

Urban Montessori Local Indicators for Dashboard 2021

June 24th, 2021 Report Out

#1 Basics: Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities - MET

Mis-Assignments (0 EL) Of Teachers Of English Learners
0/12

Percent Of Students Without Access To Their Own Copies Of Standards-Aligned Instructional Materials For Use At School And At Home
0/0

Instances Where Facilities Do Not Meet The "Good Repair" Standard (Including Deficiencies And Extreme Deficiencies)
0

Additional Comments

Our core Montessori pedagogy and its required instructional materials are in every single classroom. Homework aligned with the curriculum includes students contributing to the "Work of the Home", such as cooking, cleaning, playing games, reading, and spending time together. When needed, students extend their classroom work into the home after school and on weekends.

Our facilities are adequate, but having recently moved to a new campus, we have even more work to do over the summer to prepare for a full, safe return to in-person instruction for our students and staff.

#2 Implementation of Academic Standards - MET

This measure covers the implementation of state academic standards.

Local educational agencies (LEAs) annually measure their progress in implementing state academic standards and report the results to its local governing board at a regularly scheduled meeting and reports to stakeholders and the public through the Dashboard.

The summary of progress is required to be based on information collected with locally selected measures or tools and includes a description of why the district chose the selected measure or tool.

Narrative Summary

Because we are a Montessori school, UMCS uses an American Montessori Society and Association Montessori Internationale curriculum alignment map, which aligns our scope and sequence with the CA standards. We reference other public Montessori curricular maps if needed. Lessons are given individually or in small groups to meet the needs of students. Children are given the opportunity to express their learning through various outputs that reflect choice and developmental level. Teachers evaluate student work and provide feedback that guides their progress. Standards-aligned Progress Reports classroom lesson reports are shared three times a year with families so they have an understanding of lessons presented, work completed, and growth tracked.

Students use a work plan or journal to plan, track, and reflect on their work throughout the school day, week, and year. Regular conferences with teachers support a heightened awareness and personalized look at a student's own focus, work, and patterns of learning. If a child is in need of more support, we meet with families to develop and use targeted interventions in eight-week increments and monitor student progress. Interventions include a variety of in-classroom best practices as well as accessing specialists' support for intensive intervention. Students in need have access to services such as special reading groups, occupational therapy, and speech and language. Teachers continue only those interventions that result in measurable growth.

Our most recent Winter 2020 to Winter 2021 growth as measured by NWEA MAP shows that we are narrowing racialized achievement gaps. We support teachers to approach their classrooms with an equity lens, working to provide an education that allows every child to reach their full potential. We observe in classrooms to highlight ways that we can support teachers to identify patterns, blind spots, and ways they can better serve our students. We practice structured data analysis to coach and support teachers in tightening their feedback loop as well as gaining a better understanding of what pieces of the curriculum students are accessing or not. We examine our math sequence and presentation styles to look for ways in which they may inadvertently act as barriers to student understanding. We look critically at systems or platforms we've adopted to see if they enhance or take away from fidelity of implementation of our core Montessori pedagogy.

#3 Parent and Family Engagement - MET

This measure addresses receiving parent input in decision-making and promoting parental participation in education programs for students.

LEAs report progress of how they have sought input from parents in decision making and promoted parent participation in programs to their local governing boards at a regularly scheduled meeting and reports to stakeholders and the public through the Dashboard.

The summary of progress is required to be based on either information collected through surveys of parents/guardians or other local measures, and includes a description of why the district chose the selected measures, including whether progress on the selected measure is related to goals it has established for other Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) priorities in its Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

Rating Scale (lowest to highest): 1 – Exploration and Research Phase; 2 – Beginning Development; 3 – Initial Implementation; 4 – Full Implementation; 5 – Full Implementation and Sustainability

1. Rate the LEA's progress in developing the capacity of staff (i.e. administrators, teachers, and classified staff) to build trusting and respectful relationships with families.

- *3 – Initial Implementation*

2. Rate the LEA's progress in creating welcoming environments for all families in the community.

- *3 – Initial Implementation*

3. Rate the LEA's progress in supporting staff to learn about each family's strengths, cultures, languages, and goals for their children.

- *4 – Full Implementation*

4. Rate the LEA's progress in developing multiple opportunities for the LEA and school sites to engage in 2-way communication between families and educators using language that is understandable and accessible to families.

- *4 – Full Implementation*

Briefly describe the LEA's current strengths and progress in this area and identify a focus area for improvement, including how the LEA will improve the engagement of underrepresented families.

During distance-only instruction we focused on improving school staff's ability to partner with families from all different backgrounds. We continued professional development for our whole staff before school began to focus on the foundations of implicit bias and decentering whiteness. This work included collaborating with each other to develop systems and strategies for partnering with families in meaningful ways. We made great progress ensuring students and families had access to food, devices & internet, and other social services.

