



Welcome to Go Like the Wind Public Montessori School, a Montessori Magnet alternative within Whitmore Lake Public Schools. We are delighted to enhance the district's mission of partnering with students, families, and the community to provide exceptional, personalized education. We further the WLPS vision of providing each individual the inspiration to dream and the skills to succeed.

Dr. Montessori said, "Free the child's potential, and you will transform him into the world." We hold this as a cornerstone of our program through supporting each child to reach their highest and best self. We educate the whole child to be an active and engaged citizen of tomorrow.

Thank you for partnering with us for these critical years of development and growth. We look forward to the wonderful achievements this year.

Cory Woodard
Principal & Director of Montessori Education

Contact

WLPS Main Street Campus
8845 Main Street | Whitmore Lake, MI 48189
(734) 449-4715

Cory Woodard, Principal & Director of Montessori Education
cory.woodard@wlps.net | ext. 4100

Charlie Basham, Montessori Operations and Family Services Coordinator
charlie.basham@wlps.net | ext. 4000

Attendance Line: (734) 449-4715 ext. 2

After-Hours EduCare Line: (734) 449-2825

Hours of Operation

GLTW is open 6:30 am – 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday

Elementary Students: 8:50 am - 3:35 pm | EduCare 6:30 am - 8:30 am, 3:35 pm - 6:00 pm

Tuition Based Students: 8:00 am - 4:30 pm | EduCare 6:30 am - 8:00 am, 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm

***Please find the Whitmore Lake Public Schools Family Handbook Policy [HERE](#)
This is an addendum to address the unique areas of the WLPS Montessori Program.***

1. Montessori Philosophy

1.1 Vision and Mission Statement

Whitmore Lake Public Schools is an exceptional learning institute that works towards high achievement and individuality within a community environment.

In June, 2022, WLPS assumed full operations of Go Like the Wind Montessori School. We upheld the integrity and high standards of the Montessori programming for students from infancy through 6th grade. Programming for Kindergarten and Elementary students is tuition-free.

1.2 Montessori Overview and Core Beliefs

Montessori is a method of education that is based on self-directed activity, hands-on and collaborative learning. In Montessori classrooms, children make creative choices in their learning, while the classroom and the highly trained teacher offer age-appropriate activities to guide the process.

1.3 Montessori Classrooms

The classroom environments are designed to meet the developmental needs of the particular age group. Our team of certified Montessori teachers is well-equipped to ensure the environments expand to accommodate the children's growth and development.

We have a teacher certified through the American Montessori Society (AMS) or the Association Montessori International (AMI) for each level. Every classroom has a team of adults (depending on the child's age) collaborating to support and nurture our students. Our support staff is all background checked and receives internal training on the Montessori philosophy.

1.3.1 Infant Community

The Montessori Infant community encourages independence through calm, nurturing environments designed to embrace each infant's individual needs. We staff our infant program at a 3:1 child: teacher ratio to better ensure personal care. *Please see your child's teacher for classroom-specific information.*

1.3.2 Toddler Community

The Montessori Toddler environment aims to support the growth of

the child through exploration of the environment. This class has a focus on the care of self and care of the community.

1.3.3 **Primary Community**

The Montessori Primary environment encompasses students 3 - 6 years old. This classroom includes the WLPS tuition-free, magnet Kindergarten program. With a 1:10 ratio, the classroom has a lead teacher and an assistant. The children receive individual lessons in curriculum areas: sensorial, language arts, math, science, geography, and practical. Each student moves through the curriculum at their own, individual pace. *Please see your child's teacher for classroom-specific information.*

1.3.4 **Lower Elementary Community**

Our Lower Elementary environment (grades 1 - 3) aims to bring the world to our students. We give the students opportunities for self-regulation with our weekly work plans and help them to identify ways in which they learn best. The Lower Elementary classroom provides opportunities for the students to collaborate in their exploration of the curriculum. *Please see your child's teacher for classroom-specific information.*

1.3.5 **Upper Elementary Community**

Our 4th, 5th, and 6th graders are the leaders of our student body. These students have many opportunities for planning school-wide events, shaping their individual curriculum, and planning class outings. Our Upper Elementary students also have an active role in our FTO planning community events. *Please see your child's teacher for classroom-specific information.*

1.4 **Classroom Schedules**

Infant: Our infant program does not have a cohort schedule; rather, we aim to meet the needs of each child on demand. Prior to your child starting care, our team will meet with parents to obtain their eating and sleeping schedule. We implement this individualized schedule at school; then work in partnership as your child grows and schedules change.

