

Innovation Montessori, Inc.

Parent-Student Operations Manual

2026-2027



Preschool: Innovation Montessori Ocoee Casa, LLC.

1610 North Lakewood Avenue, Ocoee, FL 34761

Elementary: Innovation Montessori Ocoee

1644 North Lakewood Avenue, Ocoee, FL 34761

Secondary: Innovation Montessori Academy

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Executive Director: Heather Clay

Principals: Cathy Tobin (Elementary), Dr. John Pagnotti (Secondary)

Assistant Principals: Marianna Wasserman (Elementary), Kathleen Robinson (Secondary)

ABOUT INNOVATION MONTESSORI OCOEE

Innovation Montessori (IM) was conceived and approved in 2010. The school was founded by a group of devoted and supportive parents. Our schools are governed by a school board of parents and community members. Our charter is granted through Orange County Public Schools (OCPS).

Our Vision and Purpose

The goal and purpose of the educational program at Innovation Montessori is to ensure that all students meet or exceed rigorous academic, personal, and social/emotional objectives. This will be accomplished using a curriculum that effectively aligns the research-based Montessori Primary through Adolescent curriculum with state standards. Innovation Montessori defines a joyful, authentic public Montessori education to include the following ten elements:

- Beautiful and thoughtfully prepared classrooms, designed with a complete collection of developmentally appropriate Montessori learning materials.
- Research-based, world-renowned Montessori materials.
- Multi-age classrooms: Lower Elementary (grades 1-3, ages 6-9), Upper Elementary (grades 4-6, ages 9-12), Secondary 1 (grades 7-9), and Secondary 2 (grades 10-12). Primary classrooms include our private Casa program for three- and four-year-old students and our public kindergarten students.
- Teachers who are both Montessori and state-certified, with a passion for seeing children flourish and a strong commitment to the school's mission.
- Individualized education founded upon differentiated instruction using child- and lesson-driven Montessori materials and work plans.
- Frequent observations and assessment of student learning outcomes, faculty collaboration, and active parent partnership throughout the year.
- Individual and small group lessons with immediate, ongoing assessment embedded in every lesson, ensuring mastery of content across the Montessori curriculum.
- Joyful, self-directed, exploratory learning leading to personal responsibility and intrinsic motivation.
- Long, uninterrupted work cycles and project-based learning that encourage concentration and deep focus.

- An emphasis on stewardship and respect for the natural world, with global awareness and appreciation for the interconnectedness of all life.

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027

We hope you find this Alphabetical Guide to Innovation Montessori, Inc. student policies helpful. This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list. If you have questions about our Charter, the Montessori curriculum, ESE (Exceptional Student Education), MTSS (Multi-Tier System of Support), Gifted Services, or any other information not listed, please contact the front office.

This handbook provides parents and teachers with a quick guide to the most relevant day-to-day information. A parent agreement is included at the end and must be returned to school within the first 10 days of school with your signature. Please note that regardless of signature status, if your child is participating in our program, it is understood that you will abide by our policies and procedures.

ADDITIONS (VOLUNTEERS)

Innovation Montessori students need you! Parents and friends of IM can help through the ADDITIONS Volunteer Program. Younger siblings may not accompany parents to classrooms during volunteer times. Volunteer hours for both campuses are logged through Concierge Pad.

Volunteering is one of the most meaningful ways to get involved in your child's education. Volunteers contribute through field trips, making materials, organizing events, and much more. Seeing how children are taught also provides insight and ideas for supporting learning at home.

The school charter requires families to support the school by volunteering their time. Innovation Montessori families are asked to contribute 20 hours per family per year. Please remember to record hours through Concierge Pad - it is your responsibility to log them. Families should re-apply to Additions each year at: https://ocps.samaritan.com/custom/503/volunteer_home

Only adult family members will be credited with volunteer hours. Please spread hours throughout the year. All volunteer hours must be fulfilled prior to May 15; the school cannot guarantee volunteer opportunities at year end for families who have not yet met the requirement. Attendance at PTO meetings (in person or via Zoom - use your full name for attendance) counts as one hour per meeting.

Examples of Volunteer Opportunities:

- Material Making
- Classroom Support (Seasonal Activities)
- PTO Activity Assistance
- Teacher Appreciation Week
- School Field Trips
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Fundraising Events

ADDRESS, EMAIL AND TELEPHONE NUMBER

Please keep us informed of any changes to your address, email and telephone number, or work location. It is important that we can reach you quickly in an emergency. If your phone number or email address changes, please update your information with both the school office and your child's teacher.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Primary and Elementary Campus

All primary through 6th grade students receive placards for car line. Placards are not required for drop-off but must be displayed clearly on the dashboard during afternoon pickup. Once all your children are loaded, remove the placard to signal to staff that you are ready to go.

Afternoon dismissal is 2:30-3:00 PM every day except Wednesday, when early dismissal car line runs 1:30-2:00 PM.

Parents with primary building students should park and walk their children to the primary front porch. Families with students at both campuses may park at the primary building, walk the primary child to the front porch, and have elementary children walk down the fire lane to their classroom. Due to parking constraints, parents may not walk down the fire lane with elementary children. If weather prevents children from walking the fire lane, elementary siblings must be dropped off through the main campus car line.

Elementary children may not walk down the fire lane after 8:25 AM - parents must sign them in as tardy. Primary parents may not walk elementary children to the main campus, with the exception of parents of Kahlo, Cassatt, and Thomas preschool children, who are required to sign their children in at the main campus. Kindergarten students in those classes may be dropped off through car line without a sign-in.

During afternoon pickup, main campus students with primary siblings may be escorted to the primary playground for dismissal as a convenience. If inclement weather occurs, a ParentSquare message will be sent and those students will be dismissed from the main campus. For safety reasons, families with elementary students may not drop off on the access road between the primary and elementary buildings.

During arrival and dismissal, two lanes of cars are pulled forward from the Fuller's Cross Road entrance for every one lane from the North Lakewood Avenue entrance. On North Lakewood, please follow the rules of the road, do not block intersections, and allow neighbors to enter and exit their properties.

Car Line Protocol - Primary and Elementary

1. Do not use cell phones while car line is active. For the safety of students and staff, we need your full attention.
2. Pull up to the designated cone when it is your turn.
3. Place your car in park when loading or unloading children from the passenger side.
4. Stay in your car.
5. Do not move until directed by car line staff.
6. Please turn right out of the school parking lot to keep the car line moving.
7. Treat all car line staff with grace and courtesy. Please do not engage in conversation with staff during car line - their full attention must be on student safety.

Early Checkout and Late Drop-off - Primary and Elementary

1. When checking students out early, please do so by 2:00 PM (1:00 PM on Wednesdays). We do not dismiss students during the last 30 minutes of the school day.
2. Late-arriving students must be signed in at the table by the Multi-Purpose Room (MPR). If no staff member is outside, please go to the main office.

