenings

We ask to be informed immediately of any changes in a child's health as it may affect her behavior in school. To facilitate this communication, we ask parents to complete and submit a daily health screening form on SchoolCues about their child's health. The form must be submitted before drop-off in the morning.

When ill

Children who have a **fever**, are **vomiting**, have **diarrhea**, or have any other **communicable disease are not allowed in school**. If vomiting, diarrhea, and/or fever have occurred, the child must stay at home until the fever, diarrhea, or vomiting **has subsided for a full 24 hours without medication**. **To return to school, please provide a PCR test taken after the symptoms started or a negative antigen test taken on the morning of return to school**. Quite often children may seem fine in the morning, but symptoms may return as the day progresses. If a child becomes ill in school, we expect parents to pick the child up **as soon as possible**. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact someone on the Emergency Form. **If a child presents congestion or a runny nose, a negative antigen test is required before arrival and, if the symptoms have not gone away naturally, please PCR or antigen test on the 3rd day of symptoms.**

Lice

When a child is discovered to have **lice** at school, parents are notified immediately to pick up their

child for treatment. We notify parents immediately in order for their child to be picked up immediately and treated promptly. Following treatment for lice, students are welcome to return to school with a note or receipt from the treatment facility.

COVID Policies

Although COVID is certainly less of a threat now, it is still with us. Our COVID policies are subject to change throughout the year as warranted by local and state mandates, as well as recommendations of the Alameda County Health Department. Parents are informed of change in policies, via email or the TRIS Newsletter with at least 24 hours notice before implementation. Our policies and procedures evolve to address the safety of the TRIS community, as it is our number one priority.

Symptoms of COVID-19:

- Fever
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Prevention of COVID-19

Research continues to show that vaccination is the best prevention tool for COVID-19. We encourage parents of children starting at six (6) months of age to consider vaccination for their child. Vaccines do not prevent all cases of COVID-19, however they have been shown to prevent severe disease and hospitalization.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

We will continue cleaning and then sanitizing with a non-toxic CDC COVID-19 approved disinfectant (hypochlorous acid - HOCL). Although materials will no longer be sanitized after each use, the systems will be in place if more frequent and detailed disinfection becomes necessary.

Masking

Masking outdoors is no longer required for students or staff, as Alameda County currently has a low incidence of COVID. As long as we continue at that level we will not require masks, other than when:

- A student starts exhibiting signs of COVID
- A student has been exposed to COVID.
- A student is returning from a COVID quarantine, until ten (10) days from the onset
- A student has a runny nose or a cough,
- At the request of a TRIS staff member.

Masking indoors will still be required for the beginning of the school year. We will evaluate the need for masks periodically.

Please be aware that if the incidence of COVID-19 increases substantially, masks may again be required at all times.

COVID Exposure

Vaccinated or unvaccinated individuals

- No quarantine is required as long as the child is able to wear a good, well-fitting mask for the whole time the child is in school, for ten (10) days.
- Antigen test is needed the first day
- PCR test is required on the fifth day
- If symptoms develop, quarantine is necessary until a PCR test is performed and the result is negative

Testing positive for COVID

Vaccinated or unvaccinated Individuals

- Five (5) day quarantine
- Wear a well-fitting mask for ten (10) days from the day after diagnosed or symptoms appear
- May return to school on Day six (6)

Travel by Public Transportation - Plane, train, ship, bus, etc.

Vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals

- May return directly to school with an antigen test performed the morning of scheduled return
- **PCR** Testing on the fifth day after the arrival day is required

Please note that while we do not require a PCR test to return after travel, if you have not been at school and did not take a PCR test the prior week, you will need one to return to school. This means that if you test with us on a Thursday and travel over the weekend, your child may return to school without taking a PCR test. If you have been traveling and did not test with us on the Thursday before returning, you will need to find your own PCR testing in order for your child to return to school.

Environments and Ventilation

TRIS HVAC Filtration Systems were upgraded to the highest available levels during the 2021-2022 school year to be able to offer the healthiest possible environments to our students and staff for COVID-19 and other possible contagious respiratory diseases. During periods of high levels of respiratory disease transmission, windows and doors will be kept open for maximum ventilation.

The new filtration system also protects our students and staff during periods of poor air quality particularly due to wildfires. In those situations, all doors and windows will be kept closed. It is safe for individuals to be in the classrooms when the air quality index stays under 150. When the air quality index reaches an unhealthy level of 150, or higher, parents will be notified and school will be closed.

Testing for COVID

TRIS will start the year with weekly PCR testing for students and staff. The need for continued testing will be periodically evaluated.

Students at Home with COVID-19

Elementary and Jr. High students who are required to stay home because of COVID-19, will be provided with work to do at home and due when they return to school.

Providing work for **Primary students** under the age of 5, is left to the discretion of the guides working with the parents. Children in their **last year of Primary** will be provided with work to do at home.

Work will not be provided to students who are on vacation.

MEDICATION AND FIRST AID

Every classroom is equipped with a first-aid and a medication box. The first -aid box contains necessary items to take care of scrapes and cuts, etc. The medication box is for the storage of prescription medication that needs to be administered at school at the request of a parent. Also included in the medication box is a supply of Children's Tylenol in case a child develops a high fever at school. Parents will be notified immediately and they may request that a teacher administer Tylenol to their child. The child must have a temperature of at least 103 degrees Fahrenheit before the Tylenol can be administered. Tylenol will not be given to any child without the parent's verbal consent.

For administration of other medication at school:

- Parents must complete an Authorization for Administration of Medication form which can be found on SchoolCues, in the offices and in the classrooms.
- Medications must be packaged in the original container with the sticker stating the child's name, the physician's name, and prescription details.
- Medication must be handed to the child's teacher. **DO NOT SEND MEDICATION WITH YOUR CHILD OR PUT IT IN THEIR LUNCH BOX.**
- Parents are responsible for reminding teachers about their child's medication on a daily basis.