Toddler

7:30 am - 10:00 am	Morning Work Cycle
10:00 am - 11:30 am	Gross Motor Play
11:30 am - 12:00 pm	Gathering
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Lunch and Clean Up
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Nap time
3:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Group Snack, Gross Motor, & Work Cycle

Primary

8:30 am - 8:50 am
 8:50 am - 11:30 am
 11:30 am - 12:00 pm
 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
 1:00 pm - 3:35 pm

Transition
 Morning Work Cycle
 Recess
 Lunch and Clean Up
 Nap or Afternoon Work Cycle

Elementary

8:30 am - 8:50 am
 8:50 am - 11:45 am
 11:45 am - 12:15 pm
 12:15 pm - 12:45 pm
 12:34 pm - 3:35 pm

Transition
 Morning Work Cycle
 Lunch and Clean Up
 Recess
 Afternoon Work Cycle/Enrichment

Tuition EduCare

6:30 am - 8:00 am
 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm

Elementary EduCare

6:30 am - 8:30 am
 3:35 pm - 6:00 pm

1.5 Observation in the Montessori Environment

Montessori environments are not static. The classrooms change and shift to meet the emerging needs of the students. This is achieved through routine teacher observations. Montessori teachers go through extensive training on how to observe and how to curate an environment based on what the teacher learns from the classroom observations.

As we get to know your child, we may **observe** differences in behavior and social/emotional well-being. We will work within the classroom environment to address these needs, but we will also share our ideas with you to ensure a solid partnership and continuum of care. If you notice any changes at home, please contact the school so we can collaborate to best serve your child.

1.6 Developmental Screening

We perform ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaire) at the beginning of the school year for all preschool children. This is used to ensure all children are meeting their developmental milestones. If there are concerns that arise during this process, we communicate with you first. We may offer referrals for outside support as needed. Our intention is to ensure the children have a firm foundation as they learn and grow.

1.7 Assessment

In the Montessori classroom, assessment is often different from the traditional school model. We are looking for mastery of the material, whether this means a

toddler can sequentially complete the table scrubbing work, a primary student is ready to move on to the bead chain, or an elementary student is presenting a research project to the whole class. We typically do not use testing to measure mastery, but a reflection model with the student.

Throughout the year, teachers perform assessments of each student. We have parent-teacher conferences once a year so our staff can share their observations with you. Our aim in parent-teacher conferences is to ensure strong collaboration between home and school

In addition to the Montessori methods of assessment, we will use the *Ounce Scale* (ages 0-3), *Work Sampling* (ages 3 -5), and standardized testing such as MAP and M-STEP to further inform our assessment of each student.

2. Communication

2.1 Methods of Communication

2.1.1 What to Expect

Procare: Students are enrolled in Procare (Infant-Primary, & students enrolled in EduCare).

When you enroll your child in our program, you will receive an email inviting you to download this app. Teachers will send photos and notes, and our 0-3 community provides updates throughout the day on the Procare App.

You will also receive weekly email updates about your child’s classroom from the teacher in the form of a Parent Newsletter. The Director of Montessori Education will send a weekly reminder to the whole school community and keep an eye out for routine updates from the district superintendent.

2.1.2 Where to find answers

Building Main Office: Charlie Basham	734-449-4715 x 4000 charlie.basham@wlps.net
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Principal & Director of Montessori Education: Cory Woodard	734-449-4715 x 4100 cory.woodard@wlps.net
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After-Hours EduCare Line:	734-449-2825
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2.1.3 In Case of Emergency

If you need to communicate with your child’s teacher during the day, the fastest way to do this is to call the main office. You may want to message your child’s teacher through the Procare App or email, but our

staff does not regularly check these methods of communication when they are with the children. If you call the Main Campus Office, we can get a message to the faculty in the classroom and coordinate a call back if you need to speak directly with the teacher.

2.2 Parent-Teacher Conferences

We will have scheduled time in October for parents to meet with their child's Montessori teacher to get an understanding of their child's growth in our program. This is only a snapshot. We encourage vibrant communication between our faculty and parents - together we are guiding your child's development, and we want to be a team! Our staff is available to meet and discuss your student's progress throughout the year; if you have questions, please do not wait for conferences.

