



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY
education that transforms lives

AMS School Accreditation Standards and Criteria

Effective November 1, 2014





AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

STANDARD 1: MISSION AND VISION

The quality Montessori school establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for enhancing the development of students and the effectiveness of the school. The school's vision is consistent with the Montessori philosophy of facilitating the student's development of full potential.

CRITERIA:

- 1.1 Creates a mission statement for the school in collaboration with its stakeholders, including administrators, governing board members, faculty, staff, parents, students, and community.
- 1.2 Establishes a vision, educational goals, and philosophy in alignment with the school's mission statement and appropriate to the needs of the school population in harmony with Montessori's descriptions of the nature of the student, the needs of the family, the prepared environment, and the needs of the staff.
- 1.3 Communicates the mission and vision to build stakeholder understanding and support.
- 1.4 Identifies, documents, and monitors goals to advance the vision.
- 1.5 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the school, its students, and the community.
- 1.6 Holds beliefs, mission, and goals of the school appropriate for the students enrolled and does not sanction discrimination against any student or applicant because of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic level, national origin, physical ability, or learning style.
- 1.7 Ensures that the school's mission and vision guide the teaching and learning process.
- 1.8 Provides written policies and procedures that promote the effective operation of the school and support the school's mission and beliefs.
- 1.9 Periodically reviews with a representation of all constituents the school's mission statement, educational goals, and philosophy and revises them when appropriate.

Impact Statement

A quality Montessori school is successful in meeting this standard when it commits to a shared mission, vision, and direction as outlined in a Strategic Plan. The school establishes expectations for student learning aligned with the school's vision and in keeping with the Montessori philosophy that is supported by school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student development and school effectiveness. The school's vision guides allocations of time, human, material, and fiscal resources.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

STANDARD 2: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT—Strategic Plan

The quality Montessori school promotes student learning and school effectiveness through strong governance and leadership and establishes, implements, monitors, and refines a strategic planning process to demonstrate continuous improvement.

GOVERNANCE

CRITERIA:

- 2.1 Establishes policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the school, including a system for short- and long-term sustainability of the governing body and school leadership.
- 2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the administrative leader (head of school/principal/executive director) by delegating responsibility for the operations of the school to the administrative leader and ensuring that the administrative leader receives appropriate support, evaluation, and compensation.
- 2.3 Provides an organizational chart that clearly defines lines of authority, relationships, and accountability to be included in employee handbook (see criterion 5.2).
- 2.4 Ensures compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, standards, and regulations. If the school is exempt from licensing or compliance, written exemption of current issue (within the last five years) verifying exemption from the appropriate federal, state, and/or local agency is necessary to show compliance. It is the school's responsibility to be aware of all these laws and regulations and to take steps to be and remain in compliance. It is not the responsibility of AMS or the Visiting Team to verify compliance independently. Accreditation by AMS is not certification of a school's compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- 2.5 Maintains on site all legal documents that define and describe the corporate status of the school (e.g., articles of incorporation, franchise agreements, proprietary registration, charter, and/or partnership agreements).

LEADERSHIP

CRITERIA:

- 2.6 Fosters a learning community through collaboration with all stakeholders.
- 2.7 Employs a system that provides for analysis and review of student performance and school effectiveness.
- 2.8 Provides teachers and students opportunities to lead.
- 2.9 Provides stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership.
- 2.10 Manages curricular and extracurricular activities that are sponsored by the school.
- 2.11 Seeks and responds to community concerns in order to establish appropriate community expectations and to maintain stakeholder satisfaction.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT – Strategic Plan

CRITERIA:

2.12 Engages all constituents in a continuous process of improvement that:

- Articulates the mission and vision of the school
- Maintains a detailed and current description of students, learner outcomes, program effectiveness, and the school community
- Employs goals and interventions to improve learner outcomes
- Documents and uses the results to inform goals

...as outlined in a written 3- to 5-year Strategic Plan.

2.13 Engages and supports stakeholders in the process of continuous improvement.

2.14 Ensures that plans for continuous improvement are aligned with the mission and vision of the school and the expectations for student learning.

2.15 Annually monitors, updates, and communicates the progress and results of improvement efforts to stakeholders.

2.16 Annually evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous improvement process as outlined in the Strategic Plan.