Children are not allowed to bring any medications to school regardless of age, **not even vitamins or cough drops**. If found by another child who is allergic to the substance, and he takes it thinking it is candy, an allergic reaction could occur and we would have no idea what the child ingested. An Authorization for Administration of Medication must be completed for the administration of vitamins, cough drops or medications.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS

It is the parents' responsibility to inform relatives, friends, nanny, babysitter, or any other person who might drive their child to or from school, of the traffic and parking regulations at TRIS. Parents are asked to talk to the child's caregiver/s and make sure they have a good understanding of where they can and cannot park when dropping the child off or picking him/her up from school.

At the Oakland Campus

- **Do not** double park on Dimond Avenue
- **Do not** park in the red zone at the end of Dimond Avenue
- **Do not** block any driveways, even partially!
- **Do not** park in any of the TRIS driveways.
- **Do** park in one of the fifteen stalls to the left as you enter the parking lot of the Lord of Zion Church at 3618 Dimond Avenue!
- **Do** display the TRIS decal on their windshield to identify school-affiliated vehicles while parked in the church parking lot and on the street!
- **Do** observe the speed limit on Dimond Avenue and adhere to public traffic and parking laws along Dimond Avenue!

At the Piedmont Campus

- **Do not** speed when entering the parking lot.
- **Do not** park blocking the turnaround zone
- Respect the orange cones delineating the student's recess area.

Parking and Traffic Violations

Parking regulations and guidelines are to be strictly enforced. Failure to adhere to TRIS parking guidelines and regulations results in the following: *first* violation, the family is given a written reminder; second violation, the family is given an additional 5 hours of volunteer work as needed by TRIS or fined \$350.00 (rate of \$70.00 per hour); third violation, the family is given an additional 15 hours of volunteer work as needed by TRIS or fined \$1,050.00, and the family is put on probation.

At the time of a fourth violation, the family is asked to leave. The accumulated number of violations stays effective throughout the duration of your child's enrollment at TRIS.

USE OF TRIS FACILITIES

We would like to make sure that TRIS families feel like this is their school; that this is their community. We must, however, ask that in using the facility, parents keep in mind the rules and regulations we are asked to follow. There are two instances that often come up when families use the facility and we need their cooperation.

- When families are visiting Dimond Park or simply walking by, they are welcome to use the adult restroom in the foyer of the Sycamore/Oak building. When your child needs to use the restroom, you must come into the building with them. We are held responsible for having children at the Pre-primary and Primary levels under constant supervision. When you allow your child to enter the facility alone, we immediately find ourselves in a noncompliance situation. Philosophically, we agree with the responsibility and trust you are showing your child; however, we are, unfortunately, not able to support you in this practice. The same is true when you are walking around the facility with your child. Community Care Licensing mandates that we make sure children walk with their parents while entering or exiting.
- When you are on TRIS grounds with a sibling not enrolled at TRIS, particularly a younger sibling, parents must keep their child(ren) with them at all times. We are not allowed to have children walking around the facility without direct supervision. If something should happen to the child, TRIS is held responsible for the accident. In addition, we could be sanctioned for having children in the facility who are not of age to be in the program.

Moving around Campus

Whenever students are on campus TRIS is responsible for their safety and well-being. This includes pick-up and drop-off and school-sponsored activities with parents at school (such as performances, open houses, potlucks...). Philosophically, we believe parents are the primary caretakers and thus we feel that when parents are present, the children should respond to them. However, we are held responsible for our students at any time they are present on campus or in any venue that involves TRIS. We ask parents to support their child and TRIS by holding their child(ren) responsible for abiding by and respecting TRIS rules. Should we observe a child doing something unacceptable, we will intervene even if the parent is present. The purpose of our intervention is to maintain consistency and safety in the environment.

Rules for a large group are very different from the rules that typically govern a small group, such as a family. This means that we may have rules that you might not have in your home. We ask that you consider what you would want to happen if you had ~150 children and their parents visiting your home. Whose rules would you want everyone to follow? At TRIS, the staff and the parents function cooperatively to organize, entertain, enjoy and clean up, and therefore we share a great deal in common. We want to make sure this level of cooperation is maintained at all times.

MANDATORY PARENT GATHERINGS

Experience has shown us how essential it is for parents to have a firsthand understanding of the Montessori philosophy and method. We have also learned of the great importance for families and school to create a sense of community with one another. To offer a good quality program, we need the help, support, and understanding of the parents. For these reasons, we must insist on their presence at:

- Back-to-School Night
- Pre-primary and Primary Open Houses for Parents
- Pre-primary and Primary Parent-Teacher conferences.
- Elementary and Jr. High Student-Parent-Teacher conferences
- Elementary and Jr. High Parent-Teacher conferences

PARENT VOLUNTEERISM

Each family with one child enrolled at TRIS is required to volunteer a minimum of 15 hours between September and June of each school year. For families with two or more children enrolled, the requirement is 20 hours per family. At least 5 of the 15 hours must be dedicated to fundraising.

All volunteer hours must be recorded on the family's volunteer log by the last day of school in June. Please be aware that providing snacks for your child's classroom, and hosting parents-only get-togethers will not be considered as volunteer hours. There are many opportunities available throughout the school year to volunteer. Volunteerism may take place on or off school premises, on the weekends, evenings, or during school hours.

Some areas of volunteer opportunities are:

- Baking cookies for school events,
- Doing research by phone or on-line for various needs,
- Maintaining a database for school use,
- Helping with various repairs and maintenance on school grounds,
- Helping with gardening, landscaping or yard maintenance,
- Photographing or videotaping TRIS events as required by TRIS,
- Helping to organize school fundraising activities,
- Helping with community outreach and public relations.

