

# Essential Elements for Public Montessori

## Adults

- Teachers have Montessori credentials from an AMI-, AMS-, or MACTE-accredited training program for the age group they teach.
- Non-Montessori-credentialed teaching team members have preparation appropriate to their roles and play an integrated, collaborative role in the classroom.
- Teachers implement Montessori curriculum and pedagogy.
- Adults embody and foster a school-wide culture supporting human flourishing which respects children, offers independence and responsibility, embraces full identities and diverse lived experiences, and works towards fairness free from bias.

## Learning Environment

- Children are grouped according to Montessori age groupings:
  - 2.5 to 6
  - 6 to 9
  - 9 to 12
  - 12 to 15
  - 15 to 18
- Class sizes are large enough to support independence and a wide range of social interaction.
- Classrooms are staffed with teaching teams that support one-on-one interactions with a teacher, while not compromising children's independence.
- Daily schedules provide uninterrupted two- to three-hour classroom work periods.
- Classrooms support a high degree of student choice.
- Classrooms are inviting and free of clutter, with art and décor that represent a diversity of cultures.
- The full complement of Montessori materials is available in every area. Additional materials, when present, embody Montessori principles of order, beauty, simplicity, and purpose, and do not replicate the purposes of Montessori materials.
- Classrooms offer ongoing access to real-world materials and activities.
- Children have access to developmentally appropriate outdoor play environments prepared according to Montessori principles including order, freedom within limits and choice.
- Movement, music, art and/or additional languages are integrated as part of the Montessori curriculum as choices. When programs happen outside of the classroom, they are scheduled to minimize disruption of the work period.
- All children are included in the classroom learning environment. Service providers work in close partnership with classroom teachers to maintain consistency between the Montessori classroom and the support services and settings.
- Multilingual children are included in the Montessori classroom, with knowledgeable and well-supported teachers.

## Family Partnership

- The school fosters and sustains authentic family partnerships.
- The school communicates with families clearly, regularly, and frequently.
- Communication supports multiple languages and levels of literacy, and varying access to technology.
- The school communicates, educates, and engages with families about Montessori pedagogy and school-home relationships.
- The school has a community association that represents community demographics, has clear roles and responsibilities, and gives families authentic opportunities to contribute.

## Leadership and Organizational Development

- The school has a clear vision and plan grounded in Montessori practice, equity, and sustainability.
- Leadership fosters a culture of human flourishing based on respect, freedom, and responsibility, which values racial, cultural, and social identity and works towards fairness free from bias.
- All adults engage in professional development supporting Montessori practice, equity, and inclusion.
- The school maintains connections to the larger Montessori community.
- The school has a proactive approach to its teacher pipeline, attracting, training, and retaining staff representative of the school community.
- The school implements a Montessori scope and sequence aligned with state and local standards as required.
- The school helps all stakeholders build understanding of the Montessori approach, its purpose, and its expected outcomes.
- School leadership has accredited Montessori training, or formal orientation to Montessori fundamentals.
- Montessori implementation is supported by appropriately prepared Montessori coaches.

## Assessment

- Assessment is a coordinated system of data collection and reflective practice.
- Assessment includes evaluation of school culture, the physical environment, and adult behavior for their effects on children's development.
- Assessment of children considers development across multiple domains, including general well-being, executive function, social-emotional, and academic.
- Assessment protocols include family input, observation, work samples, and additional formative measures of growth.
- Observation, record-keeping, and reflection drive classroom practice.
- If standardized assessments are used, children are prepared for practical aspects, assessments are given in familiar settings, and they disrupt the Montessori experience as little as possible.
- As students mature, they are increasingly involved in monitoring their own progress and discussing their development in family conferences.
- Standardized assessments are one piece of a full protocol, and are contextualized in communication with families.
- The school communicates with families about children's development in conferences and in writing.