Impact Statement

A quality Montessori school is successful in meeting this standard when its leadership advocates for the school's mission and vision and implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the school with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained and the school demonstrates progress in improving its educational programs and services and school effectiveness. New improvement efforts are informed by the results of earlier efforts through reflection and assessment of the improvement process.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

STANDARD 3: TEACHING AND LEARNING – Educational Nature

The quality Montessori school operates comprehensively within Montessori philosophy and provides a Montessori curriculum and Montessori instructional methods and materials that facilitate learning for all students.

CRITERIA:

- 3.1 Develops and implements a Montessori curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning.
- 3.2 Promotes active involvement of students in the learning process, including opportunities to explore application of higher-order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning.
- 3.3 Gathers, analyzes, and uses data, research, and classroom observation in making curricular and instructional choices.
- 3.4 Designs and uses instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that are research- and observation-based, meet student needs, and reflect best practice.

Curriculum Design and Implementation of Instructional Programs

The school provides a comprehensive Montessori educational curriculum based on the Montessori planes of development and implemented by Montessori-credentialed instructional staff as outlined in Standard 5. The school uses supplementary programs and materials that are deemed necessary to enhance the basic core curriculum for their student population. Activities in peace and cosmic education reflect the Montessori philosophy of peace and harmonious coexistence based on mutual respect that should be evident at all levels. The Montessori curriculum at all levels includes opportunities for community service within and beyond the school community, outdoor exploration and education, and experiences outside the classroom to expand learning (“going out”). To address the needs of the whole child, the curriculum promotes the students’ cognitive, physical, social-emotional, spiritual, and psychological development. Activities provide purpose, procedure, closure, and opportunity for success.

Schools are expected to demonstrate the following curriculum planning and implementation indicators:

3.4.1 Infant/Toddler (Birth – 3)

Curriculum planning at the 0 - 36 month level is extremely dependent upon developmental characteristics. The teacher plans the daily activities and general program goals based on the capabilities and interests of the child. Learning cannot be separated from motor development at this age. The structure of the curriculum is based on six developmental areas: sensory and perceptual, cognitive, physical, gross and fine motor, self-help skills, and social/emotional development. Materials allow children to explore, absorb, and experience their environment through their senses and kinesthetically.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

3.4.2 *Early Childhood (2.5 – 6)*

Curriculum planning at the 2.5 – 6 year level integrates Montessori's fundamental philosophy of the child with the core areas of Practical Life (including grace and courtesy and care of self, others, and the environment), Sensorial, Math, Language, Peace and Cosmic Education, and Cultural Subjects (including Geography, History, Botany, Zoology, Physical Science, Art, and Music). The learning environment is student-centered and designed to promote the development of order, coordination, concentration, independence, cooperation, collaboration, inner discipline, self-motivation, self-regulation, and respect for self, others, and the environment. Self-directed learning includes choice, learning from built-in controls of error, and completing cycles of work by choosing, completing, and returning materials.

3.4.3 *Elementary I (6 – 9) and Elementary II (9 – 12)*

Curriculum planning at the elementary level considers that the student is entering a new plane of development characterized by tremendous imagination, critical thinking, critical questioning, a strong sense of morality and justice, and a strong need for peer relationships. Individually-paced academic progress allows students to explore their interests and acquire the mastery of basic skills and knowledge, including basics such as: numeracy and math facts, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, sentence analysis, creative and expository writing, and using technology for research and communication. In addition, the Montessori elementary learning environment offers activities that provide deeper educational experiences in the areas of: Mathematics (including Geometry and Algebra), Biological and Physical Sciences, Technology, Language Arts and Literature, History, Physical and Political World Geography, Civics, Economics, Anthropology, Peace and Cosmic Education, and areas of Art, Music, Additional/World Language, and Physical Education. Students have opportunities to plan, monitor and assess their own work, thereby enhancing their independence and responsibility for their own actions. The learning environment is student-centered and designed to promote the development of organizational and time management skills, conflict resolution skills, concentration, independence, cooperation, and collaboration.

3.4.4 *Secondary I (12 – 15) and Secondary II (15 – 18)*

Curriculum planning at the secondary level is a continuation of the Montessori curriculum at a deeper level. The curriculum at the secondary level increases students' development in decision-making, problem solving, community building, and applying this learning to their lives and the larger community. Students expand on their cumulative experiences in the creation and care of the environment. Students have opportunities to plan, monitor, and assess their own work, thereby further developing their independence and responsibility for their own actions. The Montessori secondary curriculum includes opportunities for community service and career exploration, economic exploration, technology, activities in the humanities, peace and cosmic education, physical education, creative arts, outdoor education, and field studies.