Families indicated through survey data that they wanted more parent education about Montessori and more in-person communication with leadership. Based on this information we are offering regular parent nights with specific topics of focus. Our administration also now hosts regular informal office hours, to connect with members of the community.

One focus area for improvement in 2021-2022 is successfully transitioning to a new, single School-to-Home communications platform, and to create common expectations for classroom teacher use across the entire school.

5. Rate the LEA's progress in providing professional learning and support to teachers and principals to improve a school's capacity to partner with families.

- *3 – Initial Implementation*

6. Rate the LEA's progress in providing families with information and resources to support student learning and development in the home.

- *4 – Full Implementation*

7. Rate the LEA's progress in implementing policies or programs for teachers to meet with families and students to discuss student progress and ways to work together to support improved student outcomes.

- *4 – Full Implementation*

8. Rate the LEA's progress in supporting families to understand and exercise their legal rights and advocate for their own students and all students.

- *4 – Full Implementation*

Briefly describe the LEA's current strengths and progress in this area and identify a focus area for improvement, including how the LEA will improve the engagement of underrepresented families.

This past year we streamlined communications with families by implementing regular weekly whole school messages, as well as teacher, operations, and admin office hours. Our out-going family communication platform Konstella translates into several languages and gives parents the ability to connect with both staff and one another. This system is sunseting with the end of the 2020-2021 school year and we will transition to a newer, integrated system.

Current strengths progress includes sustained parent-teacher conferences that happen multiple times each school year. With the transition to the new communications platform, we will have work to do training staff and families to ensure that families who are too often underrepresented in school engagements are equitably supported to fully engage as they wish.

9. Rate the LEA's progress in building the capacity of and supporting principals and staff to effectively engage families in advisory groups and with decision-making.

- *4 – Full Implementation*

10. Rate the LEA's progress in building the capacity of and supporting family members to effectively engage in advisory groups and decision-making.

- *3 – Initial Implementation*

11. Rate the LEA's progress in providing all families with opportunities to provide input on policies and programs, and implementing strategies to reach and seek input from any underrepresented groups in the school community.

- *3 – Full Implementation*

12. Rate the LEA's progress in providing opportunities to have families, teachers, principals, and district administrators work together to plan, design, implement and evaluate family engagement activities at school and district levels.

- *3 – Initial Implementation*

Briefly describe the LEA's current strengths and progress in this area and identify a focus area for improvement, including how the LEA will improve the engagement of underrepresented families.

UMCS uses Panorama to administer the CORE Climate and Culture survey to families and guardians multiple times per year in order to seek input and promote community participation. We make the survey available online and provide chromebooks for family use at our school sites. We monitor the number and backgrounds of community members who participate in these surveys. The survey seeks input about academic programs, school community, and administrative functions. Related to decision-making, 97% of respondents felt that UMCS has a climate of support for academic learning. Related to promoting family participation, 99% of respondents report that our school creates a sense of belonging for students and community members.

It was also used to identify the school's strengths and gather important suggestions for improvements. Survey results show that families experience the strength of the school through the faculty and staff.

We use this survey every year because it gives actionable, detailed data, and as a small school it helps us be responsive to community needs as quickly as we can. In our LCAP, the survey most closely connects to our work in Goal #4 supporting and empowering families as we work together to build a strong anti-racist, engaged, and collaborative school community, which includes families having multiple ways of receiving help when needed so they can further support student learning at home. This survey also has student and staff components

#6 Local Climate Survey - MET

This measure addresses information regarding the school environment based on a local climate survey administered every other year on the topics of school safety and connectedness.

LEAs report how they administered a local climate survey (at least every other year) that provides a valid measure of perceptions of school safety and connectedness to their local governing boards at a regularly scheduled meeting and reports to stakeholders and the public through the Dashboard.

The summary of progress is required to be based on information collected that captures a valid measure of student perceptions of school safety and connectedness in at least one grade within the grade span.

Local Climate Survey Summary

UMCS uses Panorama to administer the CORE Climate and Culture survey to students multiple times per year in order to seek input from students. Our student survey results showed that students would like for their teacher to know more about them, their interests, and their home life but do feel like their interests are reflected in their work at school. Students last year shared that they would like clarity in regard to discipline and norms. Students also feel like their teacher knows how they learn best and can identify their general strengths, areas for growth, and learning style. The survey also showed that students recognize the attempts toward personalization shown by faculty and staff. Students acknowledge having great flexibility in the outputs used to show their learning and that once they master a skill, they can report to their teachers and move on to the next task.

Additional Comments

Moving our new facility in July 2020, where our whole school could once again come together in one location, was a win for our climate and culture. Additionally we have stable leadership and growing retention rates among all staff.

