



## Cooperative Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team Report

### Report on Verification of School's Self-Study and Compliance with AMS Standards and Criteria

SCHOOL INFORMATION		
Name of School	Head of School	
<b>California Montessori Project--Elk Grove Campus</b>	<b>Kathleen Merz</b>	
School's Street Address	City, State, Zip, Country (if outside Continental US)	
<b>8828 Elk Grove Blvd. #4 and 9649 Bradshaw Rd.</b>	<b>Elk Grove, CA</b>	<b>95624</b>
Accreditation Cycle (check one)	Date of On-site Visit (mm/dd/yyyy)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Accreditation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reaccreditation	<b>02/26/2017-03/01/2017</b>	
Protocol (check one)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cooperative Accreditation with : WASC		
Levels Served by the School	Levels Applying for Accreditation	Enrollment
<b>Kindergarten-Middle School</b>	<b>Kindergarten-Middle School</b>	<b>446 Students</b>

ON-SITE VISITING TEAM APPOINTED BY THE AMS OFFICE OF SCHOOL ACCREDITATION	
Name of Team Chair	Organization and Affiliation
<b>Brenda Huth</b>	<b>Oak Farm Montessori School, AMS</b>
Name of Team Co-Chair (if applicable)	Organization and Affiliation
Name of Team Members	Organization and Affiliation
• <b>Barb Scholtz</b>	<b>Practicum Direction &amp; Instructor, Cincinnati Montessori Secondary Teacher Education Program, AMS</b>



**COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

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## **COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The California Montessori Project (CMP) is a network of charter Montessori public schools, operating within the greater Sacramento area. CMP is the actualization of the vision of a group of parents and teachers who sought to make Montessori methodology accessible to students in the public school sector. After one year of planning, the California Montessori Project Charter Public School opened in August 2001. CMP schools currently maintain accreditation through WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) and AMS (American Montessori Society) and are viewed within the educational community as an exemplary model in terms of student curriculum, program, and school operation. Today, CMP provides an innovative educational program which serves over 2,600 students at six campuses (seven sites) located in Sacramento and El Dorado Counties.

The California Montessori Project, Elk Grove Campus, operates within the geographic boundaries of the Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD), as authorized pursuant to the Education Code Section 47605. EGUSD authorized California Montessori Project, Elk Grove Campus, for a five-year term in 2016. Since the previous accreditation term, the Elk Grove Campus has expanded from one site to two, separated by 2.2 miles: the newest campus is the Bradshaw Road site at 9649 Bradshaw Road, Elk Grove and the Elk Grove Blvd. site, located at 8828 Elk Grove Blvd., Suite 4, Elk Grove.

The Elk Grove Campus currently serves 458 students between the two locations. As a public charter school, CMP offers an open enrollment policy. Families enter a lottery and are randomly selected. Siblings and students with prior Montessori experience are given preference. There are two private Montessori schools within walking distance that serve Primary aged children. Students from neighboring cities including, but not limited to, Sacramento, Elk Grove, Lodi, and Galt are served.

The Bradshaw Road site is located on approximately 10 acres of land in Elk Grove. Serving 334 students in Kindergarten through eighth grade, the facility houses school offices, 16 classrooms, a library, resource room and a large gymnasium/multi-purpose room. The school grounds include a spacious field, a large asphalt play area with an extended gravel area, and an additional Kindergarten play area with sod. Custodial and maintenance services are provided in the late afternoon and evening through contractual services.

The Elk Grove Blvd site currently serves 124 students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade. Located on the city of Elk Grove's main street, the Elk Grove Blvd. facility is a former public school campus leased through the Cosumnes Community Services District. The facility houses an office and six classrooms. The school grounds include an open field, a playground, a large asphalt play area with a basketball court, and labyrinth paint on the blacktop area. Custodial and maintenance services are provided in the late afternoon and evening through contractual services.

CMP-Elk Grove is particularly interested in attracting students who hold the following characteristics:

1. The interest and motivation to be educated in the Montessori approach.
2. The ability and capability to work independently.
3. The propensity to be self-motivated in learning and achievement.

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Many families live and work in the Elk Grove and Sacramento areas. This supports steady enrollment at CMP-EG. Many children will stay from Kindergarten through 8th grade. The slight attrition is usually due to families moving out of town or families choosing to attend a school closer to their home or to a school that provides bus transportation.

Parents are a vital resource at CMP; their participation is crucial. Parents serve as instructional partners in the classroom assisting teachers by reading with students, supporting students with projects, sharing personal gifts and talents, and chaperoning field trips outside of the classroom. In addition, their financial support enhances extra-curricular experiences, augments school supplies, and helps fund field study trips. They also contribute to a strong sense of community.

