

**We shall walk together  
on this path of life,  
for all things are part of the universe and are  
connected with each other to form  
one whole unity.**

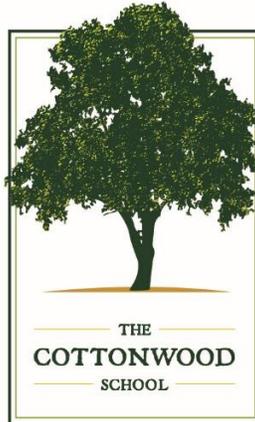
**DR. MARIA MONTESSORI**

# **The Cottonwood School**



# **Community Handbook 2019-2020**





## **Vision and Mission**

### VISION (The WHY)

The Cottonwood School's vision is to guide our community to love learning, to profoundly contribute to our diverse world and to lead lives of achievement.

### MISSION (The HOW)

The Cottonwood School, influenced by Montessori principles, will provide an innovative, rigorous, self-exploring education through experiential learning, design thinking and meaningful interdisciplinary studies cultivating a growth mindset.

## **Values**

The Cottonwood School (TCS) strives to develop students who are prepared to be part of an increasingly complex, demanding and competitive 21st century. In addition to being influenced by Montessori principles, TCS values the skills highlighted by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P-21): Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity.

### COMMUNICATION

Students will engage in constructive, critical conversations by listening, responding, questioning and conveying ideas in diverse settings.

### COLLABORATION

Students will engage with fellow classmates, staff and consult with community experts to increase innovation and to achieve a common goal through shared responsibility.

### CRITICAL THINKING

Students will engage in conceptualizing, analyzing and synthesizing to draw conclusions.

### CREATIVITY

Students will move beyond comprehension to innovate in and outside the classroom setting.

## **Academic Program**

The Cottonwood School course of study blends Common Core, project-based learning, and 21st Century Skills with the philosophy of Montessori. Incorporating TCS values with the spiraling curriculum deepens understanding leading to student agency—where a student has a growth mindset to take charge of their own learning.

The Cottonwood School students are expected to complete the courses required for graduation. Students are encouraged to pursue internships, special projects and other endeavors with the guidance of an advisor for credit toward graduation.

## **Community Meetings**

In a relaxed, open environment students are able to respectfully express themselves. Community meetings support student agency through mindful engagement as a participant and through leadership development as a facilitator.

### Facilitator's Duties

- Prepare environment (moving chairs/tables to appropriate places)
- Lead the community
- Recognize and encourage participation
- Maintain the standards of the community meeting
- Dismiss group on time
- Arrange in advance for responsible substitute in case late or absent

### Standards for community meetings

- Acknowledgment and sharing
- Only contribute to the meeting when called upon by the facilitator
- Speak loudly enough for all participants to hear
- All comments should be inclusive of the community

## **Advisory**

Advisory is all four years with the same group of students and same advisor. Advisors help students find educational resources, assist students to target key academic learning goals, work with mentors to ensure the rigor of internships, and actively involve parents in their student's education.

## **Collaboration/Garden/Personal-Reflection**

Time built-in to the daily schedule allows for individual and/or small group tutorial time for students (with teacher guidance when needed).

## **Field Studies**

To foster agency, students are encouraged to explore their own interests by participating in week-long field studies linked to various themes and academic work. These may include mini courses, local and international trips.

**Service Learning**

Service learning opportunities allow students to become knowledgeable in specific areas of interest while serving local and global communities.

**Graduation Requirements**

<b>TCS Graduation Requirements</b>	
English	40 credits
History/Social Science	
World History	10 Credits
US History	10 Credits
US Government	5 Credits
Economics	5 Credits
Mathematics (must include Algebra 1)	30 Credits
Laboratory Science	
Biology	10 Credits
Chemistry	10 Credits
Physics	10 Credits
Visual and Performing Arts/Language Other Than English	10 Credits
Physical Education	20 Credits
Electives	80 Credits
<b>Total Credits Required</b>	<b>230 Credits</b>

**By Graduation, All Students Will**

- Plan and participate in one field study a year
- Attempt an independent Design Thinking venture
- Give multiple presentations including performances to the community
- Plan and participate in service learning each year

## Mastery Learning: Grading Scale and Rubric

Mastery learning is a form of personalized learning that supports Montessori principles. Once mastery is achieved students progress to the next level of work. Students take on the responsibility of understanding concepts. The teacher's role is to assess student understanding to provide feedback, examples and time to ensure each student reaches the next level. Mastery learning provides clear expectations allowing students to take agency.