If parents choose not to participate in our volunteer program, they are asked to pay \$750.00 for families with one child enrolled, \$1,000.00 for families with two or more children enrolled, to opt out of the program. If families feel that they can simply not commit the time, we ask that they make a check payable to TRIS and return it with the annual form before the child's first day of school. Please note that partial hours/partial payment combinations will **not** be accepted.

REQUESTS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS FROM TEACHERS

When a student applies for admission to another school, it is common practice that the school asks for letters of recommendation from two teachers and the head of school, which we are glad to accommodate as long as we are given an adequate amount of time to respond. **We need three weeks to be able to complete the form and forward it on to the school in question.** We are unable to respond to rush requests as it can jeopardize the smooth operation of our own program. We recommend that parents give the teachers in question the recommendation form as soon as they decide to apply so that there is plenty of time for the teacher to complete it.

Recommendation forms are strictly confidential and must be forwarded directly to the schools you designate. We are not allowed to share recommendations with families. This is part of the East Bay Independent School Association agreements. Recommendations are based on observations of a student's performance in a given class at a given time. Parents can rest assured that whatever the teachers have observed their child doing will be the basis of their recommendation.

CALENDAR

A yearly calendar is distributed to every family each new school year. All holidays, vacations, and special events are announced at this time so that families may plan accordingly. The school calendar can be found on SchoolCues and in the TRIS Newsletter.

Holidays and Vacations

TRIS observes the following holidays:

- Labor Day
- Indigenous People's Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day

SCHOOL CLOSED; NO CHILD CARE AVAILABLE FOR HOLIDAYS ABOVE

Other School Holidays

TRIS also observes the following school vacations for students:

- Thanksgiving week
- Two weeks and two days in December
- One week in February
- One week in the Spring (March or April)
- One week for Independence Day
- Two weeks in August

SUMMER PROGRAM

TRIS offers a six-week summer program every year. Information about the summer is sent out in March of every year. **Students who are transitioning from Primary to Elementary education levels are required to attend four of the six weeks of the summer program.**

PRE-PRIMARY & PRIMARY

SCHOOL HOURS & PROGRAMS

At TRIS, we ask that parents, considering their child's and family's needs, choose from one of the basic programs offered Monday to Friday between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Pre-primary and Primary

The basic programs are:

2 Year Olds (Pre-Primary Program)

8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

2 to 5 Year Olds (Primary Program)

8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Students in the final Primary year (Kindergarten) must be in class by 8:30 a.m. This is in preparation for the transition to Elementary the following year, where classes start at 8:00 a.m. sharp. The state of California mandates schools to keep attendance records as well as punctuality records on all students enrolled in a Pre-kindergarten, Kindergarten, Elementary or Junior High program. The student's attendance and punctuality records become part of the student's permanent record and are reported in the student's progress reports.

For those on the 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. schedule, we also offer our Occasional Extended Day Program for those occasions when you may need childcare past 3:00 p.m. If the need arises, parents must email their child's teachers to see if there is space available at the end of the day for that child. When possible, please email your request at least 24 hours in advance. Parents should also fill out a Change of Routine form in SchoolCues. We cannot guarantee availability of space, as we need to maintain ratios mandated by Community Care Licensing.

Arrivals

Upon arrival at school, children will go into the classroom to engage in work, making use of their early morning concentration abilities. Parents are asked to be consistent about bringing their child in on time. Whether the class is inside or outside, it is best to arrive at the same time every day. Children feel very secure with routines and arriving at the same time every day provides a structure of predictable routine. **It is TRIS' expectation that all children arrive before 9:00 a.m.**

For families whose children are not signed up for the early morning program

Children, who are not signed up to participate in the early morning program may not be dropped off before 8:30 a.m. without prior arrangement. Should an emergency arise the parent is expected to check with the teacher in charge, upon arrival, to make sure there is enough staff available for the number of children present. We will always try to accommodate the needs of the family; however, we ask that the family also consider our position. There will be a one-hour Occasional Extended Day charge for arrivals before 8:20 a.m. **Drop-offs before 7:30 a.m. are not allowed.**

Arrival procedures for everyone

- Upon arrival at school, parents must remain with their child until they reach their child's classroom. They will be greeted by a teacher.
- **Make sure you make visual contact with one of the teachers to be sure that the child's arrival is properly acknowledged.**
- Parents must sign and clock their child in. It is state law that the parent (or whoever the parent designates to drop off their child) sign in with the **adult's full legal name**. Failure to sign in or out will result in a \$10.00 failure to sign fee.

To avoid disruption, **arrivals after 9:00 a.m. are very strongly discouraged**. They do not allow enough time for the child to make a smooth transition from home to school. If a tardy arrival is unavoidable, we ask that the parent please help the child enter and join the group **unobtrusively**. If the child needs help separating from the parent, we ask that the parent and child wait until the teacher has a break in her duties to come and facilitate the child's transition. We ask that the parent and child wait **at the door**, so as not to distract the class. One of the teachers will make herself available as soon as possible. This may, however, take 10 or 15 minutes depending on the activity in which they are involved.

Departures

For students who leave at 3:00 p.m.

For children on the 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. schedule, children must be picked up within 10 minutes of their contractual pick-up time (3:00 p.m.) unless they have been signed up for the Occasional Extended Day program. **Children must be signed out and clocked out each day** in the sign-in/out book after the child is picked up. **Failure to punch a child in or out will result in a \$10.00 failure to punch fee. We ask that parents say good-bye to a teacher so that the child's departure is properly acknowledged.** It is most frightening to have a child suddenly disappear. This also applies to those rare times parents might pick up their child at an irregular time.

Teachers will only allow students to go home with individuals on the “allowed pick up list” which parents completed at the beginning of the year. If a parent would like to add or delete someone from the list, they can do so on SchoolCues. If on occasion, someone who does not routinely pick up your child will be doing so:

- Parents must notify the teachers via SchoolCues (change of routine form) or via email prior to the scheduled pick-up by that person.
- Inform that person that they will be asked for identification at pick-up.

