

STARS (Early Childhood) Survey results 2018

We were thrilled with the response rate and responses from our families. We received feedback from 49% (or 21 families) of Toddler and Children's House families. Many families shared their appreciation for what Hilltop offers, and some had useful suggestions for how we could improve. Below is a summary of the responses along with additional information to share.

1. Rank the following modes of communication used by Hilltop Montessori School.

1 = lowest / 5 = highest

Newsletter: 5.0

Emails (from teachers & class representatives) 4.3

Email blasts: 4.1

"The newsletter is fabulous and I always enjoy seeing the photos of the children and reading about what they have been doing during their weeks."

"The newsletter is a robust source of vital, timely information, the children's weekly focus, living examples of Montessori philosophy, and beautiful photos."

2. Hilltop Montessori School offers ample outdoor time and space to meet my child's needs.

1 = Strongly Disagree , 2 = Disagree , 3 = Agree , 4 = Strongly Agree

Overall score: 3.7

"Age-appropriate outdoor play space exists for the toddlers, Children's House, Elementary, and Middle School student communities. My child enjoys having outside play time, year round, three times a day, while also having time for walks and outdoor activities during PE. My child especially loves having access to the nearby woods for imaginative play with friends, and the sledding hill during after care in the winter."

3. Do you feel that our Toddler / Children's House curriculum meets your child's learning needs?

1 = Strongly Disagree , 2 = Disagree , 3 = Agree , 4 = Strongly Agree

With an overall score of 3.9, the responding parents feel the curriculum meets the needs of the child are being met. Many families report their children are thriving and demonstrating continual growth. Opportunities to offer more complex works in a timely manner for growth was suggested.

"Our children have gone through language explosions after being at Hilltop - just one example of how they've benefitted."

"We have been impressed with the Toddler & CH teachers and their attention to all of the children's needs. Our own children have demonstrated progress in different ways, and the teachers are very attuned to their individual needs."

Questions 4 and 5 are all based on the following scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree , 2 = Disagree , 3 = Agree , 4 = Strongly Agree

4. Are you satisfied with the snacks and meals offered to your child during the day?

With an overall score of 3.6, responding parents offer suggestions of more variety, with an increased focus on adding organic food, protein and other fats into the daily snack mix as part of a healthy diet. All natural soaps, sanitizers and cleaning products were also suggested as an alternative to the chemicals in conventional brands of cleaners.

We appreciate the attention to the important details of keeping our students healthy and we have already taken strides to make improvements in these areas. We balance considerations of what most children will choose to eat, what we want to present to entice a wider selection of choices, cost, and practicality. When our gardens are bursting with cherry tomatoes we are in good shape! We always welcome donations of organic food options and greatly appreciate the regular donations of organic yogurt from Green Mountain Creamery via the Humfeldts! AND, we do have a community organic garden of sorts springing up.

With care and consideration for the health of the students and staff, we use an environmentally conscious line of cleaning products, Enviro-Solutions. The primary solution used is Hydrogen Peroxide based; we also use a disinfectant solution as is required by the DCF Childcare Licensing Regulations. We have reached out to our distributor to see if there are any new products available since we last reviewed their options. Thank you for your feedback and the prompting to ensure we are using the safest options that meet our intersecting needs of sanitation, environmental impact and fragrance sensitivities. For details, please feel free to discuss further with Tamara.

5. The children play outdoors everyday except for bad weather days.

Overall score: 3.9

"They are out in the rain and snow, which we love!"

6. The program has a predictable routine and is organized.

Overall score: 95.2%

7. The provider notices any special needs of my child and offers help as needed.

Overall score: 95.2% of respondents agree

8. I trust that my child will be well cared for in every way.

Overall score: 100%. Your trust in our educators and the work done everyday at Hilltop is such an important facet of the process. We are thrilled to receive such a strong score here!

9. Is there anything else you'd like to comment on?

Overwhelmingly, responding parents appreciate the experience their children are receiving from the dedicated and talented staff. Some respondents offer concern for shy or quiet children, noting at times they are not heard or slow to respond, but with patience their response is worth the wait.

- *"Hilltop is a gift for our children. The staff are smart, creative, dedicated and kind."*
- *"We appreciate the wonderful staff of the toddler class very much."*
- *"The school should be commended for always striving for economic diversity in its student community, professional security for the staff, and thoughtful, tenacious work to grow the school in the spirit of Maria Montessori's teachings in the 21st century."*