For any early checkout, students must be picked up before 2:00 PM (1:00 PM on Wednesdays). Students must be signed out at the office for security purposes. Please bring your placard and/or be prepared to show identification.

If a student is to be picked up by anyone other than the parent or authorized adult, those arrangements must be made in writing in advance. Parents and guardians may email the office and classroom teacher to communicate transportation changes.

Secondary Campus - Arrival

The school day begins promptly at 8:30 AM. Students arriving after 8:30 AM will be marked tardy and subject to Progressive Discipline in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct. Students may arrive on campus at 8:15 AM and wait in their designated area until 8:25 AM. All students enter through the front main double doors. Any parent arriving on campus must check in at the main office before entering the building for any reason. The main gate will be locked by 8:45 AM; the secondary gate nearest the building will remain open for visitors.

Cars enter through the main gate and proceed through the parking lot in a single file line. Students exit from the right side of the vehicle in the lane closest to the sidewalk. Parents remain in the car; if you need to exit, please park in a visitor spot and cross with caution. After drop-off, exit through the secondary exit leading into the plaza lot.

Secondary Campus - Dismissal

1. Do not use cell phones while car line is active.
2. Cars enter through the main gate in a single file line.
3. As cars approach the building, the line breaks into three lanes. Car line uses the lane closest to the building, leaving the far-left lanes clear for through traffic.
4. Follow the directions of car line staff and load only in designated zones when indicated.

5. Exit when directed by staff.

Students eligible to drive may do so with a valid parking permit (inquire at the front office). Student drivers are expected to be courteous and mindful of fellow drivers, students, and the community. Students are authorized to park only in designated campus spaces and are subject to plaza rules if parking off campus.

Early Checkout and Late Drop-off - Secondary

1. When checking students out early, please do so by 2:45 PM (2:15 PM on Wednesdays). We do not dismiss students during the last 30 minutes of the school day.
2. For safety and security, students under 18 are NOT authorized to leave campus for any reason without being signed out by a parent or guardian. This includes trips to their car or leaving for lunch. Students 18 or older may sign themselves out. Upon return, acceptable documentation (medical or official appointment record) must be provided for the absence to be excused.

If a student is to be picked up by anyone other than the parent or authorized adult, arrangements must be made in writing in advance. Secondary parents should email IMAoffice@innovationmontessori.com from the email address on file. No student will be released to a person not on the authorized pickup list without prior written parent permission. Phone calls may not be accepted for dismissal changes. No exceptions will be made.

ATTENDANCE

Student attendance is an integral part of your child's social, emotional, and academic growth. Attendance is ultimately the responsibility of the student and parent or guardian.

Please use this link to review Florida Law regarding compulsory school attendance:
<http://www.fldoe.org/how-do-i/attendance-enrollment.shtml>

Students must be in class and ready to learn by 8:00 AM (Secondary) or 8:30 AM (Primary and Elementary). If your child will be tardy, absent, or leaving early, please complete the attendance form on our school website. Students with frequent tardies or absences will be involved in district truancy processes and may be removed from the school.

A NOTE ON TARDINESS - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

At Innovation Montessori, tardiness carries a weight that may be greater than in traditional school settings. In our elementary program, each child receives one small-group Montessori lesson per day. These lessons are the foundation of the entire learning cycle - they introduce the concept, the materials, and the pathway for follow-up work. A child who arrives late misses that lesson and, with it, the entry point for the day's learning.

Unlike a traditional classroom, where a concept may be repeated in a lecture or posted on the board, Montessori lessons are relational and specific. A missed lesson is not simply rescheduled - teachers

carry full lesson loads across mixed-age groups, and make-up opportunities are limited. Over time, cumulative tardiness creates real gaps in a child's scope and sequence, limiting their access to content and their ability to progress independently.

We recognize that mornings can be hard. We simply ask that families treat the 8:30 AM arrival time with the same importance as a work or medical appointment. Arriving on time every day is one of the most meaningful and concrete ways you can support your child's education at IM.

At the secondary campus, please note that arriving after 8:30 will count as a tardy just as being tardy to another class throughout the day will. Tardies do accumulate and will lead to consequences for students based upon the Code of Student Conduct and truancy processes.

Per Florida State attendance guidelines, 5 tardies equal to 1 unexcused absence. We do participate fully with state and district truancy processes.

BACKPACKS

Only secondary students may bring backpacks to school. Students in primary and elementary may use drawstring bags or reusable cloth shopping bags to carry their lunches and water bottles.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT (BASE)

Elementary and primary only. BASE is designed to meet the needs of working families with children enrolled at IMO/Casa. The program is fee-based; enrollment is limited by staffing and space and may not accommodate all families. BASE operates Monday through Friday following the OCPS calendar, from 7:00-8:00 AM and 3:00-6:00 PM. For more information, visit our school website or email base@innovationmontessori.com.

BULLYING POLICY

IM follows the OCPS Code of Student Conduct to comply with Florida's Anti-Bullying Policy. Bullying is defined as "Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance." All children are learning appropriate social interaction and the importance of kindness. Unkindness and bullying are not the same. The full policy can be found in the Code of Student Conduct on our website.

CASH

IM discourages all students from bringing cash to school. The school is not responsible for any cash lost on school property.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Florida law outlines both the rights and responsibilities of students. While the student has the right to expect a good education, the school has the right to expect good behavior and responsibility in return. The Innovation Montessori Ocoee and OCPS Student Code of Conduct can be found on the school website. Please note that all provisions governing discipline, dismissal, technology, and dress code may be more stringent than Orange County School Board requirements.

The Code of Student Conduct describes the rules that must be followed as well as the consequences if they are not. All parents receive a link to the policy at the start of the year along with an acknowledgement page for signature. Paper copies are available at the front office upon request.

Important reminders: Due to FERPA, we will never communicate with you about any child other than your own, including discipline consequences. Innovation Montessori may dismiss a student for repeated behavior issues. Dismissal is not the same as expulsion - students who have been dismissed may enroll in a district school. The dismissal policy is on the school website. Please speak with your children about the importance of not making threats at school; we participate in a threat management system that carries serious consequences. Students should also never bring anything that could be considered a weapon to school. If they find themselves with such an item, they are asked to turn it in to the office immediately.

COMMUNICATION

If you have a question or concern about the classroom or academics, please contact your child's teacher first. If you do not reach a resolution, forward previous communications to administration for support. If further support is needed, you may then reach out to the Executive Director and then the Board President.

Weekly summary newsletters are the most comprehensive look at what happened each week and what is upcoming at IM. They are posted in ParentSquare and include information from administration and the PTO.