We will not allow a child to leave TRIS with a person unknown to us, who cannot present proper identification, such as a driver's license. If a teacher does not feel comfortable releasing a child, TRIS policy is to keep the child until one of the parents can be contacted. We are sorry if this might cause some inconvenience.

Late Pick-up

There are times in our lives when schedules and plans fall apart at the very last minute, including the time we need to pick up our children. We understand those situations and would like to reassure parents that their children will be well taken care of and comforted if needed. However, a phone call before the scheduled pick-up time, letting us know what is happening and at what time the parent expects to pick up their child(ren), is necessary. We worry about parents when they are late, and, so will their child. A phone call allows us to let the child know that the parent is safe and when to expect to be picked up.

The only time we cannot accommodate unpredictable schedules is after 6:00 p.m. We expect parents to be prompt at this hour. If the parent anticipates having difficulty arriving by 6:00 p.m., we expect parents to make arrangements with another parent to pick their child up.

All children must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. The fines for late pick-up are below. Repeated pick-up tardiness after 6:00 p.m. may result in dismissal.

6:01 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.: \$2.00/minute

6:16 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.: \$5.00/minute

6:31 p.m. & after: \$10.00/minute

There is no grace period after 6:00 p.m.

Main Gate to Primary Campus

The main gate to the Primary campus at 3668 Dimond Avenue opens in two ways. During normal operating conditions, we ask that parents and staff unlock the combination padlock to enter or exit the facility. We request that the padlock be replaced immediately after entering or exiting the facility. This request is for the safety of our students.

In case of an emergency, the same gate can be opened without removing the padlock by lifting the pole in the middle between the two sides of the gate and simply pushing it out from inside the facility. **We ask that this be done only in case of an emergency such as a fire.**

For the safety of the children, we must insist that parents and staff remove the padlock to enter and exit the facility. Opening the gate without unlocking the padlock in a non-emergency situation is reason for dismissal from TRIS.

CHILD'S ADJUSTMENT TO SCHOOL

Pre-Primary and Primary Levels Transition Week

The week before a child is scheduled to start, we ask that the parents bring the child to school in the afternoon between a designated one and a half hour period from Monday to Friday. The specific time will be communicated to you close to your start date.

- Day 1 & 2 - The parent should bring a book or other activity and plan to sit in the yard allowing the child to play with the other children while having the security of the parent's presence. The role of the parent should not be that of an "entertainer," but rather of a silent observer.
- Day 3 - The parent should plan on leaving the child at TRIS for one hour.
- Day 4 & 5 - The parent should plan on leaving the child for the full hour and a half.

During that week, and even before the family starts transitioning, parents should prepare their child

for the moment of separation by talking about his or her school. It should be stressed that this is the place where he will go to have fun. Enacting the moment of separation so that your child will be prepared, but also including the moment when the parent arrives to pick up, is strongly suggested.

It is very possible that the child will still cry the first week of school when dropped off. However, she will already be familiar with the environment, most of the teachers, and a good number of the students. If after the first week the child still cries, we ask that parents understand that the child is testing them. Most often, as soon as the parent is gone, the child is usually very interested in the new environment and stops crying. Those who really have to overcome a problem of separation will have our extra attention. If the child is crying when the parent leaves, they are welcome to request to be called to know how their child is doing. **We ask that parents please do not go back to their child once they have said good-bye and have started leaving. The child needs to feel the security that the parent is sure of what they are doing.** The faculty will be glad to help the parents and the child through this period.

CLOTHING & SHOES

Children should wear comfortable school clothing — not too dressy, yet not what would be worn for playing in their backyard. Clothing should be neat, clean, **without holes**, and show respect for the school, which is a “special place.” All the children’s clothing should be easy for them to put on or take off. For example, no leotards, please. They are too difficult for children to manage in the bathroom and could be the cause of accidents.

Children should wear good, sturdy shoes that are strong, yet flexible for outdoor play. Flexible leather that conforms to the natural shape of the child’s foot is best. Sports shoes also work quite well. Cowboy boots or other stiff leather boots are not allowed. Children cannot feel what their feet are doing, often stepping on or kicking others. **We ask that children wear shoes or sandals that close so that they don’t fall off the feet when running, playing or climbing.** No jellies or other such flimsy plastic shoes or Crocks, please. They do not properly support the feet and often fall off or break during play.

We ask that the children take their shoes off when they go indoors and wear “indoor” shoes that are kept at school.

Whether your child is a Pre-Primary, Primary, Elementary or Middle school student, please give your child guidance in choosing clothes for school. We request that our students dress in a manner that addresses the seasonal climate changes and the need for comfort without distraction. We ask that our students avoid wearing “character” clothing, as they are often distracting to them and their classmates. This is particularly important with characters of a violent nature.

Although we are aware of the desire to dress in a stylish manner, particularly as our students get older, we ask that the following guidelines be respected at all times.

- Students should wear clothes that fit them, **not oversized**.
- Tops worn should be long enough to cover the top of the pants or skirt worn. No midriff showing please.
- Pants and shorts need to be hemmed and no shorter than mid-thigh.
- Pants are to be worn on the waist or hipbone. Pants that fall below the hipbone are not allowed. A belt is then necessary to hold the pants on the hipbone.

Every child should have a sweater or light jacket every day. Temperatures often change rapidly from one area of town to the other and from one hour to the next. The child is welcome to keep one in their cubby. Please label it.

CLOTHING FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

Consistent with our philosophy that there is a time and a place for everything, we will occasionally ask that our students wear more formal attire for special events such as the Thanksgiving Feast, field trips to the symphony, school performances.

POLICIES ON MAKE-UP, HAIR, NAIL POLISH, JEWELRY, WATCHES

Please **NO** make-up, hair coloring or bleaching, or nail polish for our students through the end of elementary! Children **NEED** time to be children and should not be encouraged to look or act like adolescents or adults if they are not yet there. Sometimes older siblings, neighbors, relatives, friends, and baby-sitters will need your firm guidance in this area.