The secondary II (high school) curriculum continues to support the adolescent in valorization of the personality and stewardship of the Earth and humanity. These are essential aspects of a program for the older adolescent. This includes field experience and service opportunities. The curriculum expands on the work and elements in the Secondary I program, and prepares students for post-secondary education or careers



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

through self-construction, extensive self-reflection, and opportunities for leadership and personal responsibility.

3.5 Structures classes with multi-age groupings

Multi-age grouping is an integral part of the Montessori philosophy at all levels. Philosophically, the rationale is that individuals learn from each other with opportunities to lead, share, and serve as role models for their peers. Students can accelerate or take additional time as needed to learn skills. AMS Teacher Education Programs prepare teachers to work with a 3-year age span and to have the expertise to support skills both above and below a developmental level.

Age groupings must be as follows:

- Infant/Toddler: Children from birth to 3 years of age may be grouped in varying multi-age configurations. A stand-alone classroom serving only 3-year olds does not satisfy this Criterion.
- Early Childhood: a 3-year age group within the range of 2.5 years to 6 years
- Lower Elementary: 6 years to 9 years
- Upper Elementary: 9 years to 12 years
- or Elementary I-II: ages 6 years to 12 years
- Secondary: the school must offer an age grouping of either 12-14, 14-16, 16-18 years of age or 12-15, 15-18 years of age

Schools with multi-age grouping variances listed in the document “Grandfathered Multi-Age Grouping Variances 2014” (dated October 3, 2014) are grandfathered such that they may maintain the age-grouping(s) for which the variances were granted. The accreditation status of these schools must be noted in their listing on the AMS website and in all other AMS accredited school listings, as well in the schools’ own marketing materials. The exact wording that must be used is: “Accredited with non-traditional Montessori age groupings.” Failure of a school to comply with this language will result in revocation of AMS accreditation.

3.6 Maintains ratios and maximum group sizes as follows:

The lowest ratio required by licensing or other accrediting agency supersedes AMS requirements for ratios and maximum group size. Where licensure or other accreditation standards do not specify ratios or group size, the following applies:

The ratios of students to teaching staff, both Montessori-credentialed and assistant teacher/aide/paraprofessional, is appropriate for the age level:

| | |
|----------------------------------|------|
| Infants (Birth – 18 months): | 4:1 |
| Toddler (18 – 36 months): | 8:1 |
| Early Childhood (2.5 – 6 years): | 15:1 |
| Elementary (ages 6 – 12 years): | 20:1 |



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

Secondary (ages 12 – 18 years): 20:1

The school assigns no more than the maximum number of students to each Montessori credentialed teacher that is appropriate to the age level:

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Infants (Birth – 18 months): | 8 |
| Toddler (18 – 36 months): | 16 |
| Early Childhood (2.5 – 6 years): | 30 |
| Elementary (ages 6 – 12 years): | 30 |
| Secondary (ages 12 – 18 years): | 30 |

- 3.7 Offers a curriculum that challenges each student to excel, reflects a dedication to equity, and demonstrates a commitment to diversity.
- 3.8 Provides and follows a collaboratively-designed curriculum and scope and sequence, including benchmarks, across all program levels within the school; these are communicated to all constituencies.
- 3.9 Allocates and protects 2- to 3-hour blocks of uninterrupted instructional time to support student learning. Schools schedule enrichment programs and transition times to accommodate these blocks.
- 3.10 Provides accommodations and interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning.
- 3.11 Monitors school and classroom climate (including both indoor and outdoor environments) and takes appropriate steps to ensure that it is conducive to student learning and social/emotional growth.
- 3.12 Ensures that all students and staff members have regular and ready access to instructional materials and tools, including technology where appropriate, based on school mission, and a comprehensive materials collection that supports the curricular and instructional program.
- 3.13 Maintains an environment that incorporates materials, structure, and leadership to best meet the needs of all students.

3.13.1 Facilities, Instructional Materials

Classroom environments in quality Montessori schools are equipped with a full range of fundamental Montessori materials, aesthetically displayed and easily accessible to students. Curriculum support materials to meet the needs of the children may be incorporated into the classroom. Schools inspect and evaluate materials regularly for completeness and good working condition and keep a school-wide inventory of all instructional materials and furnishings, including a repair and replacement plan.

