



Updates to Curriculum and Instructional Design

Overview:

The implementation of our current charter did not result in the academic achievement we expected for our students. Challenges we experienced were due to a combination of insufficient planning time for teachers to develop curriculum based on state standards and student needs, the inability to recruit and retain qualified Montessori staff to facilitate a high-fidelity Montessori model, inconsistent implementation of personalized student work plans aligned to state standards, and a lack of clarity for students in how to engage in extensive uninterrupted work blocks (especially those new to the model). This is reflected in low math and ELA student achievement outcomes from our first three years of operation. Thereby, we are requesting changes to two program terms to enable us to address these outcomes in a way that is research-backed and responsive to our students' needs. We have carefully reviewed the Curriculum and Instructional Design section of the originally approved charter application and provide relevant updates to the section below.

EDUCATION PROGRAM TERM #1:	
Approved Element	Proposed Element Change
<p><i>Developmentally appropriate age-grouped classrooms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three-year blocking of ages by developmental appropriateness in accordance with international Montessori standards. • Classrooms feature a dual certificated teacher paired with a trained classroom assistant with paraprofessional certification. • Specialized services for special education students (SpEd), ELL, highly capable students (HiCap), and others will be provided in the general education classroom, with staffing support to meet the needs of all students. • Teachers employ an integrated, place-based, Montessori curriculum aligned with all state standards. 	<p><i>Developmentally appropriate age-grouped classrooms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-age blocking of ages by developmental appropriateness • Classrooms feature a certificated teacher with expertise to instruct the assigned developmental grade paired with a trained classroom assistant when feasible. • Specialized services for special education students (SpEd), ELL, highly capable students (HiCap), and others will be provided in the general education classroom to the greatest extent possible based on student needs, with staffing support to meet the needs of all students. • Teachers employ an integrated, place-based, Montessori inspired curriculum aligned with all state standards.
Rationale and Research Basis	Observable Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research shows that without the ability to properly implement the Montessori Model with fidelity, particularly in grades participating in state testing (3-8) due to the increased accountability demands of both the Montessori Model and implementation of state assessments, the quality and rigor of the academic program greatly decreases (Flemming et.al., 2023). The Montessori Model holds a rigorous demand for teacher Montessori certification and Washington State requires that teachers also hold an Elementary Education Certification. This dual certification requirement can create 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developmentally appropriate mixed age classrooms: Classroom age groupings will adhere to the developmentally appropriate groupings defined by student academic and social emotional assessment scores which will be reviewed quarterly to determine transition needs and grouping shifts. On-going professional development on data-driven decision making to inform developmentally appropriate groupings will be implemented. 2. Transitions and progression: Mixed aged classrooms feature smooth transitions both throughout the day and as students progress through age groupings. Students will focus

EDUCATION PROGRAM TERM #2

Approved Element	Proposed Element Change
<p>Self-directed learning environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morning and afternoon blocks of uninterrupted work time build focus and respects students' work. Students build agency over their education by taking increasing ownership in the creation of personalized work plans (PWP) that incorporate their interests, setting SMART goals, reflecting on progress, and recalibrating. Learner-centered classrooms, where freedom is expanded with show of responsibility, builds intrinsic motivation. Flexible work groups, where students may work alone or in teacher-devised groups, provide another avenue for building agency, displaying responsibility, practicing collaboration skills, and participating in group problem solving. 	<p>Self-directed learning environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morning and afternoon blocks will consist of structured time spent on core content subjects (math and ELA). Students build agency over their learning through place-based, Montessori inspired projects. Learner-centered classrooms, where freedom is expanded with show of responsibility, builds intrinsic motivation. Flexible work groups, where students may work alone or in teacher-devised groups, provide another avenue for building agency, displaying responsibility, practicing collaboration skills, and participating in group problem solving.
Rationale and Research Basis	Observable Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Math/ELA scores indicate changes are needed. We propose to adopt a high quality CCSS aligned curriculum in these areas, have more structured lessons to build skills and understanding. We intend to partner with Instruction Partners, to provide appropriate professional development for our staff. Our agreement with Instruction Partners also covers costs for adoption of high-quality instructional materials, and we would use this to purchase math and ELA curriculum. PCM would form curriculum adoption committees which would select an adoption rubric, review potential curriculum, solicit feedback 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Core Content Blocks: Core content blocks will be observable through the daily scheduling of ELA and Math at dedicated times each day. Educator implementation: Educator implementation of curriculum delivery will be evidenced by participation in the following types of professional development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopted curriculum professional development Data driven instructional decision making Ongoing formal and informal coaching. Student-driven, personalized work plans: Student-driven, personalized work plans will be evidenced by implementation