Jewelry may not be worn to school because it is a distraction to the student or his classmates. A non-digital watch may be worn if it is not a distraction to the student. That student should either know how to tell time or be in the process of learning.

SHARING ITEMS FROM HOME

We have special days for children to bring something to present to the class. We ask that parents help with the choices. Items should have some “special” quality. It is important that we guide the children in their choices, as this is the time of building “values.” Do help guide them towards

something that carries an important memory or perhaps something from nature.

We do not allow toys to be brought from home. They can break or get lost or another child may think it belongs to him.

When a child under four is new to TRIS, a “comforting” stuffed animal or blanket is fine for the first few days, if the parent feels it is necessary. We ask that the “special” item be brought in a bag and that it be given to one of the child’s teachers. They will keep it in a safe place and make it available to the child **if s/he needs it.**

FOOD

Lunches

Nutrition directly affects a child’s health, behavior, and ability to concentrate. Learning good nutritional values at an early age helps ensure healthy eating habits as adults. Please help us help your child attain that goal. To do so, we ask that you start by providing a nutritious breakfast that includes a source of protein. When packing your child’s lunch, or encouraging him to pack her own lunch, we ask that you follow these guidelines:

- **NO CANDY, COOKIES, POTATO CHIPS, OR OTHER JUNK FOOD.** Please read labels when shopping. Fruit Roll-Ups, for example, are almost pure sugar!
- **AVOID SALT, FAT, ARTIFICIAL COLORING AND FLAVORING.**
- **USE PORTIONS THAT ARE INVITING, NOT OVERWHELMING.**
- **USE WHOLE GRAIN BREAD, PASTAS, ETC.**
- **USE A VARIETY OF FILLINGS FOR SANDWICHES.** For example: cheese, left-over meat, tuna fish, baked bean spread, vegetable sandwiches, egg salad, avocado, etc..
- **USE RAW OR COOKED VEGETABLES.**
- **USE FRESH OR DRIED FRUIT.**
- **PLEASE PACK ALL FOODS IN REUSABLE PLASTIC CONTAINERS.**

Disposable containers or prepackaged foods are very convenient, but if we want our children to be healthy tomorrow, we have to care for our planet today. This is also a part of learning to lead a healthy life.

- **Pack a water bottle filled with water!** This is the best source of hydration.
- **INCLUDE A NAPKIN.**
- **PACK ALL LUNCHES IN LUNCH BOXES.** No paper bags, please.

By age four, most children are ready to start preparing their own lunch in the evening so that it is ready for the next day.

Snacks

Snacks are provided by the parents so that each child is given the opportunity to be the host for a week. Parents are typically assigned alphabetically (by their child's first name) for the weeks when they will host the snack. This is a very special time for each child and they are usually very proud to share what they bring from home. In Pre-Primary, this happens about once every twelve to fifteen weeks. In Primary, this should happen about two or three times a year. Snacks must be delivered to the classroom by **8:30 a.m.**

The snack need not be expensive, but should be nutritious. Each snack shall include at least one serving from each of two or more of the major food groups, definitely including fruits. The idea is that each child can easily serve himself two or three pieces at the snack table.

We ask that parents refrain from using peanut butter, nuts of any kind, products made with nuts or nut oils, in the preparation of snacks. We have students who are highly allergic to nut products and the presence of such products poses a threat to their health.

The following are some suggestions for snacks that have proven successful in the past. This is by no means a complete list; this is just something to help you get started:

- Whole wheat bread with a filling
- Celery with cream cheese or spread on the side
- Crackers and cheese
- Crackers and spread
- Small chunks of vegetables and/or fruit
- Cheese and fruit or vegetable slices
- Small tortillas with filling on the side
- Small pita bread with filling on the side
- Dried fruit
- Small chunks of dried fruit and cheese
- Deviled eggs
- Olives with other veggies
- Fruit to make a salad
- Fruit to make skewers

We welcome all ethnic dishes or snacks as long as they are mild since some of the children may not be used to spicy foods. It is very important that the snack be nicely presented so that it is inviting for the children as well as a source of pride for the host of the week.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthday celebrations at TRIS are very special for the children. Parents or two special adults are invited to join their child on this special day. We ask that the participants be limited to two adults. Siblings, other than non-mobile infants, relatives and friends can better celebrate with the child at home. Birthday circles are class specific. Parent attendance at the birthday celebration is, however, optional. Parents are asked to agree on a specific date to celebrate their child's birthday. Each class designates a day and a time for birthday celebrations.

We celebrate birthdays with a candle, songs in several languages, and a picture lifeline. This is a line symbolizing the child's life with the important events marked down with a picture. The lifeline can be presented with pictures on a poster board or a selection of individual pictures that can be passed around. During the birthday circle, the parents are invited to talk about important milestones in the child's life.

The child is invited to join in and describe the pictures if they so wish. If the parents cannot be present, we ask that they provide the teacher with the lifeline and a short account of what the important events in the child's life have been. Sharing stories with the children about the child's progress over the years is fun for everyone. Siblings are invited to participate, when appropriate.

At TRIS, we would like to celebrate your child's developmental history and acknowledge his/her dreams for the future. For this reason, we request that treats of any kind be left for the traditional family birthday celebration. However, if you would like to donate a book or object of art, in commemoration of your child's birthday, it will be enjoyed and appreciated by all. This is a concrete symbol of the child's connection to the community. We suggest that the child be included in the selection of the book or object, so that it is a meaningful gift for him/her. This gift need not be bought. It can be something that the child makes or brings from his home. If families should choose to donate a book, we kindly request that they refrain from donating books about movies, videos, any Disney character, etc. If the parent would like help in selecting a book, we ask that they contact one of the child's Montessori teachers.