TCS uses a 4-point scale to assess student mastery.

TCS Mastery Scale		
Levels of Mastery	Scale	Description
4-Innovating	90-100	Applies learning beyond expectation
3-Proficient	76-89	Meets the expectation
2-Developing	60-75	Meets the expectation with support and guidance
1-Exploring	0-59	Surface level of understanding

## Grades

Grades are issued four times each school year. Quarter grades are “progress” grades that are not permanently recorded. Semester grades are permanent grades that are recorded.

## Student-Led Conferences

To build agency, students are asked to lead conferences with their advisor and parents/guardians to evaluate their progress in Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking and Creativity.

## **School Policies**

### **Attendance and Tardy Policy**

Consistent attendance is imperative for success at The Cottonwood School. Students who attend class have greater opportunity to succeed. This includes attendance on campus, participation of field studies and internships/other academic endeavors. A student can expect their grades to be impacted by attendance. In addition, excessive/constant tardies or absences may lead to a family conference, more extensive campus restriction, including participation in activities beyond TCS campus.

### **Clearing Absences**

Phone: 530.285.2578

Every attempt should be made to contact TCS on the date of the absence.

Community meetings, advisory and collaboration time while not graded, are equally important school programs and are vital to The Cottonwood School education; therefore, like academic classes students are expected to attend and fully participate.

### **Late Arrival/Leaving Early**

Students who arrive to school late or leave early need to check in and out of the office. Parent/guardian permission is required and an approved parent/guardian must sign out the student, send a signed note or call 530.285.2578 to excuse the student during school hours.

### **Dress Code**

To promote unity, excellence and pride the TCS community will dress for success.

1. Students can wear tank tops as long as undergarments and/or private areas are not exposed.
2. Shorts, dresses and skirts must be length that ensures undergarments and/or private areas are not exposed.
3. Students cannot wear clothing that displays or insinuates weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, nudity, or gang affiliation.

Teachers may have other requirements for presentations and field trips.

### **Health and Medication**

Completed medical forms must be on file at the school. Written permission from parents/guardians must be obtained before medication (prescription or nonprescription) will be dispensed by the designated staff. TCS does not have an on-site nurse or health aide. If a student needs to leave campus due to illness a parent/guardian must contact the office to make arrangements. With exception of inhalers and epi-pens, students may not carry medication. Medication taken during the school day must be kept in the office with dosage instructions from the doctor and a statement from parent/guardian regarding proper administration. A doctor's note for all medication must be kept on file in the office.

## Emergency Card

Completed, up-to-date Emergency Cards with current contact information for parents/guardians and individuals to contact in case of an emergency must be on file at the school.

## Social Guidelines

### Integrity, Respect and Responsibility

We have the confidence that all students will interact with others respectfully and with grace. If needed, students are supported by redirection toward making the necessary changes in their behavior.

The Cottonwood School has the following social guidelines

1. Spreading negative information regarding any member of the TCS community is unacceptable. If there is any way that the information can be construed as negative, harmful, or abusive the sender(s) of that information will be viewed as contributing to an unsafe school community.
2. Students are expected to conduct themselves outside of school with respect toward any member of the TCS community with the same guidelines that exist when in school.
3. Students are not allowed to take pictures, audio or video of any member of the TCS community without permission.
4. The TCS community shares the responsibility of keeping the environment orderly, clean, and operational.

Students contributing to an unsafe school community will be subject to consequences.

### Behavior Consequences

TCS adheres to the CA Education Code regarding grounds for suspension and expulsion.

### Suspension/Expulsion Guidelines

California Education Code 48900 allow the principal, or principal's designee, of a school to suspend or to recommend for expulsion a student for any violation of the following rules. These rules apply while on school grounds, going to or coming from school, during the lunch period whether on or off campus, or during or while going to or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

Administrators have discretion of final discipline based upon circumstances. Zero Tolerance Policy states: assaults, drugs, weapons, robbery, and extortion constitute cause for expulsion.

### *Infractions and Consequences*

Grounds for Immediate Recommendation for **Expulsion** (The infractions listed will result in a five-day administrative suspension, loss of all extra-curricular activity privileges, and an immediate recommendation of expulsion):

- Possession or use of weapons or other dangerous objects. This includes, but is not limited to, firearms, knives and/or explosives.

- Abuse of personnel. This is classified as willful assault or battery or threat of great bodily harm against school personnel coupled with the ability to commit such harm.
- Possessed, sold, or furnished a controlled substance, as defined in Section 11007 of the Health and Safety Code, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- Committing or attempting to commit sexual assault or battery.