Sensitive to families' busy schedules, the administration works with parents and teachers to identify ways families can be involved outside school hours to better accommodate working families and conflicts. Periodic weekend work days, for example, have been an effective way to bring families together to beautify the campus—whether building garden boxes or setting up for a special event.

CMP-Elk Grove has an active Parent/ Teacher Fundraising Committee (PTFC) and Campus Advisory Committee (CAC). The PTFC is a group of parent volunteers, teacher representatives, and Deans of Students. This group identifies and organizes fundraising and community events for the campus. The CAC functions as an advisory committee to the Principal. The primary function of the CAC is to provide support for the successful operation of the school campus through serving as a positive communication channel between the campus, parents, teachers and the community by allocating funds raised.

CMP suggests parents fulfill participation hours as a bridge in supporting home to school partnership and connection. Families with one enrolled child are encouraged to complete 40 hours of service and families with additional enrolled children are encouraged to complete 70 hours of service. The parent handbook is available on the school's website for easy reference.

CMP-EG is involved with local businesses in many ways. Collaboration with various local businesses provides a bridge from the school community with the community at large by offering after school enrichment opportunities. These opportunities provide experiences for students our school site that expand the scope for local small businesses. The Middle School students also conduct three business shadow days each year where they go to a local business of their choice. One student traveled to a technology company in San Francisco for three days to shadow. The shadow days are culminated by report writing and presentations given to other students.

Local businesses also donate items for fundraising events and are acknowledged at the event and in school newsletters. Many of the older students walk to local eateries and the library after school. This connection to the neighborhood has created a strong sense of community in and around the school.



## COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT

### SECTION I: The Educational Nature of the school

#### Montessori Learning Environment

At CMP's Elk Grove School, the emphasis on the Montessori prepared physical environment is evident. The teacher sets up the classroom with the appropriate Montessori materials on low shelves so as to be accessible and sequenced for students. Classrooms have plants and/or pets that students take care of and lots of natural light. Classroom materials and supplies are in excellent condition and in numbers that students share or take turns. The classrooms have areas for gathering, for students to work on the floor or at tables, and snack. Every classroom had framed anchor charts that match Montessori curriculum (for example, chart renderings of the Grammar Symbols were beautifully displayed for students to reference). The Visiting Team noted that great care was taken to frame guidelines, pictures, anchor charts, and other items that were displayed in the classroom.

The didactic Montessori materials in each kindergarten and elementary classroom are arranged by subject on open shelves. There are laptop carts in each classroom for 3rd - 8th graders. Computer stations are available in each Kindergarten and Lower Elementary Classroom. Students have cubbies to hold personal academic items (composition books, writing utensils, reading books, etc.) in all classrooms except the Middle School.

The adolescent classroom includes materials for academic instruction. Their environment includes outside areas and "outings;" the idea of "the world as the classroom" expands as the student matriculates through the levels.

It is the intention of the teachers to model respect, grace, and courtesy. Teachers and students spoke quietly to one another during the uninterrupted work period. Teachers were observed bending to address students with respectful eye contact and smiles.

#### Students' Learning Activity in a Montessori Environment

Students in Elk Grove classrooms work independently during extended work times. A teacher assistant is assigned to each classroom to work with students. They use work plans (K-6) or study guides (7-8) to guide them as they make choices during extended work times. Students share materials or take turns appropriately. Students in most classrooms used procedures and processes that allowed them to be autonomous and independent. Where needed, aids such as timers and sound-canceling headphones were in use.

Cultural materials were stored on shelves in a common middle area. "Cultural Rotations," students grouped by grade level for science and history instruction, change members every six weeks. In the classes we observed, students were taking end of rotation tests or doing whole group learning activities that required students to work together in "teams."

Students of all levels who met us for lunch to talk about their experiences at CMP-EG were earnest and gracious. They waited politely and quietly for us to join them, and didn't open up their lunches until we did so. When one team member indicated for the students to begin without waiting for the other adults to join, the students hesitated. A youngster showed concern, saying, "Aren't they going to eat?" The students beamed with pride for their school and shared several areas they felt the school excelled.

## **COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

### Montessori Learning Relationships

The Elk Grove administrators, teachers, assistants, and students appeared genuinely to have good relationships. Assistants supported the Montessori expectation of using quiet voices and provided quiet, personal redirection if students didn't self-monitor. In every classroom, we observed students working together, asking for and offering assistance to each other, and demonstrating grace and courtesy. Teachers and students worked peacefully and quietly, respecting the working community.