If a child is having a birthday celebration outside of school, we ask that families send an electronic invitation or mail card invitations directly to the child's friends' homes. **Parents are requested not to leave invitations in the sign-in/out binders.**

TOILET LEARNING

There is an optimal time to learn how to use the toilet. Using the toilet is a normal, healthy, necessary process. From the very beginning of a baby's life, his diapers should be changed as soon as they are soiled so that he absorbs the message that it is normal to stay clean and dry. He will soon come to feel uncomfortable whenever his diaper is wet or soiled. Babies typically need to be changed at least ten times per day. It is important to remember the baby's gastro-colic reflex, wherein his bowels are stimulated whenever he is fed. He will probably have to be changed immediately after eating, even if he had just been changed before he ate. The baby should never be left any length of time with a soiled diaper.

For most babies, bowel movements soon become regular and predictable. If a pattern can be recognized and the baby can sit, it is possible and desirable to place the baby on a very small potty. It

is extremely important never to comment on whether anything is deposited in the potty. This is simply an opportunity for the child to understand that urine and bowel movements can be held and released. Never pressure the child in any way or comment on “accidents.” These are normal functions, not accidents. Use correct language for bodily functions, i.e. urinate, bowel movement.

When a child can walk independently, his myelinization has reached the point where he can have some control over his sphincter muscles. Toileting should be made as easy as possible for the child. His clothes need to be very easy to take off, clean clothes must be accessible for the child and the toilet needs to be small enough so that the child can get on and off easily. At first, the child will need a great deal of help taking off and putting on clothes. He will collaborate and then gradually learn to do it for himself. When a child first begins toilet learning, he will recognize when he needs to urinate just prior to urinating. So it is important to observe the child to know when a child is about to urinate, and then suggest to her to use the toilet. If the toilet and his clothes are easy to handle, he is more likely to be successful.

In the Pre-Primary classroom, we have regular times when the children are asked to use the toilet. Such times are when the children enter the environment, before snack, before going outside, before lunch, before nap, etc. We do not force the child to use the toilet; we just state in a matter of fact way, “We are going outside soon, so it is time to use the toilet.” We are only making an offer, but are phrasing it in such a way that the child will not automatically refuse. If he does refuse, it is because he has made a conscious choice, and so we do not push the issue. A child should be given every opportunity to observe other children using the toilet and taking care of their dressing. Eventually, the child will accept that using the toilet is a natural behavior in the environment, and he will no longer want to be in diapers.

Once a child is wearing training pants during the day, she should wear them at night as well. It is a good idea to use flannel rubber sheeting under the mattress cover to protect the bedding.

Toilet learning in the Pre-Primary classroom starts the first day of school. We do request that the parents be ready to support their child’s efforts by providing a small toilet and working with the child in this process at home. **We ask that the child wear training pants at home at all times. The use of diapers or pull-ups after starting toilet learning undermines everyone’s efforts, including the child’s.**

NAPS

Naptime is from 12:45 to 2:45 p.m. Children aged 3-1/2 and older are not required to nap, but may do so if they wish. If the child is cranky or accident prone, regular naps will be necessary.

Children who nap need to bring a **small** light blanket and a small pillow (optional) to leave in school. **All items must be labeled with the child’s name.** Blankets will be laundered every week.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

There are two formal conferences per year. **THESE ARE MANDATORY.** Plan to meet your child's teachers for approximately forty minutes in the fall and in the spring. We hope that parents come in open to discuss their child's progress. Parents and teachers need to work as a team and sometimes this means making changes in the school or home environment. Online booking of conference appointments will be available ahead of time. School is closed on conference days.

A conference can, however, be requested at any time by the parents or the teacher, if concerns arise. Parents should let the Teacher(s), the Head of School, Associate Head of School, or the Program Coordinator know if they have any concerns or need clarification on any points. It is most important for TRIS, the parents, and the child to keep communication open and clear. This is essential for the child's well-being in school.

USE OF INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

It is very important for a child to be exposed to appropriate use of the spoken language. At the Pre-Primary and Primary levels, they are acquiring language skills at a faster rate than at any other time in their lives. They perfect their understanding of words and their use by practicing and imitating. It is in this manner that children sometimes experiment with words that are considered socially inappropriate.

Our policy is not to react to a child who uses an inappropriate word for the first time, unless others are upset by it, so as not to give undue attention to the matter. Often, not getting a reaction discourages the use of the word.

If the child persists or if other children are upset, the child is invited to have a conversation with the teacher and, at times, the Early Childhood Coordinator or the Head of School. The purpose of the meeting is to explain the existence of social conventions and how these apply to language. The child is asked not to use the word or words, as their usage is upsetting and sometimes insulting or disrespectful to others. We explain that when a student uses that type of language, we cannot allow her to be part of the group for that day. We tell the child that we will let the parents know of the incident at the end of the day.

If the child chooses to continue using inappropriate language, the parents will be called at the time of the incident and asked to pick up the child and keep him at home for the rest of the day. The purpose of this is to impress on the child that we will not tolerate such behavior. We request that the parents let their child know how they feel about the use of such language and that they expect the child never to use the word(s) again.

We do not recommend any form of punishment for such behavior. Having the parent pick up the child is usually a strong enough message to discourage the behavior. It is also recommended that the parent or other caretaker not engage in “entertaining” or “special” activities with the child that day. It is best if the caretaker explains to the child that she must continue doing the work he was planning to do while the child was at school and therefore she must entertain herself until the time when both would be going home at the end of the day. Entertaining the child may give her the impression that this is a way to go home early in the future.