**Suspension** shall be imposed only when other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct. With that said, a pupil may be suspended for any of the reasons enumerated in California Education Code Section 48900 upon a first offense, if the principal or superintendent of schools determines that the pupil violated subdivision A-O and 2, 3, 4, and 7 of Section 48900 or that pupil's presence causes a danger to persons or property at the school in which the pupil is enrolled.

- Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- Willful force or violence used upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
- Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the pupil had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the principal or the designee of the principal.
- Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind.
- Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage or an intoxicant of any kind, and then either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to.
- Any person selling another liquid, substance, or material and representing the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.
- Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- Stolen or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- Possessed or used tobacco, or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel. However, this section does not prohibit use or possession by a pupil of his or her own prescription products. However, the principal shall be notified of any prescription medicine, which must be brought to school or taken at school.
- Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Had unlawful possession of/unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11014.5 of the Health and Safety Code.
- Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
- Knowingly received stolen property or private property.
- Possession of an imitation firearm. Replica so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- Committed or attempted to commit a sexual battery as defined in Section 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a, or 289 of the Penal Code or committed a sexual battery as defined in Section 243.4 of the Penal Code.
- Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness/witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of either preventing that pupil from being a witness or retaliating against that pupil for being a witness, or both.

- Sexual Harassment: Conduct considered sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon an individual's performance or created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.
- Hate Violence: Willfully interfering with or threatening another person's personal property or orientation. A verbal act (speech) is not sufficient unless the speech threatens violence against person or persons, and perpetrator has apparent ability to carry out the threat.
- Harassment, threats, intimidation: Intentional behavior severe enough to disrupt classwork, create substantial disorder, and invading the rights of that pupil or group of pupils by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment.
- Terrorist threats.

### **Sexual Harassment**

E.C. 48900 Sexual harassment is defined as: "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature made by someone from or in the work or educational setting." Any student who commits sexual harassment will be subject to suspension and even expulsion. If a student feels he/she has been sexually harassed, he/she should see the principal or other school official as soon as possible.

### **Gambling**

Wagering, gambling, or using gambling devices or money is prohibited. Gambling is not allowed at any time or any place on campus. In addition to legal penalties, students will be subject to school discipline.

### **Prohibited Illegal and Dangerous Items (P.C. 25608, 262.9, 626.10, E.C. 48903)**

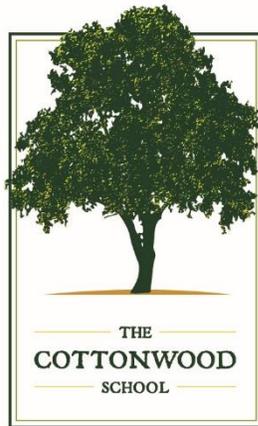
Students shall not carry with them to school any of the following: firecrackers, explosive devices, any size knife, metal pins, stars, baseball bats, clubs, chains, pellet guns, nunchucks, mace, pepper spray, stun guns, or ANY item which could be used as a weapon. Possession and/or use of any dangerous weapon or object will result in an immediate suspension/expulsion and a citation/arrest by the Police or Sheriff's Department.

### **Driving and Parking**

Both parking on campus and on the street is shared with multiple businesses in the immediate area. In serving our communities, we acknowledge a commitment to maintain a good relationship with our neighbors and to honor their need for parking space. There is no student parking on campus nor on the street surrounding the school at this time.

### **Technology Use Agreement**

Students and parents/guardians are responsible to read and sign the terms of the Internet/Network/Technology Equipment Acceptable Use Policy. The Acceptable Use Policy must be signed prior to being allowed access to TCS technology.



The TCS staff looks forward to the upcoming year. We believe all students have the ability to learn, to think innovatively, and to achieve their academic and personal goals through relevant experiences. We value each student's cultural and personal values, and strive to engage students in practical and relevant real-life learning—inside and outside the classroom—locally and globally.

## The Cottonwood School ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT (AUA) NETWORK AND COMPUTER RELATED RESOURCES

Each student is authorized to use school technology when the parent/guardian and student sign this Acceptable Use Agreement as an indication that they have read and understand the agreement. The parent/guardian must sign when the user is under 18 years of age. TCS authorizes students to use technology owned or otherwise provided by the school as necessary for instructional purposes. The use of school technology is a privilege permitted at the school's discretion and is subject to the conditions and restrictions set forth in applicable school administrative regulations, and this Acceptable Use Agreement. The school reserves the right to suspend access at any time, without notice, for any reason. TCS expects all students to use school technology responsibly and appropriately consistent with school policies and regulations, California Education Code, and other local, state and federal laws and regulations governing the applicable matter in order to avoid potential problems and liability.

