

Foundational Commitments for Public Montessori

The Montessori model differs from other approaches in significant ways. The points below summarize these differences and provide design commitments for a successful and sustainable public Montessori program.

More detailed guidelines for implementation can be found in our [Essential Elements for Public Montessori](#), with further elaboration in the [Essential Elements Implementation Rubric](#).

Public Montessori programs require:

I. Equity

A commitment to equity

Publicly-funded Montessori programs are responsible for providing all children a high quality education that meets their individual needs.

School culture embraces and reflects children's, families', and staff members' full identities and diverse lived experiences, and works towards fairness free from bias.

II. Staffing

Montessori trained teachers

Teachers are prepared with a high quality Montessori training for the age group they teach. A Montessori credential from an AMI-, AMS-, or MACTE-accredited training program is the standard for Montessori teacher training.

Teaching teams in most classrooms

Most classrooms are staffed with a Montessori-trained teacher and an appropriately prepared classroom assistant.

Montessori-oriented or trained school leadership

School leaders have accredited Montessori teacher or administrator training, or have been formally oriented to the fundamentals of Montessori.

III. Curriculum and Pedagogy

A commitment to implementing Montessori curriculum and pedagogy

Schools implement the Montessori curriculum and pedagogy as the core of their program.

Ongoing Montessori-specific professional development

Staff professional development supports Montessori implementation.

IV. Learning Environment

Montessori materials

Each classroom is outfitted with a full complement of Montessori materials.

Three-year age groupings

Montessori uses a mixed-age, “looped” model, combining three age levels in one classroom in specific groupings:

- PK3–K
- 1st-3rd grade
- 4th-6th grade
- 7th-9th grade
- 10th-12 grade

Although local considerations may require variation around preschool and middle/high school, the above groupings are developmentally ideal.

Inclusion

Montessori classrooms offer full inclusion for multilingual children and children receiving support services.

Uninterrupted, student-directed work periods

Montessori classrooms provide daily two-to-three-hour periods where students largely direct their own work, uninterrupted by pull-outs and specials.

A high degree of student choice

Children have a high degree of choice in what to work on, with whom, when, where, and for how long.

V. Family Engagement

Strong family partnerships

Montessori schools foster and sustain authentic partnerships that support children and families, build inclusive community, and invite mutual investment.

Sharing information about Montessori education

Montessori schools inform and engage with families about Montessori education during recruitment, enrollment, and throughout a family’s time with the school.

VI. Assessment

Assessment of a broad range of inputs and outcomes

Assessment protocols include family input, observation, record keeping, work samples, and additional formative measures of growth.

Assessment of children considers development across multiple domains, including general well-being, executive function, social-emotional, and academic.

Judicious use of standardized assessments

Standardized assessments, if used, are one piece of a full assessment protocol, minimally disruptive to the program, and shared with families in context with other measures.