2.3 Parent Questions

We welcome parent questions. Throughout the year, we will offer various entry points for parent education. We have a series of classes for 0-3 parents as well as topical sessions for parents of older students to share with you what is happening in your child's classroom and why. We are eager to share more about the Montessori philosophy with all of you, so please schedule a time with your teacher or the Director of Montessori Education to get your questions answered.

2.4 Local Resources

We are proud to serve such a diverse parent and student body. We want to ensure our families are successfully linked with local resources for all their family needs. We will routinely share information about events and opportunities in SE Michigan in our weekly email communications.

3. Enrollment Policy

Please see the [Go Like the Wind Website](#) for:

3.1 Tuition Schedule & Program Hours (n.b. Specific dates are subject to change annually)

3.2 Enrollment Process

3.3 Annual School Calendar

3.4 School of Choice

Please find information and applications for School of Choice [HERE](#)

4. Behavior Guidance and Consequences

4.1 Prevention of Suspension and Expulsion

The Montessori classroom is designed to meet the needs of each child. Our goal is to provide a safe, inclusive, and fun learning environment for all students.

We have multiple adults in each classroom in an effort to implement redirection as our primary strategy of classroom management. Through suggestion and guidance, we strive to keep students engaged in activities they enjoy throughout the work time.

We will follow the following steps with our students

- Step One: Redirection to appropriate behavior/activity
- Step Two: Discussion and problem solving with child
- Step Three: The child will stay near the teacher for independent choice time
- Step Four: The child may be removed from the environment for a brief period
- Step Five: Family communication
- Step Six: Family meeting with a focus on problem-solving
- Step Seven: Implement the coordinated plan with the family

4.2 Partnership with Parents

When students exhibit challenging behaviors, our faculty will initiate communication with the family. Together we will develop and implement techniques that can address the concerns consistently. This collaboration is critical to the success of your child.

4.3 Media in the Classroom

Electronic devices, including phones, tablets, and smartwatches, must be turned off and left in lockers during the school day or in EduCare/after-school clubs. If a student needs to contact a parent, they may go to the front office. If an electronic device is being used in the classroom, it will be confiscated and brought to the main office; an adult will need to come with the child to collect the device. Multiple offenses may result in electronics being banned for this child. This policy also applies to all field trips and school-related activities.

5. Attendance Policy

The administration and staff of Go Like the Wind Public Montessori School believe that regular attendance by all students is essential and therefore an important school requirement. Furthermore, the State of Michigan also recognizes the value of regular attendance.

In accordance with Compulsory School Attendance Law (380.1561), "Every parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charge of a child from ages 6 to 18, shall send that child to public school during the entire school year". The child's attendance shall be continuous and consecutive for the school year fixed by the school district in which the child is enrolled. If extenuating circumstances result in a student absence, the school administrator will consult with parents before determining if such circumstances define proper cause. Certain exemptions to this law may be found by reading the entire Compulsory School Attendance Law.

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5.1 Procedure When Absent

When a student is absent, the school requires a satisfactory explanation by phone or a written note from the parent or guardian for each absence. Please call the GLTW attendance phone line at 734-449-4715 ext. 2 by 9:15 am on or before the day of absence.

5.2 Family Trips

Family trips in excess of three days must be communicated to the GLTW office. Family trips count as absences. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance of a trip. They may give work before or after a student returns to school.

5.3 Voluntary Withdrawal

Students who miss ten or more consecutive days from school without a parental contact to the GLTW office will be considered a voluntary withdrawal.

6. Illness Policy

6.1 Children may not attend school until they are free of fever without medication for at least a full 24 hours. (See the WLPS Parent Handbook for a list of specific conditions for which the Department of Health requires a child to be kept home.) If your child becomes ill while at school with a fever higher than 100.3 or other symptoms that require him/ her to leave, we will contact you to take your child home. Your child must be picked up promptly.

6.2 Protocol for a Sick Child

Contact the school office at 734-449-4715 ext 2 by 9:15 am if your child will be absent. If your child's absence is due to illness, please inform the office with details of symptoms. Please list symptoms so we can appropriately track and report to the Washtenaw County Health Department. You can also email this information to charlie.basham@wlps.net.