### **Definitions**

School technology includes, but is not limited to, computers, the school's computer network including servers and wireless computer networking technology (wi-fi), the Internet, email, USB drives, wireless access points (routers), tablet computers, smartphones and smart devices, telephones, cellular telephones, wearable technology, any wireless communication device including emergency radios, and/or future technological innovations, whether accessed on or off site or through school-owned or personally-owned equipment or devices.

### **Student Obligations and Responsibilities**

TCS's network/computer system ("school system") is shared and available to all registered users. The school system may not be used in a way as to disrupt or interfere with its use by others. Students are expected to use school technology safely, responsibly, and for educational purposes only.

Student users will ONLY use authorized accounts they have been personally issued. The student in whose name school technology is issued is responsible for its proper use at all times. All student users must keep their account passwords confidential. Students shall not share their assigned online services account information, passwords, or other information used for identification and authorization purposes, and shall use the system only under the account to which they have been assigned.

Students are prohibited from using school technology for improper purposes, including, but not limited to, use of school technology to:

1. Access, post, submit, publish, display, or otherwise use harmful or inappropriate material that is discriminatory, libelous, defamatory, obscene, sexually explicit, disruptive, harassing, or that could be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on their race/ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender, gender identify, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or political beliefs
2. Bully/cyberbully, harass, intimidate, or threaten other students, staff, or other individuals
3. Disclose, use, or disseminate personal identification information (such as name, address, telephone number, Social Security number, or other personal information) of yourself, or another student, staff member, or other person with the intent to threaten, intimidate, harass, or ridicule that person

4. Infringe on copyright, license, trademark, patent, or other intellectual property rights
5. Intentionally disrupt or harm school technology or other school operations (such as destroying school equipment, placing a virus on school computers, adding or removing a computer program without permission from a teacher or other school personnel, changing settings on shared computers)
6. "Hack" into the school system to manipulate data of the school or other users
7. Steal services, including connection of unauthorized network/computer equipment to the system
8. Install non-approved software/programs, and/or download and install software/programs on school computers and/or network communication systems
9. Use school technology to communicate unlawful information or to transmit computer viruses.
10. Use of the school system for anonymous access or communication of information
11. To send "junk", "mass", or "spam" email
12. Engage in other conduct deemed objectionable by The Cottonwood School
13. Engage in or promote any practice that is unethical or violates any classroom rules, school conduct code, or any law administrative regulation, or school practice, including any communication advocating, encouraging or supporting illegal activities.
14. Access, delete, move, or alter anyone else's files and/or data.
15. Communicate using inappropriate language, including swearing and use of vulgarities.

## Privacy

Since the use of school technology is intended for educational purposes, students shall not have any expectation of privacy in any use of school technology.

The school reserves the right to monitor and record all use of school technology, including, but not limited to, computer files, access to the Internet or social media, email, text messages, instant messaging, and other electronic communications sent or received from school technology, or through the use of school technology. Such monitoring/recording may occur at any time without prior notice for any legal purposes including, but not limited to, record retention and distribution and/or investigation of improper, illegal, or prohibited activity. Students should be aware that, in most instances, their use of school technology (such as web searches and emails) cannot be erased or deleted.

All passwords created for or used on any school technology are the sole property of the school. The creation or use of a password by a student on school technology does not create a reasonable expectation of privacy.

## Personally Owned Devices

If a student uses a personally owned device to access school technology, he/she shall abide by all applicable administrative regulations, and this Acceptable Use Agreement. Access to school technology from personal technology is limited to wireless access points on the school campus. Access to the school technology from personal technology is not available via hardware connections. The school assumes no liability for personally owned devices, including computers and smart phones, if such devices are damaged, lost, or stolen. The student and parent/guardian, shall indemnify and hold the school harmless from any losses sustained as the result of use or misuse of the school's technology by the student, and/or the loss or damage of personally owned devices.

**Reporting**

If a student becomes aware of any security problem (such as any compromise of the confidentiality of any login or account information) or misuse of school technology; it must be immediately reported to the teacher or other school personnel.

**Consequences for Violation**

Violations of the law and regulations governing the use of school technology, or this Acceptable Use Agreement may result in revocation of a student's access to school technology and/or discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion. In addition, violations of the law or this Acceptable Use Agreement may be reported to law enforcement agencies as appropriate.