- School website: www.innovationmontessori.com
- PTO website: www.ptoowls.com
- Online school calendar: www.innovationmontessori.com/calendar - updated regularly with all school holidays, events, and meetings. Add it to your own Google calendar with one click.

ParentSquare

The hub for online parent communication. Each class has its own private page for sharing pictures and information with families. Download the app and adjust your notification settings to your preference. All families must be connected to ParentSquare, as it is also used for school alerts. Sign-ups for classroom activities and donations are also managed through ParentSquare. Emergency notifications are sent through ParentSquare.

Email

Please ensure current parent and guardian email addresses are on file with the school. We will respond within 48 hours during the work week.

Phone Messages

We do not transfer calls to classrooms. Calls to the school with requests to deliver a message to students should occur only in an emergency. Plans for transportation and after-school activities should be made before the student comes to school. If there is a change in the plan for pick up, that may be communicated in a call to the office.

Canvas

Used by the secondary program (grades 7-12) as an online learning platform providing students and parents with a detailed map of academic progress, assignments, missing work, upcoming deadlines, and teacher feedback. Students and parents are encouraged to check Canvas regularly.

Boardocs.com

All information regarding board meetings can be found at [Boardocs.com](https://boardocs.com).

CLASS PLACEMENT

In keeping with Montessori pedagogy, our hope is that all children remain in their assigned elementary and primary classrooms for a three-year period. We understand that sometimes classroom dynamics may not work well for an individual student. Parents may reach out to administration to request a classroom change if attempts to resolve concerns have not been successful, though we are limited by class size requirements. We will do our best to meet change requests for the new school year when an earlier move is not possible.

While parents may not make direct classroom requests, we do solicit input from our instructional and student services staff and work to balance all relevant considerations. In keeping with Montessori pedagogy and the goal of fostering each child's independence, we do not place siblings in the same suite.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The school maintains and regularly practices emergency procedures including the "I Love You Guys" Foundation protocols as adopted by OCPS. These cover fire evacuation, severe weather, and active assailant drills as required by law. School administration has developed a crisis management plan and crisis team. Specific evacuation procedures are posted in every room, and all personnel receive annual training.

CUSTODY AND STUDENT RELEASE

School staff are required to release students to either parent unless we have a copy of a court order granting custody to one parent or to another person. If you have a court order, please provide a copy to the office. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to keep the school updated with any new legal paperwork.

All students must be signed out at the office by a parent, legal guardian, or designated adult listed on the emergency form. Students will only be released to people who are their parents or legal guardians, unless the school has received written permission to release the student to another adult.

In the case of divorce or separation, both parents shall have full rights until legal notification is provided to the school limiting those rights. If a parent or legal guardian is unable to receive a student and the person arriving is not an approved individual with written permission, the school will make all efforts to contact parents and guardians. If no authorized person can be reached, the local police or sheriff's office will be contacted, and the Florida Department of Children and Families will be notified.

DRESS CODE

Primary and Elementary

See Uniform section.

Secondary

Secondary students are expected to wear appropriate dress as outlined in the OCPS Code of Conduct. Students must always be in the dress code. If a student is out of dress code, a parent may be contacted, and a change of clothes may be required. Cleanliness, good hygiene, and neatness are important standards of appearance for all members of our community.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND CLUBS

Extracurricular Activities

Students at Innovation Montessori may be permitted to enroll at other schools for extracurricular activities, including sports, if those activities are not offered at our school. Participation in interscholastic and extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right, and may be withheld as a disciplinary condition. All policies that apply to the regular school day also apply to extracurricular activities and events.

Clubs - Elementary

After-school clubs are provided through BASE and offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Information and sign-ups will be posted on ParentSquare as clubs become available. Past offerings have included band, percussion, soccer, and gardening; offerings change each year.

Clubs - Secondary

Secondary students are encouraged to propose clubs they would like to see on campus. Once an idea is formed, students must find a sponsor (a staff or ADDITIONS-approved community member) and have at least five interested members. Club applications are available at the front office. All proposed clubs must be approved by the principal or the principal's designee before meeting.

FIELD TRIPS

Permission slips and fees for field trips are collected through our digital field trip platform, Parentsquare. Chaperones are selected by classroom teachers. If a parent is not selected to be a chaperone/volunteer, they are not welcome to attend or follow the field trip/event. Younger siblings may not attend school field trips. Where persistent behavioral challenges exist, parents may be required to accompany their child on a field trip.

Please note that field trip fees will not be refunded under any circumstance if your child is unable to attend a field trip.

GRADING POLICIES

Grades are not assigned in primary or elementary. In the secondary program, grades serve multiple purposes: documenting student and teacher achievement, providing feedback on progress to students and parents, monitoring growth and mastery, and informing instructional practices. Each level has established norms for parent reporting aligned to state standards. These rubrics are shared with parents at the beginning of each school year.

HEAD LICE

Head lice can be a common occurrence in a school setting, and there is no need for embarrassment. Any student found to have head lice may not remain in school and will be isolated until picked up. All nits and lice must be removed at home before the student may return. Before re-entering the classroom, the student must be checked by the school clinic. Please accompany your child to the office when returning after a lice-related absence.

INTERNET SAFETY POLICY

Students are expected to comply with Innovation Montessori's Internet Safety Policy. A copy of the policy is available at www.innovationmontessori.com/resources.

LUNCH

Innovation Montessori participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) federal food program for free and reduced lunch. Students in Casa and K-12 who qualify will have the opportunity to participate. While neither campus has an on-site kitchen, we offer hot lunch through an outside vendor. All students may purchase lunch through the vendor.

Innovation Montessori does not offer alternate meals to students participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Students who receive school lunch are served the same meal and meal components as all other students participating in the lunch program.

All meals served to students participating in the NSLP are planned and served in accordance with USDA meal pattern and nutritional requirements for a reimbursable meal.

All lunch payments are processed through our payment system, Procure. Parents and guardians are required to register in Procure to receive lunch invoices and submit payments.

Innovation Montessori recognizes that some families may need assistance accessing or navigating the Procure system. Staff are available to assist families with registration, accessing invoices, and completing the payment process. Families who experience difficulty accessing Procure should contact the school for assistance to ensure they are able to make required lunch payments.

Students with a negative hot lunch balance will receive written notification of charges. Parents are encouraged to make payment through our online prepayment system, Procure. Unpaid balances are carried over year to year. Per USDA guidelines, students with disabilities or free meal eligibility cannot be denied a reimbursable meal even with a negative balance.

If your child chooses not to participate in our school lunch program, your child has the option to pack a lunch. When packing lunch, please include a reusable/cloth napkin, placemat, and appropriate silverware. We do not provide single-use plastic utensils. We are a PEANUT-AWARE SCHOOL on both campuses - please do not send any food items containing peanuts. Please pack a nutritious meal and do not send candy, soda, or sugary treats; teachers will send those items home. For the elementary campus, please do not send items requiring heating or refrigeration. Please also send your child with a labeled water bottle.