If you are uncertain whether your child is well before returning to school, please consult your pediatrician. If your child is not well enough to participate in all school activities, including outside play and/or physical education class, they should remain home.

6.3 Medications

All medications administered at school must be brought to the main office. We

must have a completed medication permission form. Medication must be in the original packaging with explicit written instructions by a medical professional. EpiPens and inhalers also require an action plan from the doctor.

7. Nutrition Health and Needs

7.1 Lunches

Children need good nutrition for their brains and bodies to function. We encourage you to pack nutritious lunches each day for your child. Our policy is to allow the students to eat whatever you pack for them; treats are strongly encouraged to be saved for the ride home. Do not send candy to school. We are also a nut-free building; sun butter is an acceptable peanut butter alternative.

Food preparation is a key component in the Montessori curriculum. We will be teaching your children how to eat independently (infant), how to serve themselves snacks, and a variety of food-related activities from baking bread to slicing bananas.

We will periodically send ideas for healthy lunches, how to get your child involved in the kitchen, and nutrition information to support your family in cultivating these healthy habits.

7.2 WLPS Breakfast and Lunch

Kindergarten and Elementary students have the option of participating in the WLPS breakfast and lunch program. We encourage you to learn more and apply for the [WLPS Lunch Program](#).

Breakfast:

Served daily in the cafeteria from 8:30am to 8:50am

- Free for all 4-year-old, Kindergarten, and Elementary students
- Available to 3-year-old students for \$2.25

Lunch:

- Free for all 4-year-old, Kindergarten, and Elementary students
- Available to 3-year-old students for \$3.25

7.3 Health Action Plans

We will work with families to develop an appropriate health action plan for

students with allergies, asthma, epilepsy, and other ongoing health concerns that may need special attention while they are in our care.

Classroom allergy concerns will be communicated to you by your teacher at the start of the school year. We are a nut-free building

7.4 **Oral Health**

It is crucial to reduce germs and promote healthy teeth and gums in children. We aim to help families establish good oral care routines and will periodically send home oral health information.

7.5 **Breastfeeding**

We believe in and support breastfeeding. Our staff is trained in how to handle and serve breast milk; we are also equipped to store milk in freezers as appropriate. We have a breastfeeding room available for your comfort and convenience.

8. **Special Education Support**

We are fortunate to have access to the WLPS Special Education Support Team. This dynamic group of specialists is wonderful to work with; they provide guidance and suggestions to our staff, assist with need assessments, and when appropriate, can work one-on-one with our students within the classroom or in our library space.

9. **Diversity and Inclusion**

9.1 **WLPS Policy:**

No person may be denied admission to any school in the School District, be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, or other School District program or activity based on the person's gender, religion, race, color, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, marital status, or any other legally protected characteristic. The Board of Education has adopted a Discrimination and Harassment Policy that prohibits all forms of illegal harassment and discrimination within the School District. Any person who believes that he/she has been the victim of discrimination may seek resolution of his/her complaint through the procedures that have been established by the School District. A person wishing to pursue a complaint may also contact the School District's Civil Rights Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator, Charlie Basham (charlie.basham@wlps.net, 734.449.4715 ext 4000) or visit the Superintendent offices at 8845 Main Street, Whitmore Lake.

9.2 **Inclusion in Montessori**

Maria Montessori believed that young children should study the similarities and differences between communities around the globe, to build an early and growing awareness of our diverse, interconnected world.

We strive to get to know not only the child but also your family. This supports our individualized instruction for your child; it is also a way to build community in the classroom and ensure every child is reflected in our community. Information may be asked about family structure, language, pets, careers, hobbies, culture, and other facets of your home life. We encourage you to share with your child's teacher, and with the whole school community through classroom presentations and FTO events.

10. Snow Day Policy

Go Like the Wind's EduCare program will make every effort to remain open on district-issued snow days. You must enroll in our [Snow Day/No School Day Educare](#) in advance to access this care. WLPS reserves the right to issue late starts and early dismissals based on road conditions. We also retain the right to close all programming based on hazardous conditions.

For tuition families, snow day care will be considered part of your monthly tuition, and there will be no additional fees nor any reimbursements for the use of this care. Montessori K-6 and WLES students will be signed in through the Procure App and will be charged our EduCare rate of \$11.00/hr for Snow Day Care, for the first child and \$7.00/hr for the second child, and \$5.00/hr for every additional child.

11. Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

We encourage parents to support their child's independence during drop-off. We love to see you in the morning, so infant, toddler, and preschool parents are welcome to walk with their children to their classroom. Please do NOT go into the classroom. The classroom staff will greet your child and help them get comfortable in the room. Infant and toddler classrooms have a more flexible start time.

We encourage the parents of Kindergarten and Elementary students to drop their children off at the front door between 8:30 am and 8:50 am daily. Students can enter the cafeteria at 8:30 am for breakfast. The school day officially begins at 8:50 am; parents should be out of the hallways at this time so the children can focus on the start of school. Elementary parents are asked not to escort their children past the gym door during morning drop-off. If you arrive late (after 8:50 am), please check in with the main office for our administration team to escort your child to class.

At 3:35 pm, Kindergarten and Elementary students will be walked to the front hallway for dismissal. Parents, please pick up your child from the awning in the front of the school. Infants and Toddlers will be in their classrooms unless otherwise noted.

12. Outside and Montessori

We go outside in all weather. Please make sure your child is dressed for the weather and ready to play. As seasons change, we strongly encourage layers. Hats, mittens, snow pants, and boots are necessary so your child can safely play outside.

12.1 Sunscreen/Insect Repellent

Sunscreen and insect repellent must come from home. Please label each container with your child's name. You are welcome to send a sunhat. We will do our best to encourage children to wear hats!

12.2 Focus on Nature

The cycles of the natural world are very important to the Montessori curriculum. We focus less on holidays and more on the changing of the seasons. We are striving to explain, demonstrate, and expand upon the student's knowledge of the natural cycles.

12.3 Gardening

In the Spring of 2023, our Elementary students launched our community garden. This has been an exciting project that our whole school community will continue to support.

13. Transitions in Montessori

There are several ways the Montessori curriculum supports the child through transitions. When babies join our 0-3 community, a GLTW faculty member facilitates a home visit, so they can meet the parents and the infant in their own home community. Shortly after this meeting, the child will come for several consecutive days, building their day over a week or two so both parent and child have confidence and trust in the classroom and the caregiving team.

When an infant moves to toddler, and a toddler moves to primary, a teacher joins the child in their new classroom so they can explore and join the community with a trusted support system. Similarly, we support children transitioning from a bottle to a cup, from a crib to a cot, from the primary classroom to the lower elementary classroom, from napping to joining the afternoon work cycle, and from summer camp to school in the fall. Each of the transitions is treated with care as we support the child growing into their next phase of growth.

14. Great Start to Quality

Go Like the Wind Montessori School is participating in Michigan's Great Start to Quality rating system. This is one tool we have in place to ensure our program is following all of the recommended Best Practices in Early Childhood Development and Education. Through the Great Start to Quality, we have an improvement plan to learn and grow with the help and guidance of trained consultants. We will have onsite observations every two years.

15. Professional Development of Staff

Go Like the Wind has a thorough in-house training program for our support staff on the Montessori philosophy. We strive to create a community among our staff where we can

learn and grow as a team. We honor, respect, and incorporate every staff member's talents while leaning on our certified teachers to model and explain the philosophy in action in the classroom.

We routinely have training through AMS (American Montessori Society) and AMI (Association Montessori International) resources. These help the whole team go deeper into understanding the implementation of the Montessori philosophy.

We have several Professional Development training days throughout the year. Great Start to Quality requires our team to have 24 hours of PD annually; about half of this is accomplished through health and safety and additional Montessori training. The other hours are available for the team to explore their interests within the field of Child Development.

16. Safety & Licensing

Go Like the Wind Montessori School strictly complies with the Michigan LARA regulations. We have provided an electronic copy of the [Child Care Center Licensing Notebook](#) for your review. Search for our specific location by license number: DC810412167

17. Family Teacher Organization (FTO)

Our Family Teacher Organization (FTO) supports our school and the broader community by hosting social events and fundraising activities. Every parent or guardian of a child enrolled in our school is encouraged to participate in FTO functions. Every fall, we recruit volunteers to spearhead committees for different events. If you are interested in joining this planning committee, please email GLTWFTO@gmail.com.

Some of the activities that the FTO hosts are the Fall Festival, International Festival, and the End of Year Picnic.

Thank you for sharing your child with us. We look forward to working with you and your child for their success.