A list of fundamental and other suggested materials for each age level is provided in the AMS School Accreditation Handbook. This guides quality Montessori schools in preparing and assessing environments and selecting materials for each age level.

Classroom environments in quality Montessori schools are equipped with furnishings (tables, chairs, etc.) of sizes and quantity to meet the needs of students.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

3.13.2 *Physical Environment*

The environment:

- Is clean, orderly, neat
- Has logical organization of materials/resources/activities, by level of difficulty and sequence of skill development
- Is aesthetically pleasing
- Is appropriate in size (follows licensing regulations)
- Has adequate furnishings for size and ages of students
- Has accessible, neat storage area for students' belongings
- Has accessible, neat storage of teacher materials
- Has a water source available
- Allows for a variety of activities such as individual/group, floor/table, noisy/quiet, and active/sedentary
- Accommodates different learning styles and different kinds of work

3.13.3 Provides for display of students' work

3.13.4 *Structure and Curriculum*

Classroom schedule:

- Encourages the student's spontaneous activity
- Provides community building and leadership opportunities appropriate to each level
- Allows for a balance of uninterrupted, self-directed, self-teaching, and collaborative activities with the presentation of individual, small, and large group lessons

3.13.5 *Classroom leadership*

The teacher exhibits the following characteristics and abilities:

- Plans, implements, and keeps records of clear, meaningful individual, small, and large group lessons and activities
- Monitors the overall environment during individual lessons and through general observations
- Works with students to assess the quality of their work using developmentally appropriate guidelines and assessment tools such as portfolios (including samples of student work)
- Facilitates regular, ongoing communication of student development through parent and/or family conferences as needed
- Implements accommodations and interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning, with appropriate consultation with administration and parents
- Uses a comprehensive record keeping system that accurately reflects the student's development
- Uses an effective system for communication with parents, acknowledging parents' needs and offering a variety of means for communication, e.g. electronic, oral, written and/or online newsletters and notes



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

- Shares knowledge of the students' development and concepts appropriate to each level with staff and parents
- Recognizes and provides opportunities for students to participate in meaningful, age-appropriate leadership activities

3.13.6 Professionalism

The teacher demonstrates knowledge and internalization of the core beliefs of Montessori philosophy, such as respect for the individual learner, preparation of self and the environment, fostering independence, order and concentration in the student, respect for and recognition of sensitive periods, planes of development, intrinsic motivation of the student, and the absorbent mind.

- The teacher has a written plan for and documentation of continuing professional growth that includes evidence of personal reflection in preparation of self
- The teacher has fundamental communication skills to support the social and emotional development of students and advisory skills appropriate to the age level
- The teacher interacts appropriately, respectfully, and professionally with students, colleagues, and parents
- The teacher develops and refines fundamental communication skills with parents about student's social/emotional and academic progress
- The teacher is guided by the AMS Code of Ethics

Impact Statement

A quality Montessori school is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a Montessori curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process and students exhibit a joy in learning. Teachers provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

STANDARD 4: DOCUMENTING AND USING RESULTS – Learner Outcomes

The quality Montessori school enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents outcomes and uses these results to improve learner outcomes and school effectiveness.

CRITERIA:

- 4.1 Develops and implements a comprehensive assessment system for evaluating progress toward meeting the established expectations for student learning across age levels, which may include research-based assessment tools and/or alignment with common core and/or state standards.
- 4.2 Uses student assessment data in making decisions that impact continuous improvement of teaching and learning processes.
- 4.3 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional effectiveness and uses the results to improve student learning.
- 4.4 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations.

As applicable to **Elementary** and **Secondary** levels:

- 4.5 Communicates the results of learner outcomes and school effectiveness to all stakeholders.
- 4.6 Uses comparison and trend data of learner outcomes from comparable schools in evaluating its effectiveness.
- 4.7 Demonstrates verifiable growth in learner outcomes.

Impact Statement

A quality Montessori school is successful in meeting this standard when it uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined outcome measures. The system is used to assess student outcomes on expectations for student learning, to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions to improve student learning. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information, both qualitative and quantitative, that is meaningful and useful to students, school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding learner outcomes, school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

STANDARD 5: PERSONNEL

The quality Montessori school provides for ethical, fair, and non-discriminatory practices for all employees, teaching and non-teaching.