We found students very articulate and comfortable speaking with us. They spoke politely to each other, taking turns in our meeting with the visiting team.

It was evident that students had leadership opportunities. Two 3rd level girls in one classroom greeted the visiting team member. The girls have been trained in conflict resolution skills and enjoyed telling the on-site visitor how they "monitor" the playground on Mondays. In other classrooms, students dismissed peers from circle; in one, dismissal was silent and in another, the teacher drew a name of a student to be dismissed, and the selected student drew the next student, and so on.

Teachers and students meet daily in circle time or community meeting, and activities vary according to that level.

Parents expressed a deep respect and gratitude for the teachers and the school. They are asked to provide service to the school and were happy to do so. One mother said, "The gift I'm giving my child is the liberty of thinking."

### Montessori Spirituality

Kindergarten and elementary classrooms have "peace" tables with materials such as finger mazes, candles, natural objects, peace roses, love lights, and books about peace. Several teachers were playing soft, ambient music during independent work cycle. Voices were quiet and conversations were personal, demonstrating appreciation for the dignity of the work cycle. Some classrooms have water and aromatherapy systems. Plants and animals supported the idea of us being part of the natural world.

Every classroom has a framed photograph of Maria Montessori, plants, area lighting, rugs, and areas that create a warm, comfortable environment that is welcoming and calming.

### What the Montessori Teacher Is

Our observations of the teachers indicated that they work together, are happy, and strive to be good role models for the children and parents. We saw Montessori credentials clearly displayed in the classrooms indicating Elk Grove's commitment to hiring teachers who are Montessori trained or requiring that the new hires attend Montessori training. All Elk Grove lead teachers are also California credentialed. Elk Grove teachers are life-long learners. Professional development opportunities have been expanded by introducing Early Release Professional Development days. These bi-monthly trainings are offered in the afternoons and are dedicated to campus-specific areas of need as well as collaborative work within the CMP network.



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During the Instructional Assistant interview it was expressed that the targeted expanded professional development opportunity of “Super Saturdays” have been very well attended and are an excellent learning opportunity.

### What the Montessori Teacher Does

The teachers prepare the environment to allow for student autonomy and independence in the classroom. In the kindergarten and lower elementary classrooms, materials are arranged purposefully.

Teachers support and guide students as they make choices and complete work. They provide instruction in whole groups, small groups, and individually. They implement structures such as work plans and study guides, leaving the classroom, routines, and procedures. Classroom expectations were determined by the students and were posted.

As students work, adults in the classroom move about the room and address students on their level.

Classroom adults continually assess student learning through period 3 paper pencil tasks. They implement intervention strategies; modify work, and identifying students who need to enter the Response to Intervention (RTI) process. Many classrooms have support staff in place to assist with students who have special needs. Three Elk Grove students have one-on-one assistants.

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### SECTION II: The Learner Outcomes

#### Independence

It is evident from student behaviors that routines and procedures for student independence are in place. Classrooms have agendas for the day posted. Teachers implement systems that promote autonomy: we saw students make choices from work plans in several classrooms and move about the classroom and school to use the restroom, have a snack, and work together. Students of all levels walked around the others working on the floor with purpose. Adults supported students privately when they needed redirection.

#### Confidence and Competence

The members of the visiting team were frequently greeted by a student or two when we entered their classrooms and moved around the school. We had the opportunity to meet with students during lunch periods, and they were eager to answer our questions and share information about their experiences at Elk Grove.

We saw the end of a “cultural rotation” cycle; Upper Elementary were taking paper-and-pencil tests to assess their learning. In the middle school, students used their math work cycle to work on various review exercises to prepare for their end-of-cycle tests.

There are many support staff who support student needs. Adults pull out students during the day to provide one-on-one or small group intensive work. The Response to Intervention process involves teams of adults to help provide student assistance.

#### Autonomy

Student self-government begins with lessons on grace and courtesy at the beginning of the year. Lessons and practice exercises around routines for self-regulation and mediation are part of the curriculum. Class meetings allow students to work out issues and develop problem solving strategies. A LEI student explained to me her work at the peace area and how it helped her “calm down and concentrate”. An adult with a service dog was on the campus, and explained that she’s available to students if they wish and/or need to calm themselves with her dog.

At all levels, we saw students helping each other by giving subtle reminders or more specific directions to assist the flow and culture of the classroom.

#### Intrinsic Motivation

During the work cycles we observed, students setting goals, making choices, and completing work. Several middle school students told us that they value their education at CMP-Elk Grove because they make decisions and do work because it is in their best interest. It was evident that students were intrinsically motivated by the feeling of accomplishment when they could check off a completed “job” (work).