#7 Access to a Broad Course of Study - MET

This measure explores whether students have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study including the programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated students and individuals with exceptional needs.

LEAs report progress in the extent to which students have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study that includes the adopted courses of study specified in the California Education Code for Grades 1-6 and 7-12, as applicable, including the programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated students and individuals with exceptional needs to their local governing boards at a regularly scheduled meeting and reports to stakeholders and the public through the Dashboard.

The summary of progress is required to be based on information collected through locally selected tools and measures that identifies differences across school sites and student groups, barriers preventing student access, and any revisions to ensure access for all students.

1. The locally selected measures or tools used to track the extent to which all students have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study, based on grade spans, unduplicated student groups, and individuals with exceptional needs served.

The curriculum in Montessori pedagogy is vast and fully covers and extends beyond California's standards. At all levels, classroom observations of students are a key tool for teachers in assessing and tracking student learning. All students enrolled in the same Level at our school receive the same access to the same broad courses of study.

The primary environment (TK-K) has four main areas: Language, Math, Practical Life, and the Sensorial area. The Practical Life area includes activities to improve on the work of daily life and build functional independence, while also touching on art and science. The sensorial area focuses on the refinement of the senses but also includes the exploration of dimension, patterns, and building skills needed for success in the mathematics and language areas. The language and math curriculum starts with building a foundation in literacy and then spans far beyond Kindergarten standards including topics like the study of grammar, sentence mapping, and the study of the four mathematical operations. Montessori pedagogy incorporates visual images or actual objects, personalized instruction, front-loading and reviewing vocabulary, using sentence frames and graphic organizers, and using tangible objects which support all of our students, including English Language Learners and students with special needs.

The curriculum in the elementary (Grades 1-6) years expands on the foundation developed in the primary classroom. The official subject areas include Language, Math, Geometry, History, Biology, Geography, Music, and Art. Social-emotional learning is interwoven throughout the curriculum as students manage work in flexible collaborative groups within the classroom and connect with resources from the community. Part of the goal in the elementary years is for students to achieve

intellectual independence, giving them tools to learn new things that interest them, making them lifelong learners. The Montessori curriculum in the primary and elementary classrooms is tracked using an online record-keeping tool called Transparent Classroom that allows teachers to monitor student progress through the Montessori curriculum. Using this tool, teachers are able to account for each individual's path through the curriculum as no two students are in the exact same place in all areas of the class. Transparent Classroom supports teachers to provide a truly individualized learning experience as they manage lessons given, concepts mastered, and make plans according to student needs. Last year the school piloted the program and this year we are looking to more fully utilize the program to collect new data on students, the lessons they receive, and the concepts they master.

The middle school's field of study covers state standards, but also caters to the needs of the young adolescent, giving students real work that allows them to feel a sense of valorization while contributing to their community. This is seen in work such as adopting local creeks or partnering with local museums to take on larger project-based tasks.

2. A summary of the differences across school sites and student groups having access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study, and may include a description of progress over time in the extent to which all students have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study.

We operate a single school at one campus, and all students are enrolled in and have access to the same broad courses of study by their age/grade-level.

3. Identification of any barriers preventing access to a broad course of study for all students.

A Montessori classroom functions based on specific materials created to teach different concepts. This allows for the curriculum to be laid out on the shelves and for learning to happen using manipulatives that aid in learning. These materials can be quite costly, costing upwards of \$40,000 to fully outfit a classroom (though those costs do not fully recur annually). Furthermore, in a classroom designed to have free movement and access to all areas at any given time, space for materials and students is always a balance. We are also always striving to achieve higher fidelity of Montessori practices. This includes quality training, preparation of the environment, classroom management, and skilled lesson giving. Transparent Classroom is a relatively new tool being used in the school so the current push is to get teachers comfortable with the platform so that they can record all of their lessons and observations on the platform. Once this level of comfort is attained, we will be able to dig deeper into the data provided about the platform to analyze how students are able to access all areas of the Montessori curriculum. In terms of the NWEA tests and CORE data, the Montessori curriculum is not always best suited to display mastery of concepts in the way those tests measure or vice versa. We are therefore exploring different avenues to display student mastery of concepts including portfolios, anecdotal records, and other measures of executive functioning and social emotional skills.

4. Revisions, decisions, or new actions that will be implemented, or has been implemented, to ensure access to a broad course of study for all students.

To continuously improve Montessori implementation, our Head of School and Assistant Head of School regularly observe and give feedback to every classroom Lead teacher at the school. We are sourced funds for materials and specifically outfitted classrooms with Montessori music materials to improve access to a broad range of studies. In unifying our record keeping, we are looking to start analyzing data around Montessori lessons, to be able to identify gaps that may lead to lower than expected achievement on the various tests taken by students.