These incidents are often upsetting to parents and other caretakers. Please consider that although we want to make an impression on the child, such experimentation is quite normal. It is important to take this seriously with the child, nevertheless keeping a respectful attitude towards the child modeling the behavior we are requesting of the child. We do request monitoring of the child’s exposure to circumstances or environments where such language is commonly used.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY

1. Take care of the injured party.
2. Take care of your own emotions and energy (adult).
3. Verify through multiple parties, what happened
4. Share feelings, experiences, expectations via “I” messages
5. Start with person most emotionally charged/upset allowing time for self-calming
6. Brainstorm with involved parties, “How can we resolve this situation again in the future, should it present itself (When people have had time to process the incident and are ready to explore)
7. All ideas are accepted without judgment (ground rule)
8. All ideas are written down (verbatim)
9. Everyone has the right to cross out anything that does not work for them
10. If a solution is not found, parties can take a break, and agree to come back and try again at an agreed upon point in time.
11. Define what solution looks like, feels like, and sounds like, with regard to one’s personal responsibility and behavior, or group responsibility/behavior.
12. Does everyone agree with this solution? (Check in) (Possible use of “High Five” technique, e.g. “in a scale from one to five, tell me how you feel with this solution”)
13. How do we support and enforce this agreement? “What would be best for this person and the community if this happens again? (repeat of disrespectful behavior)
14. Planning to observe, support and check in on progress and needs.

This conflict resolution model is also used in each of the classrooms starting at age three through the use of the “peace table,” where children can resolve their own conflicts. Children are also given the opportunity to find different ways of self-calming either by finding a peaceful place (another classroom, the art studio, the music studio, the porch, etc.) or an activity of their choice (listening to music, using a hand labyrinth, painting, etc.).

ELEMENTARY

School Hours & Programs

TRIS is open from 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Elementary and Junior High students are expected to be present in school from 7:50 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. They are welcome to arrive as early as 7:30 a.m. and stay until 6:00 p.m. If students arrive after 8:00 a.m. they are considered tardy which will be recorded in their permanent record.

Arrivals

Parents are asked to use the car line to drop their children off in the morning. They are asked to remain in their car while their child exits the vehicle. This will save time for all families at drop off. Any student who arrives after 8:00 will be marked tardy.

Departures

Students in the Elementary and JH program may be picked up starting at 3:30 p.m. All children must be picked up by 6:00 p.m.

Teachers will only allow students to go home with individuals on the “allowed pick up list” which parents completed at the beginning of the year. If a parent would like to add or delete someone from the list, they can do so on SchoolCues. If on occasion someone who does not routinely pick up your child will be doing so:

- Parents must notify the teachers via SchoolCues (change of routine form) or via email prior to the scheduled pick-up by that person.
- Inform that person that they will be asked for identification at pick-up.

We will not allow a child to leave TRIS with a person unknown to us, who cannot present proper identification, such as a driver’s license. If a teacher does not feel comfortable releasing a child, TRIS policy is to keep the child until one of the parents can be contacted. We are sorry if this might cause some inconvenience.

Late Pick-up

All children must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. The fines for late pick-up are below. Repeated pick-up tardiness after 6:00 p.m. may result in dismissal.

6:01 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.: \$2.00/minute

6:16 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.: \$5.00/minute

6:31 p.m. & after: \$10.00/minute

There is no grace period after 6:00 p.m.

Clothing & Shoes

Children should wear comfortable school clothing — not too dressy, yet not what would be worn for playing in their backyard. Clothing should be neat, clean, **without holes**, and show respect for the school, which is the children's work environment.

Children should wear good, sturdy shoes that are strong, yet flexible for outdoor play. Flexible leather that conforms to the natural shape of the child's foot is best. Sports shoes also work quite well. Cowboy boots or other stiff leather boots are not allowed. Children cannot feel what their feet are doing, often stepping on or kicking others. **We ask that children wear shoes or sandals that close so that they don't fall off the feet when running, playing or climbing.** No jellies or other such flimsy plastic shoes or Crocs, please. They do not properly support the feet and often fall off or break during play.

We ask that the children take their shoes off when they go indoors and wear "indoor" shoes that are kept at school.

Special Events

Consistent with our philosophy that there is a time and a place for everything, we will occasionally ask that our students wear more formal attire for special events such as the Thanksgiving Feast, field trips to the symphony, school performances

Policies on make-up, hair, nail polish, jewelry, watches

Please **NO make-up, hair coloring or bleaching, or nail polish** for our students through the end of elementary! Children **NEED** time to be children and should not be encouraged to look or act like adolescents or adults if they are not yet there. Sometimes older siblings, neighbors, relatives, friends, and baby-sitters will need your firm guidance in this area.

Jewelry may not be worn to school because it is a distraction to the student or his classmates. A non-digital watch may be worn if it is not a distraction to the student. That student should either know how to tell time or be in the process of learning. Please check with the child's teacher to verify that the child is ready to use a watch at school.

Our Junior High students are no longer children. They are welcome to express themselves with socially acceptable nail polish and jewelry, as long as their family is in agreement.

Elementary and Junior High Chorus Uniforms

Elementary and Junior High students wear uniforms to perform. Information about where to purchase the uniforms will be sent out in early fall.

Outdoor Field Trips Uniforms

- **Regular School T-shirt** - Mandatory for outdoor field trips and available at either campus
- **School Sweatshirt** - Mandatory for outdoor field trips regardless of weather dictates for outdoor field trips. Available at either campus

Off Campus Activities

At the Elementary and Junior High levels, students regularly leave campus to explore the world we live in. Parents will be notified ahead of time when their child is going off campus, except for outings in the Montclair Village or Dimond District.

When leaving campus students will be transported in a school vehicle, a chartered bus or by public transportation. Parents will be notified in advance about the mode of transportation to be used on any given outing.

Field Trips

Elementary students experience a variety of outings and field trips. Field trips are organized by the teachers based on what is being studied in the classroom. These are outings in which the whole class participates.

Safety is our number one concern at all times and it is certainly a major consideration when planning a field trip. For purposes of safety we require that children at the elementary level wear a burgundy TRIS T-shirt and sweatshirt which may be purchased through the school office. At the Junior High level, field trip attire will be announced before each trip.