 **The Cottonwood School Acceptable Use Agreement**

**Student Expectations**

I have read, understand and will follow this Acceptable use Agreement. If I break this agreement, the consequence could include suspension of computer privileges and/or disciplinary action. I also understand the school network, email accounts are owned by The Cottonwood School, and TCS has the right to access any of the information used through the mediums provided through the school at any time.

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Student Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Date

**Parent/Guardian Acceptable Use Signature**

As parents/guardians, students and teachers work together, we become a strong learning community, therefore, creating more opportunities for students to be successful. As the parent/guardian of this student, I have read The Cottonwood School Acceptable Use Agreement. I understand that technology is provided for the educational purposes in keeping with the academic goals of The Cottonwood School. I recognize it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial materials, and I will not hold the school responsible for the materials acquired on the school network.

I understand and will support my student in adhering to this Acceptable Use Agreement. I am aware that if my child breaks this agreement, the consequences could include suspension of computer privileges and/or disciplinary action. I also understand the school network and email accounts are owned by The Cottonwood School. The school has the right to access any information used through the mediums provided by the school at any time. I hereby give permission for my child to use technology resources at The Cottonwood School.

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Date



Medication Permission Form  
2019-2020 School Year

Dear Parent/Guardian:

If your student needs prescription or over the counter medication administered during school hours, we require that this form be completed and returned to the office. TCS staff will not be able to administer any prescription or over the counter medication without a completed form signed by a parent/guardian and a doctor. **STUDENTS ARE NOT TO CARRY ANY MEDICATION FOR SELF-ADMINISTRATION** except for asthmatics who use inhalant bronchodilators or students who have an allergy requiring an Epi-pen (for which a copy of this form completed by parent/guardian and physician must be on file in the office.) **MEDICATION MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE SCHOOL AND TAKEN HOME BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN ONLY.**

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PARENT/GUARDIAN**

I hereby request that the approved school employee administer medication as prescribed by my child's physician.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PHYSICIAN**

(Prescription and over-the-counter)

Patient \_\_\_\_\_ Diagnosis \_\_\_\_\_

Medication \_\_\_\_\_ Dose \_\_\_\_\_ Frequency \_\_\_\_\_

From \_\_\_\_\_ Through \_\_\_\_\_ Possible Side Effects \_\_\_\_\_

Initiation Date \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Date \_\_\_\_\_

If P.R.N. signs and symptoms for administering medication

Print M.D. address and telephone number

Date \_\_\_\_\_ M.D. Signature/\*STAMP \_\_\_\_\_

**Important:** Prescription medication must be in a PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE with a proper pharmacist's label attached. The label should list the student's name, medication and physician's name. Over the counter medication is to be labeled with the student's name.

2019-2020 Essential Question: How do we lead a sustainable life?

English I/II

Biology/Chemistry

Math

Geography/World History

Food and Justice for All

Drama/Theatre

Foreign Language: online

Service Learning

Field Studies (for credit)

## 2-Block Day



THE COTTONWOOD SCHOOL: COMMUNITY HANDBOOK

Monday - Tuesday, Thursday - Friday

Community Meeting		8:00am-8:15am
<b>Wednesday</b>		
Community Meeting	8:00am-8:15am	
Advisory	8:18am-8:31am	
Block 1	8:34am-10:29am	
Lunch	10:29am-11:04am	
Block 2	11:07am-1:02pm	
Closing	1:05pm-1:20pm	8:00am-8:15am
Advisory		8:18am-8:38am
Block 1		8:41am-10:45am
Collaboration, Garden, Personal Reflection		10:46am-11:19am
Lunch		11:20am-11:55am
Block 2		11:58am-2:12pm
Closing		2:15pm-2:30pm

## 3-Block Day

Monday - Tuesday, Thursday - Friday	
Community Meeting	8:00am-8:15am
Advisory	8:18am-8:38am
Block 1	8:41am-10:02am
Block 2	10:05am-11:25am
Lunch	11:26am-12:01pm
Collaboration, Garden, Personal Reflection	12:04pm-12:48pm
Block 3	12:51pm-2:12pm
Closing	2:15pm-2:30pm
Wednesday	
Community Meeting	8:00am-8:15am
Block 1	8:18am-9:39am
Block 2	9:42am-11:02am
Lunch	11:03am-11:38am
Block 3	11:41am-1:02pm
Closing	1:05pm-1:20pm