CRITERIA:

- 5.1 Provides written employment agreements for all school personnel annually, including written job descriptions, compensation, benefits, and terms of employment.
- 5.2 Provides an employee handbook that includes a written non-discrimination policy.
- 5.3 Ensures that all staff participates in a continuous program of professional development and documents teachers' plans for and participation in ongoing professional development.
- 5.4 Provides opportunities for faculty and staff to provide input in decision-making.
- 5.5 Ensures that the Head of School and at least 50% of credentialed lead teachers maintain active membership in the American Montessori Society.
- 5.6 Maintains copies of lead teachers' Montessori credentials, licenses, teaching certificates, and transcripts and updates this information with AMS as changes occur.
- 5.7 Implements an annual evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel and maintains records of all evaluations.
- 5.8 Assigns professional staff responsibilities based on their qualifications (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience).

- 5.8.1 Administrative leader (head of school/principal/executive director) has professional qualifications that meet state and local regulations, as applicable.

Emerging criterion effective July 1, 2020: Administrative leader (head of school/principal/executive director) holds a bachelor's degree and qualifies with the minimum number of points required in the Head of School Requirements Verification.

- 5.8.2 A school that employs more than one lead teacher shall designate an educational supervisor/coordinator who holds a qualifying Montessori administrator or teacher credential. The coordinator will oversee the consistency of educational quality and serve as a resource to other staff members.

- 5.8.3 Employs lead teachers who qualify with the minimum number of points required in the Teacher Requirements Verification and hold a Montessori teaching credential for the age level taught. Pre-1991 credentials must be from a non-distance learning Montessori teacher education program. Post-1991 credentials must be from an AMS, NCME, AMI teacher education program, or from a MACTE-accredited course. Note: All AMS teacher education programs are accredited by MACTE.

*Emerging criterion effective July 1, 2020: Secondary teachers must hold a Montessori teaching credential for the age level taught from an AMS, NCME, AMI teacher education program, or a MACTE-accredited course.

- 5.8.4 Elementary and Secondary lead teachers must hold a Bachelor's degree from a regionally-accredited institution or equivalent.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

- 5.9 Provides and assigns staff that are sufficient in number to meet criterion 3.6 and the mission and vision of the school.
- 5.10 The ratios of students to teaching staff, both Montessori-credentialed and assistant teacher is appropriate for the age level following ratios articulated in 3.6.

Impact Statement

A quality Montessori school is successful in meeting this standard when it clearly states and adheres to roles and responsibilities expected of all employees and employs qualified personnel. The school states and follows fair and ethical employment practices for all employees.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

STANDARD 6: FACILITY RESOURCES

The quality Montessori school provides facilities, sites, and equipment that are functional, safe, and fully support the school's mission and beliefs.

CRITERIA:

- 6.1 Ensures that the facilities meet all building codes and safety standards required by the local civil authorities, including Americans with Disabilities Act compliance. The school provides ongoing opportunities for staff to learn current local and state safety regulations.
- 6.2 Provides and maintains a site, facilities, services, equipment, and furnishings to ensure an environment that is safe and orderly for all occupants; is in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations; and supports the quality of the school's instructional and co-curricular programs.
- 6.3 Safeguards the protection of students and staff against hazards (accidents, fire, weather-related events, and natural disasters) and provides health, safety, preventive/emergency procedures, and crisis management policies that are clearly written, well documented, implemented, and updated regularly.
- 6.4 Maintains buildings that are well-lit and -ventilated with temperatures conducive to learning and working.
- 6.5 Enforces written policies for the access to and use of the school site and facilities by individuals or groups.
- 6.6 Has facilities that are adequate for the stated purposes and support the school's mission and beliefs, including indoor space used for the educational program that meets requirements of state and local codes and space for safe, vigorous physical education.
- 6.7 Makes it possible for children to fulfill Montessori's vision of maintaining the planet through school-based facilities and grounds efforts.

Impact Statement

A quality Montessori school is successful in meeting this standard when its facilities and equipment are well-maintained and function to meet optimum health and safety standards conducive to a safe learning environment.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

STANDARD 7: FINANCES

The quality Montessori school maintains strong and prudent financial management practices and adequate fiscal resources to support its mission and vision.

