

Adopted:
Reviewed: **DRAFT**
Revised:

BLUFFVIEW MONTESSORI SCHOOL POLICY 703 MONTESSORI TRAINING AND REIMBURSEMENT

I. PURPOSE

As a Montessori school, it is of the utmost importance that we implement the Montessori Philosophy with fidelity to the degree possible within the context of being a public charter school. This policy provides guidance for teachers who are/will be leading Montessori classrooms to acquire high-quality Montessori training at the appropriate classroom level.

Bluffview acknowledges that there is a financial burden associated with running a Montessori program, and it is primarily for the school to assume due to the unique nature of its pedagogical composition.

II. MONTESSORI TRAINING CENTERS/LOCATIONS

Montessori training may be completed by attending an AMS or AMI approved Montessori training center/location. These include but are not limited to:

- A. UW-River Falls Montessori Teacher Education Program
 - 1. For credit only, MA possible
- B. MMTTC - Midwest Montessori Teacher Training Center
 - 1. For credentials only
- C. VMTEC MN - Montessori Training & Certification Program
 - 1. For credentials only
- D. St. Catherine University Montessori Program
 - 1. For credit or credentials, student choice, MA possible
- E. Other locations must be approved by the Head of School or Pedagogy Committee.

III. DEFINITIONS

Montessori training is necessary for Montessori teachers but has some specific terminology that needs to be made clear. These definitions will help teachers make informed decisions regarding the completion of the amount of education required by a Montessori training program for fulfillment of basic requirements.

- A. Montessori training: A teacher attending a Montessori training program that results in the teacher acquiring a Montessori certification.
- B. Credentials: Academic or educational attestation that demonstrate the completion of a Montessori training program that provides the teacher with the occupational qualifications required for teaching at Bluffview in a

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Montessori classroom. "Credentials" refers to classes taken that do not result in actual college credits.

- C. Credits: Academic or educational credits earned by completing a requisite number of classes/hours that are paid for at the Institution's published rate. Credits result in a degree, and may be used in the pursuit of a Masters Degree.
- D. Tuition: The cost of the courses taken for credit or credential.

IV. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

The teacher must be actively employed by or have an approved job offer (Letter of Employment) from Bluffview Montessori to be eligible for any aspects of this policy.

- A. The teacher must remain in good academic standing throughout the training, maintaining a "B" average or better.
- B. The Head of School must consent to the teacher beginning training.
- C. The teacher must remain in good standing as an employee.

V. TUITION

Bluffview Montessori recognizes not only the importance of high quality training, but that there is a significant cost that goes with it. Bluffview only requires a Montessori training credential, not a Montessori teacher degree.

- A. Tuition: Bluffview will pay in real-time the percentage of the tuition costs equivalent to the credential option. This means that:
 - 1. If a teacher chooses to enroll in a credential program only, the entire cost of tuition will be assumed by Bluffview at the time the cost is incurred.
 - 2. If a teacher chooses to enroll in a credit-based program, Bluffview will pay 50% of the tuition costs of the program at the time that the cost is incurred, and the teacher will be responsible for the difference (remaining 50%) in tuition cost.
 - a) For the credit-based option, a teacher may be reimbursed for the difference in cost they incurred upon graduation of the program and the presentation of the credential/degree to the Head of School. This is outlined in section VI.
 - b) If a teacher pursues a Master's Degree, any additional costs for those extra credits will not be reimbursed or paid as incurred. The teacher is solely responsible for that additional cost.

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VI. REIMBURSEMENT OF TUITION COSTS

To be eligible for any reimbursements, the teacher must be in good standing as an employee of Bluffview, and must have completed the Montessori training program. This includes providing proof of completion in the form of a credential, transcript, or other formal document confirming the completion of the degree.

- A. Upon completion of a credit based program, the teacher may apply to be reimbursed for the tuition costs they incurred.
 1. The teacher must complete and submit an *Intent to Apply for Reimbursement Form* by May 1 of the fiscal year prior to the reimbursement application.
 2. The teacher must complete and submit a *Reimbursement Application* by September 1 and provide the required documents to the Head of School, including paid tuition bills, transcript, teacher evaluation summary, letter of employment, and grant/loan documentation as applicable or requested.
- B. Approval Process
 1. The application will be reviewed by the Head of School within 15 days of receipt. The Head of School may conference with the Board of Directors, or individual Board members as deemed appropriate.
 2. The applicant will be notified of approval/denial through written communication by the Head of School within 45 days of receipt.
- C. Reimbursement Schedule
 1. Following approval of the reimbursement request, repayment of the costs to be reimbursed will be reimbursed to the teacher evenly over the course of 4 years (96 payments).
 - a) The Head of School may defer the beginning of the reimbursement (if it is to begin mid-year) to the beginning of the upcoming fiscal year (school's fiscal year starts July 1 annually) if necessary to maintain a balanced budget.

VII. OTHER ASSOCIATED EXPENSES

Bluffview will provide other financial support in order to remove roadblocks.

Bluffview will pay the following expenses:

- A. Room & Board
 1. Must be a location agreed to by administration as cost effective.
- B. Daily Stipend
 1. Will reflect the current, posted daily rate.
- C. Travel
 1. Will reimburse for 1 trip to the location and 1 return trip during each onsite session. Rate will be the posted mileage rate.
- D. Materials and supplies

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1. Bluffview will reimburse for Montessori curriculum binders and materials contained therein. If enough advance time is given, Bluffview may order the materials before the class begins.
2. All others, see Policy 405.

VIII. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT OR RESIGNATION

- A. If a teacher is terminated or resigns before the completion of the reimbursement cycle/process, then the teacher will not be eligible to be reimbursed beyond the date they are terminated or resigned.

IX. TEACHERS HIRED THAT ALREADY POSSESS THE APPROPRIATE MONTESSORI CREDENTIAL OR DEGREE

Due to the expensive nature of Montessori training, and the fact that Bluffview puts forth significant effort to promote financial equity amongst employees, teachers that are hired and already possess the appropriate Montessori credential may be eligible for a Montessori training equity stipend.

- A. To be eligible for this stipend, the teacher must present proof in the form of the credentials or degree that can be confirmed by administration as official and appropriate.
- B. The teacher would, upon approval, be eligible to receive up to 75% of the most current and lowest credential tuition cost at that training level.
 1. This would be paid out over four years in equal installments.
 2. The payment would take place each year after completion of all duties for each school year, but before the school fiscal year ends.
 3. If the teacher is terminated or resigns before the four year cycle is completed, that teacher will only receive payment for the years worked and completed.
- C. Ethical standards
 1. A teacher may not resign, then reapply for the next school year and collect this payment cycle for a second time. This stipend cycle will only be allowed to an employee one time, regardless of resignations and rehires.