Goings Out

At the Elementary level, there are times when students are researching something in the classroom and they organize an outing to a museum, library or other destination for the purpose of learning more about that subject. This is a student led outing and is open only to the students involved in that research. They will be accompanied by one of their classroom teachers or a TRIS staff member.

At the Junior High level, students regularly organize student led outings. They are accompanied by a classroom teacher or a TRIS staff member.

Outdoor Education

Elementary and Junior High students participate in a one week outdoor education program every year. Usually this takes place in the fall but there are years when it will be organized in the spring.

International and National Tours

Both at the Elementary and the Junior High level, students have the opportunity to participate in International and National Tours. At the Elementary level these trips are optional. At the Junior High level these trips are part of the program and are mandatory.

The purpose of these trips is to provide an opportunity for each student to:

- Participate in trips they have imagined and researched with their friends
- Achieve a higher level of independence by exercising the responsibility of taking care of himself, his peers and belongings for a two-week period
- Experience firsthand what she has been studying
- Practice one of the languages spoken at TRIS – when applicable
- Share with children from another culture common interests
- Immerse himself in the life of the culture for two weeks
- Experience and appreciate for herself the universal elements of different cultures from hers:

Language

Literature

Theater

Art

Music

Architecture

Celebrations

Beliefs

Cuisine

Community Service

Recreation

- Experience the climate, flora and fauna of a different ecosystem or possibly ecosystems
- Develop respect and appreciation for and a feeling of connection for his place in the human family

Elementary and adolescent students at TRIS have traveled to:

- Oaxaca, Mexico in 2006
- Hungary in 2007

- Yucatán Península, México in 2009
- Paris & Lyon, France in 2014
- Zhengzhou & Beijing, China in 2014
- Costa Rica and Chile in 2016
- Shanghai, China and New York in 2017
- Italy and Peru in 2019
- Guatemala in 2020

Parent Teacher Conferences

At the Elementary and Jr. High levels, there is one conference scheduled per semester, two (2) a year. **THESE ARE MANDATORY.** Plan to meet your child's teachers for approximately forty minutes at both conferences. We hope that parents come in open to discuss their child's progress. Parents and teachers need to work as a team and sometimes this means making changes in the school or home environment. Online booking of conference appointments will be available ahead of time.

A conference can, however, be requested at any time by the parents or the teacher, if concerns arise. Parents should let the Teacher(s), the Head of School, Associate Head of School, or the Program Coordinator know if they have any concerns or need clarification on any points. It is most important for TRIS, the parents, and the child to keep communication open and clear. This is essential for the child's well-being in school.

Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences

Starting in the first year of Elementary, students are invited to partake in the setting of goals for their education after reviewing what the student's, the parents' and the teachers' views of the student's strengths and challenges are at that stage in their journey.

We reserve two days in November and two days in June for Student-Parent-Teacher conferences. Online booking of conference appointments will be available ahead of time.

Use of Inappropriate Language

It is very important for a child to be exposed to appropriate use of the spoken language. At the Elementary level, they are continuing the exploration of language and the effects the use of language has on others. It is in this manner that children sometimes experiment with words that are considered socially inappropriate. The elementary child may or may not know the meaning of the word, even when they use it in the proper context.

Our policy is not to react to a child who uses an inappropriate word for the first time, unless others are upset by it, so as not to give undue attention to the matter. Often, not getting a reaction discourages the use of the word.

If the child persists or if other children are upset, the child is invited to have a conversation with the teacher and, at times, the Associate Head of School or the Head of School. The purpose of the meeting is to review or present the existence of social conventions and how these apply to language. The child is asked not to use the word or words, as their usage is upsetting and sometimes insulting or disrespectful to others. We discuss possible alternative ways of expressing what they had in mind. We inform the child that we will let the parents know of the incident at the end of the day.

If the child chooses to continue using inappropriate language, a meeting with the parents will be in order to explore ways of helping the student. We request that the parents let their child know how inappropriate the use of such language is and that they expect the child to immediately stop using the word(s) or expressions. If this challenge persists, we recommend for parents to consider counseling for the child.

These incidents are often upsetting to parents and other caretakers. It is important to take this seriously with the child, nevertheless keeping a respectful attitude towards the child modeling the behavior we are requesting of the child. We do request monitoring of the child's exposure to circumstances or environments where such language is commonly used.

Conflict Resolution Policy

1. Take care of the injured party.
2. Take care of your own emotions and energy (adult).
3. Verify through multiple parties, what happened
4. Share feelings, experiences, expectations via "I" messages
5. Start with person most emotionally charged/upset allowing time for self-calming
6. Brainstorm with involved parties, "How can we resolve this situation again in the future, should it present itself (When people have had time to process the incident and are ready to explore)
7. All ideas are accepted without judgment (ground rule)
8. All ideas are written down (verbatim)
9. Everyone has the right to cross out anything that does not work for them
10. If a solution is not found, parties can take a break, and agree to come back and try again at an agreed upon point in time.
11. Define what solution looks like, feels like, and sounds like, with regard to one's personal responsibility and behavior, or group responsibility/behavior.
12. Does everyone agree with this solution? (Check in) (Possible use of "High Five" technique, e.g. "in a scale from one to five, tell me how you feel with this solution")
13. How do we support and enforce this agreement? "What would be best for this person and the community if this happens again? (repeat of disrespectful behavior)
14. Planning to observe, support and check in on progress and needs.

This conflict resolution model is also used in each of the classrooms starting at age three through the use of the "peace table," where children can resolve their own conflicts. Children are also given the opportunity to find different ways of self-calming either by finding a peaceful place (another classroom, the art studio, the music studio, the porch, etc.) or an activity of their choice (listening to music, using a hand labyrinth, painting, etc.).

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