CRITERIA:

- 7.1 Complies with all federal, state, and local regulations, as required by the school's legal status. It is the school's responsibility to be aware of all these laws and regulations and to take steps to be and remain in compliance. It is not the responsibility of AMS or the Visiting Team to independently verify compliance. Accreditation by AMS is not certification of a school's compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- 7.2 Regularly monitors all financial practices and transactions by engaging an external accounting service annually to review and report on the school's financial practices and financial status.
- 7.3 Additionally employs sound financial planning and management practices and procedures including the:
 - development of an annual operating budget,
 - utilization of a system for accurately tracking and documenting revenue and expenses,
 - provision of appropriate governing body oversight,
 - periodic reporting on and review of current year financial performance to the governing body (if non-profit) or owner (if proprietary), and,
 - preparation of financial statements on a monthly or quarterly basis.
- 7.4 Clearly states and publishes financial responsibilities of parents.
- 7.5 Maintains a written policy for managing, dispersing, and overseeing the allocation of funds awarded through its financial assistance program, as applicable.
- 7.6 Budgets sufficient resources to:
 - 7.6.1 Recruit, employ, and mentor qualified professional staff capable of fulfilling assigned roles and responsibilities.
 - 7.6.2 Support a continuous program of professional development for staff.
 - 7.6.3 Maintain the site, facilities, services, and equipment to provide an environment that is safe and orderly for all occupants and is in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.
 - 7.6.4 Maintain and regularly update an inventory of materials and equipment.
- 7.7 Ensures sound financial planning for the long-term sustainability of the school.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

Impact Statement

A quality Montessori school is successful in meeting this standard when it has sufficient fiscal resources and practices to meet its mission and vision. The school ensures compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

STANDARD 8: RECORDS, RESOURCES, AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The quality Montessori school maintains records and has the resources and services necessary to support its mission and vision.

CRITERIA:

- 8.1 Maintains the following records at the site of attendance: student's emergency medical information, student's health information, first aid treatment administered for any injury or illness at school, medication administered at school, academic and developmental progress assessments/transcripts, attendance history.
 - 8.1.1 Provides a plan regarding retention of student records upon closing of the school that abides by state or local regulations.
 - 8.1.2 Provides a plan regarding retention of student records after the student has left the school that abides by state or local regulations.
- 8.2 Maintains and regularly updates an inventory of materials and equipment.
- 8.3 Maintains or otherwise contracts for appropriate insurance coverage: fire and extended coverage, comprehensive liability, and workmen's compensation.
- 8.4 Ensures that all procedures used in official transportation (including private vehicles used for field trips) provide for the safety of the students.
- 8.5 Has in place a current written security and crisis management plan that is reviewed regularly with appropriate training for stakeholders. Crisis management plan should include a back-up of all student records and employee and business files that is maintained in accordance with state and/or local regulations.
- 8.6 Maintains a central file of professional support services and agencies in the community and provides connections to other agencies, programs, or family systems in accordance with the needs of students and families. Provides support services and/or referrals that include, but are not limited to, counseling, , mentoring, intervention, and if appropriate for age levels served, educational and career planning.
- 8.7 Provides appropriate support for students with special needs with participation of all those involved, e.g., parents/guardians, teachers, therapists, counselors, administration.

Impact Statement

The quality Montessori school is successful in meeting this standard when it has sufficient human, physical, and fiscal resources and support systems to implement a Montessori curriculum that enables students to achieve expectations for student learning and addresses special needs. The school employs and allocates staff that is well-qualified for their assignments. The school provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness. The school ensures compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

STANDARD 9: STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIPS

The quality Montessori school fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

CRITERIA:

- 9.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning.
- 9.2 Has formal channels to listen to and communicate with stakeholders.
- 9.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the school.
- 9.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning, learner outcomes, school effectiveness, and goals for improvement to all stakeholders. Communication is achieved through various forms including parent teacher conferences, progress reports, newsletters, the school's website, agendas/minutes of stakeholder meetings, surveys, etc.
- 9.5 Conducts periodic assessments of school effectiveness involving all constituents.
- 9.6 Encourages observation visits by parents and other community members. The school has a written observation policy.
- 9.7 Provides information about itself to the community. For example, public relations and public services of the school might include providing speakers to civic and educational groups, distributing literature, contributing books to public libraries, etc.
- 9.8 Provides various types of parent education opportunities such as workshops on Montessori philosophy and curriculum, parenting issues, child development, and health and safety issues.

Impact Statement

A quality Montessori school is successful in meeting this standard when it has the understanding, commitment, and support of stakeholders. School personnel seek opportunities for collaboration and partnership with stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts.