

MONTESSORI FOR ALL

MAGNOLIA MONTESSORI

A STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

“*Montessori For All believes that Maria Montessori, the founder of the Montessori movement, would actually embrace modern technology, since her goal was to create adults who were well-adapted to the world.*”

SARA COTNER, FOUNDER AND SUPERINTENDENT, MONTESSORI FOR ALL

KEY FEATURES:

- ✓ New School
- ✓ Individual Rotation Blended Model
- ✓ Competency-Based Learning
- ✓ Project-Based and Experiential Learning
- ✓ Social-Emotional Development

AT A GLANCE:

Start Date: Fall 2014
Grades Served: PK-8
Location: Austin, TX
Operator: Montessori for All
Operator Type: Charter
Setting: Urban
Students at Start: 300
Students at Capacity: 550

MODEL TOOLBOX:

Digital Content Providers: Duolingo, Khan Academy, LearnZillion, Scratch, No Red Ink, Blogger, iMovie, Microsoft Office, Adobe Suite

Hardware: MacBooks, iPads

The Vision: Montessori For All endeavors to create LEADERS who:

Live with integrity and courage
Eager to learn

Appreciate and show gratitude

Demonstrate persistence

Excel

Respect and help others and the environment

Montessori schools have provided transformational educational experiences for more than a century. They are built around self-directed and hands-on learning that allows students to practice critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, investigation, and conflict resolution.

However, while Montessori schools foster the development of self-direction, executive functioning, innovation, and collaboration, many public Montessori schools fail to ensure that all children master the basic skills they need to excel on standardized tests. At the same time, high-performing charter schools serving low-income communities ensure that their students master state assessments but struggle to get their students to complete college.

And so, the school's founders created a new school model that blends the best of authentic Montessori schooling with best practices from high-performing charter schools in a blended learning environment.

The Academic Model: Montessori For All is grounded in a philosophy of educating the whole child, attending to their minds, bodies, and hearts. Its leaders are committed to student development academically, intellectually, socially, emotionally, creatively, culturally, and physically.

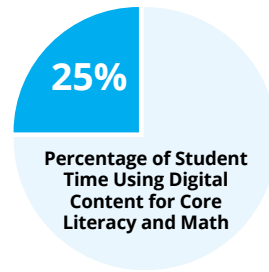
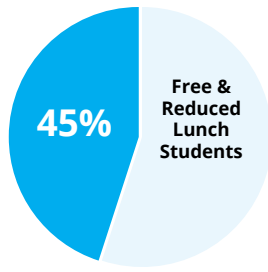
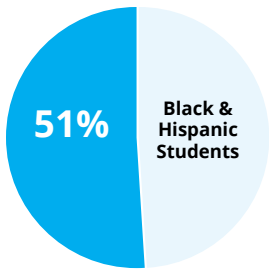
Blending Montessori and high-performing charter approaches, Montessori For All provides standards-based experiential learning. Teachers align Montessori materials with state standards and serve as guides as children master concepts within a 100% personalized curriculum.

To meet the needs of each student, individualized work plans direct lessons which occur one-on-one, in small groups, or online.

Students develop deep understanding through hands-on materials, using manipulatives in every subject area to deeply internalize concepts. Their learning extends beyond the classroom through enrichment activities like gardening, woodworking, forensics, and theater. Students work on rigorous academic material in ways that help them develop the executive functioning skills they will need for success in college, the ever-changing global economy, and life in their families and communities. They develop these skills by practicing them daily. Even the youngest of children move around classrooms and learn to navigate it, with guidance.

Montessori For All prepares students for a global, multicultural society by attending a racially, culturally, and socio-economically diverse school. And its dual-language approach ensures that all children are bilingual and bi-literate in Spanish and English by the end of eighth grade.

Technology is an important tool for the Montessori For All model, a tool to create and a tool to support differentiated instruction, practice, and



BY THE NUMBERS:

- Year 1 public revenue per pupil: \$8,677
- Year 1 expenses per pupil: \$6,142
- Year 4 revenue per pupil: \$7,101
- Year 4 expenses per pupil: \$6,242
- Years to sustainability: 3

BLENDED SUBJECTS: English Language Arts, Math

assessment. Students use software to write, blog, illustrate, and film. Montessori's model requires a gradual release from concrete hands-on materials to more abstract learning, which promotes deep conceptual understanding. With digital content tools, students practice abstraction of concepts with real-time feedback while providing data for teachers on student performance.

The Organizational Model:

The school's leaders have made a heavy investment in core teaching staff because they firmly believe that educating the whole child in high-poverty, high-needs areas requires more teachers, not fewer. They accomplish this goal within a sustainable budget by adopting a one-room schoolhouse model with

multi-age classrooms, where art, music, and physical education are incorporated into the core content classroom. Administrative human resources are intentionally lean.

A lead teacher "guide" works with an associate "guide" in each classroom with students in three different grade levels. This design creates an authentic teacher development process, an opportunity for teachers to monitor a student's trajectory over three years and build trusting relationships with families, a natural environment of differentiation where every student is working on something different, and a chance for students to take on different roles at different times—where they can both learn from and mentor other students at different levels.

The Operator: Montessori For All is a new charter management organization (CMO)—the first CMO incubated in Austin. Montessori For All seeks to help all children, regardless of family income, gain access to a transformational education through four strategies.

1. Open high-performing, authentic, public Montessori charter schools that can serve as lab schools and proof points.
2. Codify a comprehensive "whole child" curriculum that others can adopt.
3. Create teacher-training centers to increase the pipeline of effective public Montessori teachers.
4. Consult with school districts and policymakers to develop and strengthen public Montessori programs.

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

AUTHENTIC MONTESSORI

- Multi-age classrooms
- Interdisciplinary
- Hands-on materials
- Constructivist learning
- Mastery-based
- Personalized curriculum
- Freedom of movement and choice
- Teacher as a "guide on the side"
- Educating the whole child
- Classroom as a microcosm of the world
- Development of intrinsic motivation

HIGH PERFORMING CHARTER PRACTICES

- Alignment to standards
- Technology-enabled learning
- High expectations & relentless pursuit
- Personal accountability
- Data-driven decision making
- Outcomes-based management
- Extraordinary results on state and national assessments
- Systematic progress monitoring to ensure no child slips through the cracks

MONTESSORI FOR ALL

The Montessori For All model takes the best of authentic, traditional Montessori practices and mixes them with the best of high-performing charter practices to create a unique, effective approach to educating students in a diverse school community.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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