Secondary students will have access to the cafeteria and microwave. Outside vendor food deliveries are not permitted at the secondary campus. Students may not sign themselves out to obtain lunch.

For security and space reasons, we do not invite family members to eat lunch with students on either campus.

At the end of each school year, families have the option to donate remaining lunch funds to students who need assistance.

PARENT LIAISON

Pursuant to Section 1002.33(7)(d)(1), Florida Statutes, each charter school's governing board must appoint a representative to facilitate parental involvement, provide access to information, assist parents and others with questions and concerns, and resolve disputes. For the Lakewood campus, our parent

liaison is Cathy Tobin, cathy@innovationmontessori.com. For the Silver Star campus, our parent liaison is John Pagnotti, john.pagnotti@innovationmontessori.com.

PARKING

To accommodate our growing school population and limited parking, we ask that you be mindful of where you park and do not linger on campus longer than necessary during drop-off and pickup. At IMO, only primary parents are invited to park during drop-off and pickup. We will notify families in advance when parking at the adjacent church is available.

At the secondary campus, there is adequate parking on campus. When additional parking is needed, please use the lot adjacent to the building. Note that this parking lot is shared with student drivers.

PLATFORMS

- iReady: Instructional tool used for interventions with MTSS students (grades K-6th).
- Procare: Platform used for enrollment, registration, and payments for BASE, Casa tuition, and lunch.
- ParentSquare: Communication platform for teachers, administration, the Board, and PTO. Emergency alerts also come through ParentSquare. Also used for payments for field trips and school supply fees.
- RAZ-Kids: Online reading program used by primary and elementary students.
- Skyward: Student management system. Secondary students and parents access progress and report cards in Skyward. Elementary parents access standardized test scores in Skyward.
- Montessori Records Express (MRX): Our primary and elementary report card platform. Report cards are emailed directly to families.
- Canvas: Online learning platform for the secondary program (grades 7-12), providing students and parents with a detailed map of progress, assignments, and teacher feedback.
- OTUS: Instructional tool used by the secondary program to capture student mastery of content standards.

PLAYGROUNDS

Playgrounds may only be used when supervised by IMO or BASE staff. This includes school events.

PTO

Innovation Montessori Ocoee's Parent Teacher Organization is a dedicated group of parents working to enrich our students' school experience and support the school community. PTO meetings are shared on the PTO calendar and ParentSquare. Our 2026-2027 PTO President is Kristen Fetchko Labelle, and

our Vice President is Emily Calamanco. Joining our PTO is a fantastic way to support our school and earn volunteer hours - every meeting attended counts as one volunteer hour. Visit the PTO website at <https://www.ptoowls.com/>

REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Report cards inform families about their child's academic and social progress and are published quarterly, four times per year. Primary and elementary report cards are emailed directly to parents. Secondary report cards are found on Canvas.

Only secondary students receive progress reports. Progress reports for ESE students are sent home at the end of each quarter. Students in MTSS (multi-tiered systems of support) for ELA (English Language Arts) in elementary also receive progress reports. Gifted reports are sent home at the end of each semester, twice per year.

For students transferring to another school, we do not provide recommendations or reference letters.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

At IM we have implemented a Restorative Practices program designed to address the needs of students in grades 1-12 who have committed a non-violent (Level I-III) behavioral offense in violation of the OCPS Code of Conduct. Restorative justice focuses on repairing harm through inclusive processes that engage all community members, shifting the focus of discipline from punishment to learning and from the individual to the community. Students and their parents or guardians must willingly participate for restorative practices to be effective; otherwise, more traditional disciplinary actions will be used.

RETENTION

You will receive a letter in the spring if your child is being considered for retention. All retention decisions are made by school administration on a case-by-case basis. Retention is mandatory at the third-grade level for students who do not score a Level 2 or higher on the 3rd grade English Language Arts Progress Monitoring (FAST) assessment and do not meet criteria for Good Cause promotion. Third-grade students who do not score a Level 2 or higher may be promoted for Good Cause by attending and passing Summer Reading Camp, which is held at your zoned school in June.

SIBLINGS

There are special events during the year when younger siblings are welcome, but siblings may not assist when parents or guardians are volunteering in the classroom. Please read classroom invitations carefully to see if siblings are invited. To support the development of independence and to give each child their own unique experience, we do not place siblings in the same suite.

SICKNESS, MEDICATIONS, AND ALLERGIES

When Not to Send Your Child to School

- Red rashes and bumps
- Fever, nausea, or vomiting
- Red, itchy eyes with yellow discharge
- Swollen glands
- Cramping and diarrhea
- Nits and live lice

If your child has a chronic illness that presents with any of the above symptoms, please provide a doctor's letter to the school clinic so we know not to call you every time those symptoms appear.

Actions to Take

- Keep your child at home until free of fever (without medication) for 24 hours.
- Keep your child home until free of vomiting for 24 hours or until they have kept down at least two solid meals.

Illness or Injury During School Hours

In emergencies, staff will call 911 and alert the office; parents will be notified. We will share medical and contact information with emergency personnel. No student will be released to anyone except parents or authorized adults, unless release to emergency medical personnel is necessary. Please ensure your child's emergency contacts and medical information are current.

Prescription Medication

- Notify the office in writing of all prescription medications being taken by a student.
- When possible, medication should be administered outside school hours.
- If medication must come to school, the parent or guardian must complete an AUTHORIZATION FOR MEDICATION FORM, sign in the medication on a clinic log available at the office and personally deliver the medication to the office.
- All prescription medication must be in the ORIGINAL container. The prescription label must show the date, student name, dosage, and time of administration.
- If medication needs to go home, the parent or guardian must pick it up after dismissal. Parents and guardians are responsible for transporting medications to and from school.

Non-Prescription Medication

Any over-the-counter medication brought to school must be unopened with the seal intact. Parents must bring it to the office and complete an AUTHORIZATION FOR MEDICATION FORM. For school purposes, anything that goes in or on the body and is not food is considered medicine. Students are

prohibited from keeping non-prescription medication in their bags or providing such medication to classmates.

Children with Severe Food Allergies

Parents must complete the following forms and follow the accompanying guidelines:

- Authorization for Emergency Care of Children with Severe Allergies
- Acknowledgement of Receipt of Policy for Administering Emergency Treatment
- Release and Hold Harmless Agreement
- Keep the teacher informed of your child's food allergies and provide updated information as needed.
- It is the parent's responsibility to provide medication as prescribed by the child's physician.
- Two sets of current medication must be provided to and maintained at school at all times.
- When a student is on a field trip, an additional set of medication must be provided to the classroom teacher.
- No sharing of food or snacks among students.
- In the event of a severe food allergy, we may ask classes not to bring certain foods.

When the school calls and asks you to pick up your child, the expectation is that someone arrives within one hour of the call. Emergency contacts will be reached if this does not occur.

PRIMARY/ELEMENTARY SNACK

The Montessori philosophy encourages grace and courtesy, independence, and care of self and the environment. Snack time is an opportunity for students to practice these skills. Each student should bring their own individual healthy snack, such as a protein, fruit, or vegetables. Please avoid processed food. Because of potential allergies, children are not welcome to share food at school.

STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN

We will adhere to all provisions under Florida Law for Pupil Progression. The Orange County Public Schools Pupil Progression Plan will be used as a framework, with Florida Law serving as the final authority in all decisions and policies. See also: Retention.

STUDENT PROPERTY

Please put names on coats, sweaters, jackets, books, school bags, lunch boxes, and other personal items. Children are not permitted to bring toys to school. Lost and found items are kept for a limited time and then donated to a local charity. Innovation Montessori, Inc. is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

STUDENT WELFARE

IM has adopted a student welfare policy to ensure compliance with HB 443 (2025), Section 1002.33(16)(b)(17), Florida Statutes, and Rule 6A-6.0791, Florida Administrative Code. The policy outlines parent notification requirements and procedures relating to student well-being, including health services and instruction, and provides a framework for resolving parental concerns at the school, district, and state levels. A copy of the policy and the special magistrate policy is available at www.innovationmontessori.com/resources.

TECHNOLOGY

IM follows the OCPS Code of Student Conduct for the appropriate use of the internet for limited educational purposes. Students found using the internet inappropriately will be disciplined in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include loss of technology access. Breakage or misuse of technology could result in removal of devices or fees.

See also: Wireless Communications.

TEXTBOOKS

The board and book committee reviews and approves all new instructional materials, including textbooks, which are listed on our website. Students will be issued books in some classes; these remain the property of the school. "Textbooks" refers to both physical and digital versions. Any lost, stolen, or damaged materials are the sole responsibility of the student to whom they were issued. All incidents must be reported immediately to the classroom teacher. Students who do not return books or who return severely damaged materials will be required to pay replacement or repair costs.

UNIFORM - Elementary Only

Cleanliness, good grooming, and neatness are important. IM students are expected to wear appropriate dress at all times as outlined below. Uniforms are required for preschool through sixth grade. The Uniform Policy applies every day unless administration specifically designates a non-uniform or spirit wear day. No characters, large logos (other than the school logo), light-up wearables, or slogans are permitted.

Uniform Colors: all solid colors listed.

- Shirts: Solid White, Navy, Light Blue, Hunter/Forest Green, or 'Gator' Orange.
- Skirts/Pants/Shorts/Jumpers: Navy or Khaki

Uniform Details

- **Shirts:** Short or long-sleeved polo-style or button-down; oxford-style shirts are acceptable. Shirts must be collared. Visible undershirts must adhere to shirt colors listed above.
- **Pants:** Long uniform pants in solid khaki or navy. Jeans are not acceptable (except on Spirit Days).
- **Dresses/Jumpers/Skirts:** Fingertip length or longer. Solid-colored shorts, tights, or leggings must be worn underneath. Shorts worn alone must be solid khaki or navy; shorts worn under dresses or skirts may be any solid color. Dresses and shirts must be collared. Jumpers must be paired with a collared shirt.
- **Shorts and Skorts:** Fingertip length or longer in solid khaki or navy.
- **Leggings and Socks:** Leggings may be any solid color and may only be worn underneath a uniform, not alone.
- **Joggers/Sport Bottoms/Legging Pants:** Not permitted as uniform attire.
- **Outerwear:** Jackets, sweaters, scarves, and gloves worn inside the classroom must comply with the uniform color policy. Other colors worn outside must be removed and stored inside. Please label outerwear.
- **PE:** Students wear uniform clothing for PE.
- **Shoes:** Closed-toed and closed-back shoes only. Shoes should be suitable for the playground and PE. Crocs and light-up shoes are not permitted.

UNIFORM COLORS		SHIRT OPTIONS		
All solid colors listed.		Solid White, Navy, Light Blue, Hunter/Forest Green, or 'Gator' Orange.		
				
White	Navy	Light Blue	Hunter/Forest Green	'Gator' Orange

BOTTOMS OPTIONS				
PANTS  Long uniform pants in solid khaki or navy. Jeans are not acceptable (except on Spirit Days).	SKIRTS / JUMPERS / DRESSES  Fingertip length or longer. Solid-colored shorts, tights, or leggings must be worn underneath. Dresses and shirts must be collared. Jumpers must be paired with a collared shirt.	SHORTS & SKORTS  Fingertip length or longer in solid khaki or navy.	LEGGINGS & SOCKS  Leggings may be any solid color and may only be worn underneath a uniform, not alone.	NOT PERMITTED  Joggers, sport bottoms, and legging pants are not permitted as uniform attire.

OUTERWEAR	PE UNIFORMS	SHOES
 Jackets, sweaters, scarves, and gloves worn inside the classroom must comply with the uniform color policy. Other colors worn outside must be removed and stored inside. Please label outerwear.	 Students wear uniform clothing for PE.	 Closed-toed and closed-back shoes only. Shoes should be suitable for the playground and PE.  Crocs are not permitted.  Light-up shoes are not permitted.

Spirit Wear

On designated days (such as Fridays and once-monthly Worthwhile Wednesdays when donating to that month's cause), students may wear school spirit shirts (available through PTO at <https://www.ptoowls.com/store/>) with **blue** denim shorts, skirts, or jeans. Rips in jeans must start below

fingertip length. A spirit shirt with uniform bottoms, or a uniform shirt with blue denim bottoms, are also acceptable on spirit wear days.

Accessories

Hair bows, belts, and similar accessories may be in the student's choice of solid color. Ties must be a solid uniform color. Hats and hoods may not be worn indoors on the elementary campus. Jewelry, if worn, should not be distracting and should be safe for the classroom. The school is not responsible for lost or broken jewelry.

Logos

School logo shirts are not required but are available through Lands' End at www.landsend.com (school code: 900167834). Logos may also be embroidered at Stitches by Leyla: <http://www.stitchesbyleyla.com>, 13020 West Colonial Drive, Winter Garden, FL 34787. A percentage of every logo purchase comes back to the school. Logos may only be added to eligible uniform items as described above.

Financial Considerations

Students will not be denied attendance or otherwise penalized for failing to wear a compliant uniform if the failure is due to financial hardship. Parents and guardians should notify the principal if assistance is needed. Support is available through our PTO's uniform closet.

Discipline

The principal or designee has the authority to determine whether clothing complies with the IM Uniform Policy. If non-compliant, a parent may be asked to bring a change of clothes, or the student may be asked to leave an after-school activity. Repeated violations may result in progressively serious consequences. Students may appeal the principal's decision to the Governing Board President.

VISITING SCHOOL

For the safety of our students, all visitors must register in the front office and wear a visitor's badge. A driver's license is required, as we conduct a background check per the Jessica Lunsford Act. Classroom visit arrangements must be made in advance with the teacher to protect each child's uninterrupted instruction time. Parent conferences should be scheduled when teachers are not responsible for supervising children. For security and space reasons, we do not invite parents or guardians to have lunch with students on campus.

WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS

Per HB 1105 (2025) and Section 1006.07(2)(n), Florida Statutes:

- All elementary and middle school students are prohibited from using wireless communication devices at all times during the school day, including recess, lunch, and class transitions, unless a specific exception applies.
- All high school students (grades 9-12) are prohibited from using wireless communication devices during instructional time, except when specifically authorized by instructional personnel solely for educational purposes.
- When using wireless devices outside the school day at school property or school-sponsored events, students must demonstrate appropriate and proper use.

Innovation Montessori allows the possession of cell phones on school property, at after-school activities, and at school-related functions, provided that during school hours the cell phone remains off and is fully concealed in a bag. Phones may not be kept on the student's person (in a pocket, coat, etc.). At dismissal, phones may be used solely for time-sensitive communication with parents or guardians about pickup.

SMART WATCHES: Per Florida state legislation (HB 1105, 2025), smart watches are prohibited at school. This policy applies to all grades and campuses. Smart watches may not be worn to school, regardless of whether they are in "airplane mode" or have communication features disabled.

This policy applies to all devices capable of wireless voice, text, or internet communication, including but not limited to cell phones, digital music players, smart watches, smart glasses, tablets, and personal laptop computers. It also includes personal headphones, earbuds, and accessories used with such devices.

Innovation Montessori is not responsible for damage to or loss of personal electronic devices. Should misuse of wireless devices become a pattern, students will be required to check them in at the front office each morning and retrieve them at dismissal. Further misuse may result in disciplinary consequences and/or parent pickup of the device. The full wireless communication policy is available at www.innovationmontessori.com/resources.

WITHDRAWAL

Please notify the office as soon as possible if you will be moving or withdrawing your child from school. A withdrawal form must be completed, and the school is required to report where your child will attend school next. This applies to withdrawals at the end of the school year as well.

WORK CYCLE

Montessori education is built on intrinsic motivation and the power of deep concentration. Within our model, students are expected to use the work cycle to complete follow-up work and assignments. Ninety-minute work cycles are built into the school week to provide students with uninterrupted periods of focused effort. At IMA, work cycle time is built into the class schedule throughout the week. Choosing not to work or not to participate in the work cycle is not an option. Repeated attempts to re-engage a

student who is consistently refusing to work will result in an administrative conference with parents. At that point, a discussion about whether an alternative environment might better serve the child may also be appropriate.

A FINAL NOTE

We anticipate that you and your child will have a wonderful experience at Innovation Montessori Ocoee. If conflicts arise, please follow this protocol: if the issue concerns your child's classroom, the students in the class, the teacher, or a teacher assistant, please speak with the teacher first. After communicating with the teacher, if you still have concerns, contact the Assistant Principal or Principal. The Executive Director and Board President are available after you have spoken with the principal.

Innovation Montessori Ocoee Parent-Student-School Agreement

The Innovation Montessori Ocoee community is committed to providing a strong Montessori foundation in a public-school setting that enables our students to achieve their full potential, develop curiosity, creativity, and imagination, and become responsible citizens of the world. Our students flourish when their homes and schools operate harmoniously with each other.

I/we, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of _____, have read and agree to the following:

I/we will:

- View ourselves as partners with the school in support of my/our child(ren).
- Make every attempt to learn Montessori principles and use them at home.
- Attend all conferences scheduled with any member of the Innovation Montessori Ocoee staff.
- Engage in the culture of giving; share my time, talents, and resources to support the best educational experience possible for all IM students.
- Provide transportation to and from school for my/our child.
- Provide uniforms for my/our child and ensure that my/our child abides by the dress code of Innovation Montessori (elementary campus only).
- Supply a healthy lunch and snack, either from home or through the school's lunch provider.
- Annually review the Parent Handbook, OCPS Code of Conduct, and my child's classroom expectations.
- Model grace and courtesy when interacting with members of the Innovation Montessori community and resolve any problems respectfully.
- Communicate respectfully, directly, and actively with the school. This means bringing all problems and concerns directly to the school where they can be resolved, rather than broadcasting them in places where they cannot. Our goal is a community that models positive and productive communication for our children.

Innovation Montessori will:

- View ourselves as partners with families in support of our students.
- Provide a genuine Montessori environment in our public-school setting.
- Nurture curiosity and initiative so your child develops strong work habits, a sense of purpose, and the will to learn and grow.
- Encourage students to take on work and projects that require them to stretch.
- Communicate as partners, working hard to provide open, timely, and respectful information and insight about your child and the school community.
- Be professional and courteous, providing mutually respectful communication with all community members.
- Work to balance the individual needs of the child with the needs of the classroom and school community.

We look forward to a working partnership to provide both an outstanding educational experience and a warm, welcoming community for you and your child.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

FERPA - Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Schools

This notification informs you of certain rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law requiring that the School obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records, with certain exceptions.

1. Right to Inspect and Review Records

Parents have the right to inspect and review their student's education records within 45 days of the School receiving a written request. Submit your written request to the principal, identifying the records you wish to inspect. The school will make arrangements for access and notify you of the time and place.

2. Right to Request Amendment to Records

Parents have the right to request amendment of records they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights. Submit a written request to the principal, identify the part of the record you want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested, the parent will be notified and informed of the right to a hearing.

3. Right to Consent to Disclosures

Parents have the right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from education records, except as FERPA authorizes without consent. One exception permits disclosure without consent to school officials with legitimate educational interests.

The School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent unless you notify the school in writing by October 1st that you do not wish for us to do so. Directory information includes:

- Student's name, address, telephone number, and email address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance and grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Honors and awards received
- Name of the most recent educational institution attended

4. Right to File a Complaint

Parents have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with FERPA requirements. Contact: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202.

For additional information on FERPA, visit: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

Innovation Montessori Code of Civility

The education of a child happens only through a partnership among the child, school faculty and staff, parents or guardians, the community, and district office employees. Partnership is an active state that includes sharing responsibilities, having meaningful communication, and welcomed participation.

When people working together agree, the partnership runs smoothly. Two people will not always agree, and that can make partnership difficult. The partnership is most powerful when we agree on how to disagree. Civility is not simply an absence of harm; it is the affirmation of what is best about each of us. It reflects our respect for others in our behavior, regardless of whether we know, agree with, or even like each other.

Innovation Montessori, Inc. requires that students, faculty and staff, parents, guardians, and all community members shall:

1. Always Treat Each Other with Courtesy and Respect

- Listen carefully and respectfully as others express opinions that may differ from our own.
- Share opinions and concerns without loud or offensive language, gestures, or profanity.

2. Treat Each Other with Kindness

- Treat each other as we would like to be treated.
- Do not threaten or cause physical harm to another person or damage to their property.
- Do not bully, belittle, or tease one another, and do not allow others to do so in our presence.
- Do not demean or be abusive or obscene in any communications.

3. Take Responsibility for Our Own Actions

- Share information honestly.
- Refrain from displays of temper.
- Do not disrupt or attempt to interfere with the operation of a classroom or any other work or public area of the school.

4. Cooperate with Each Other

- Obey school rules for access and visitation.
- Respect the legitimate obligations and time constraints we each face.
- Notify each other when we have information that might help us reach our common goal, including safety issues, academic progress, and community events that might impact the school.
- Respond when asked for assistance.
- Understand that we do not always get our way.

Authority and Enforcement

Civility ultimately depends on the individual and collective will of those involved. If personal harm is threatened, any employee may contact law enforcement. Anyone on school property may be directed to leave by an administrator or school resource officer. Threatening, disruptive, harmful, or obscene behavior will result in removal from the premises; if the person does not leave and law enforcement is not available, it will be called. Employees are not obligated to respond to demeaning, threatening, or abusive communications and should save such messages and contact their immediate supervisor.

If verbal abuse occurs, the employee should calmly ask the speaker to communicate civilly. If the abuse continues, they may terminate the meeting or call. If on school premises, an administrator may be asked to direct the speaker to leave; if the speaker does not, law enforcement will be notified.

How We Practice PEACE in Our Community

P - Problem Solving: We seek solutions through empathy, braving difficult conversations, and understanding. We seek answers from those empowered to meet our needs, dare greatly by engaging in hard conversations, and assume best intentions.

E - Encouragement: We encourage community and collaboration by celebrating one another and choosing words that nurture growth. We celebrate each other, honor our differences, and forge authentic connections.

A - Acceptance: We embrace diversity and foster a culture of belonging. We inform and include all members of our community, accept mistakes made by ourselves and others, and ensure everyone has a voice.

C - Caring: We cultivate a safe space by building trust through empathy, kindness, and clarity. We listen with curiosity and compassion and consider the greater good of the IM community.

E - Effort: We are mindful of and accountable for our words and actions. We communicate clearly and respectfully and make our words a gift to others.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

INNOVATION MONTESSORI DISCIPLINE EXPLAINED

Introduction

Restorative practices encourage student development while reducing exclusionary and punitive discipline. Traditional discipline has been shown to disproportionately impact economically disadvantaged students, Black students, students of color, and students with disabilities. Restorative practices focus on student reflection, communication, community building, and making amends, in place of punishment. Research consistently shows that restorative practices result in fewer suspensions and expulsions, fewer disciplinary referrals, improved school climate, stronger teacher-student relationships, and improved academic achievement.

At Innovation Montessori, we acknowledge that "discipline" means to educate, not to punish. Restorative justice practices serve as our core disciplinary model, guiding students to reflect on the impact of their actions and take steps to repair relationships and build new skills.

School Culture and Core Assumptions

Restorative practices create a learning community rooted in deep belonging, respect, and shared values. Our restorative discipline policy aims to address wrongdoing while keeping everyone connected to their learning community. Innovation Montessori holds seven core assumptions about our community of students, staff, and families: that we are Good, Wise, and Powerful; Interconnected; Relationship-driven; Gifted; Capable; and Holistic.

The values that drive our efforts include equity, respect, compassion, self-determination, and the acceptance of multiple truths.

Community Guidelines

- Students share the responsibility for making school a safe, orderly, and enjoyable place for learning.
- Parents and legal guardians understand that the school community will hold students accountable for behavior at school and at school-sponsored activities.
- We seek genuine partnership with parents and guardians - a two-way, cooperative process.
- Teachers and staff use a consistent, common-sense approach to handling misconduct, emphasizing positive guidance, redirection, and appropriate boundaries.
- Staff members will guide students to develop self-control and positive conduct. They will show children positive alternatives rather than simply saying "No," and will address the behavior rather than label the student's character.

Montessori and Restorative Justice

Maria Montessori believed education should value the human spirit and the whole child: physical, social, emotional, and cognitive. Restorative practices share these values and connections, promoting community building and healing. Innovation Montessori focuses on proactive measures to create a community that practices PEACE, rather than relying solely on restorative practices only after things go wrong.

Proactive Approaches to Discipline

Peaceful Classroom Environments

The aim of the Montessori classroom is to radiate harmony and respect. Members communicate using empathy, and students and staff move and speak with grace and courtesy. Each classroom has a peace space for students to reflect and rest without guilt. Students work together as stewards of their environment.

Ethic of Care

Within the prepared environment, children develop at their own pace, guided by adults with quiet respect for children's emerging capacities. Social-emotional learning through Peer Counseling (grades 7-8), Peace Ed curriculum (PK-12), and restorative justice philosophy (K-12) are a regular part of the curriculum.

PEACE Education Curriculum

Peace education focuses on intentional daily practice. In Primary, Lower EL, and Upper EL, students participate in a bead ceremony to identify the parts of PEACE they have experienced during the week: Problem Solving, Effort, Acceptance, Care, and Enjoyment.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

SEL is the process of developing self-awareness, self-management, interpersonal skills, and responsible decision-making. At Innovation Montessori, SEL is a framework within the Montessori curriculum for grades K-12. Each year the social work department uses Panorama's SEL assessment tool to measure and support students' soft skills, including growth mindset, self-efficacy, social awareness, and self-management.

Restorative Discipline Practices

When behavioral challenges arise, teachers and assistants will work to address them by reminding students of school guidelines and offering a choice to redirect. If the behavior involves a single student, the teacher will invite a one-to-one conversation. If it involves a group, an appropriate method such as a class circle will be used.

Please note that students have the right to decline a restorative conversation; forfeiting this right may lead to traditional disciplinary actions.

Additional responses to challenging behavior may include:

- Temporary separation from peers for a designated time.
- Adjusted seating near the teacher or in a different area.
- Working with the student to identify logical consequences related to the behavior.
- Development of a Restorative Action Plan.
- Communication to parents via email, incident report, or phone.

Facilitation methods may include conferencing circles, peacemaking circles, restorative meetings, Circle of Support and Accountability (COSA), no-contact agreements, behavior agreement plans, and restitution through in-school community service.

If a student's behavior disrupts the learning environment such that neither they nor other students can learn, Innovation Montessori may use behavior contracts, discipline referrals, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or recommendation for expulsion. Students with IEPs or 504 Plans have the right to a Manifestation Determination Review before any significant change of placement.

Search of Person or Property

- Physical Searches: May be conducted only where there is reasonable suspicion that the student has engaged in a disciplinary violation.
- Minimally Intrusive Searches: Emptying of pockets, backpack searches, or removal of hats, socks, and shoes may be conducted by any certified school employee.
- More Intrusive Searches: Pat-downs and frisks will be conducted by a trained staff member of the student's choosing.

Discipline Data Review

At least twice per year, administration and the Dean of Students will review discipline data to analyze and improve policies and practices, and to address disproportionalities in student discipline data.

Record Keeping

In addition to internal record keeping, Innovation Montessori reports SESIR incidents pursuant to Section 1006.07(9), Florida Statutes, and Rule 6A-1.0017, Florida Administrative Code. Developmentally age-appropriate behavior and any IEP or 504 Plan factors will be considered in determining whether to file a SESIR report.

This policy is available on the school website and in hard copy at the main office. Please note that the Parent-Student Handbook is a living document and will be amended and adapted as our school community learns and grows.

STUDENT LAPTOP ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY 2026-2027

1. Overview

Institutional information and information resources shall be used in an approved, ethical, and lawful manner to protect institutional operations, image, and financial interest, and to comply with official policies and procedures. Students shall contact the Director of Information Technology prior to engaging in any activities not explicitly covered by these policies.

2. Scope

The institution owns all institutional information resources; use of such resources constitutes consent for the institution to monitor, inspect, audit, collect, and remove any information without further notice. IM /IMA regards any violation of this policy as a serious offense subject to disciplinary action as prescribed by IM /IMA and OCPS standards.

3. Responsibilities

Executive Director

- Responsible for ensuring appropriate and auditable security controls are in place.

Principals, Assistant Principals, and Deans

- Inform personnel of institutional policies on acceptable use.
- Communicate with parents and guardians when violations occur.
- Coordinate with OCPS when appropriate.

Teachers and Educational Staff

- Inform current and new students of IM /IMA acceptable use policies.
- Ensure students comply with policies and procedures.

Department of Information Technology

- Monitor systems for integrity and maintain data backups.
- Develop and maintain information resource security policies.
- Address violations and interpret institutional policies.

Students

- Abide by official IM /IMA acceptable use policies.
- Promptly report suspicion or occurrence of any unauthorized activities to the Director of Information Technology.
- Take responsibility for all use of their accounts, login IDs, passwords, PINs, and tokens.

4. Hardware and Software

IM /IMA provides iPad tablet computers for student educational use in the classroom and, with permission, at home. Students must comply with institutional policies regardless of the device's location. Personal devices are not authorized for academic use on school campuses.

4.1 Software

All software shall be obtained from official institutional sources to prevent malicious code and protect information resources. Users may not install or modify resources in ways that diminish security standards.

4.2 Copyright and Licensing

All software used on institutional devices shall be procured in accordance with IM /IMA and district policies, properly licensed, and registered in the name of the institution. Students shall abide by software copyright laws and may not obtain, install, replicate, or use software except as permitted by licensing agreements.

4.3 Personally Owned Software

Students are not authorized to use personally owned software on institutionally owned equipment. Documented approval from the Director of Information Technology must be secured prior to any such use.

4.4 Hardware Repair

All hardware repairs will be completed by the Department of Information Technology. No other staff are authorized to repair, modify, configure, or replace hardware components without prior permission from the Director of Information Technology or Executive Director. Students are expected to maintain issued hardware in good working order. Non-accidental damage may result in payment for repair or replacement. Devices should not leave the State of Florida without prior approval.

4.5 Freeware, Online Games, and Chat

Online gaming websites may not be accessed via any institutional device or network. Chat rooms and online messaging services other than those prescribed by policy are not to be accessed on institutional devices without prior authorization from IT. This includes but is not limited to Discord and similar platforms.

5. Electronic Mail and Messaging

Email is provided to facilitate institutional business and may be monitored; students have no expectation of privacy. Prohibited uses of institutional email include sending information that violates institutional policies or laws; unsolicited advertising; defamatory, threatening, harassing, or obscene communications; malicious code or spam; and any threatening or fraudulent use.

6. Internet and Network

Internet access is available through the assigned student network and may be monitored; students have no expectation of privacy. Students are to connect only to the approved student network as prescribed by IT. Any student device detected on another password-protected network will be removed and may result in disciplinary action.

Prohibited internet activities include posting sexually explicit, hate-based, or hacker-related material; posting or sending restricted institutional information; commercial advertising; promoting a personal or private business; using non-academic applications that consume excess network resources; browser-based gaming; and any use deemed threatening, harassing, or not furthering the educational mission of the school.

6.1 Wireless Communication Devices and Mobile Hotspots

Per the wireless communication policy, wireless devices may not be used to conduct academic business or to circumvent network protections. Using devices to bypass network protections may result in disciplinary action.

7. Authorized Monitoring

All institutional information systems - including hardware, networks, software, email, and messaging - are subject to monitoring and restriction by the Department of Information Technology in consultation with Administration. There is no expectation of privacy. IT may place monitoring software on student devices as deemed appropriate. Students are prohibited from removing, interfering with, or disabling any monitoring tools.

8. Prohibited Uses

Prohibited activities include but are not limited to:

- Stealing or copying electronic files without permission, including through peer-to-peer file sharing.
- Violating copyright laws.
- Browsing private files or accounts of others.
- Playing electronic or browser-based games on institutional devices.
- Attempting to access any network or resource in a way that could cause damage or disruption.
- Possessing or using tools to defeat copy protection, discover passwords, identify vulnerabilities, decrypt files, or otherwise compromise information security.
- Writing, copying, or introducing self-replicating or damaging code.
- Using another user's login credentials with or without their knowledge.
- Conducting fraudulent or illegal activities.
- Disclosing restricted institutional information.
- Using technology to intimidate, harass, or bully any staff, student, or teacher.

9. User IDs and Passwords

Each student must have a unique user ID and private password. Each authorized individual is personally responsible for protecting their credentials and should not share them with or allow others to use them.

10. Security Tools

Students must not acquire, possess, trade, or use hardware or software tools that could compromise information systems security. Users are also prohibited from using network sniffers or engaging in penetration testing or network exploitation unless directed by the Director of Information Technology.

11. Items Not Explicitly Covered

Students shall contact the Director of Information Technology prior to engaging in any activities not explicitly covered by these policies. The institution reserves the right to disconnect, remove, or restrict use of any equipment at any time to maintain the functionality, security, or integrity of the network and computing resources.