In the middle school, students were proud of their work of providing “Snack Shack” at Elk Grove. One boy is starting a Chess Club, and many expressed the desire for additional support in adding extra-curriculars run by students for no reason other than their own desires and interests.



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### Social Responsibility

Student responsibility begins with the establishment of classroom rules and guidelines. Each student learns personal responsibility through the procedures and routines of the classroom and from watching and working with others in the multi-age classroom. Each student has an assignment to care for the environment: putting work back properly, arranging shelves, washing dishes, watering plants, etc.

Students care for each other as they work by speaking quietly, walking around workspaces and the classrooms, and providing advice and guidance to others. We heard “thank you” and “please” often. Teachers, too, model these behaviors. Students who use technology must agree to a written policy agreement around social responsibility and safety.

### Academic Preparation

Academics are very important at Elk Grove. The schedules at each level have work cycles where lessons are taught to whole groups, small groups, and individuals. Students are grouped within the classroom to address specific academic needs. Work and lessons are modified to isolate the difficulty to help students to make progress in learning.

CMP-Elk Grove staff shared with the team the many ways that they assess students in academics. They utilize a full complement of instruments (formative and summative, informal and formal) to assess benchmark levels and progress. Rubrics are used for many of the “Montessori” objectives and for Executive Function “soft” skills.

### Spiritual Awareness

The spiritual life of the students is important at CMP-Elk Grove. We saw peace corners in classrooms that enabled students to work on quieting themselves. There were many pleasant interactions between peers: at lunchtime, a few chose to play a card game and welcomed newcomers to the group. The youngest students spoke proudly of their older “buddies” and the adolescent bragged of those same relationships of mentoring younger students. Quiet music that played during the work cycles and low lighting in the classroom added to the peaceful learning environment.

### Global Citizenship

Students at CMP-Elk Grove begin to learn about global citizenship in Kindergarten through cultural studies. The school recycles and emphasizes sustainable practices of using reusable lunch containers and water bottles. We saw fundraisers in classrooms that benefit the global community. These included activities for Pennies for Patients and the Leukemia Society. Older children and adolescents participate in activities such as Oceans Plastics and the Science Olympiad. Adolescents travel outside the city for odyssey trips and to an urban environment where they provide volunteer service.



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### SECTION III: Strategic Plan

California Montessori Project's Strategic Plan consists of 5 strategic goals. Each goal is clearly broken down into tasks, responsible person (s), resources, means to assess improvement, timeline, and means to report.

#### **Goal #1: To create a more robust science program.**

**Rationale:** As a response to stakeholder input and in conjunction with the State of California's adoption of Next Generation Science Standard (NGSS) and new science testing, there is a vital need to create a more robust science program.

**Annual Goal:** Align Montessori Science Curriculum Guide to NGSS and create a standards based rubric to assess student learning.

**ESLO Addressed:** CMP students are Montessori Learners who work independently, demonstrate initiative, utilize the power of concentration, think critically, and are life-long learners.

**Evaluation:** Administration and Network Curriculum Level Leads will review science curriculum guides to confirm that NGSS is integrated. Science mentors will facilitate the development of activities to expand the Montessori Science program.

**Progress Reports:** Status reports given regularly to all stakeholders via faculty meetings, newsletters and presentations to the Round Table.

**Action Plan:** Incorporate and implement NGSS into Montessori Science Curriculum:

- Network Curriculum Level Teams will review and compare the current curriculum guides to NGSS
- Discussion and implementation of alignment of current curriculum guide to meeting requirements of NGSS
- Identify Science Mentors whom will facilitate the expansion of the Montessori science program at each campus
- Official approval of New Curriculum Guide by CMP Leadership Team
- Develop an action plan for funding new materials needed to align curriculum
- Train teachers on effective instructional strategies regarding NGSS
- Begin implementation of newly aligned curriculum guide into classroom instruction

#### **Goal #2: To research and adopt a writing curriculum for CMP-EG, grades K-8.**

**Rationale:** Our California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress scores indicate that there is a need for the school to address writing in a systematic way. Furthermore, campus administration has observed through lesson plans and classroom observations inconsistent formal writing instruction. Teachers have indicated that the adoption of a writing curriculum would assist in the improvement of writing instruction.

**Annual Goal:** To convene a formal writing committee to investigate and pilot potential curricula.

**ESLO Addressed:** CMP students are Montessori Learners who work independently, demonstrate initiative, utilize the power of concentration, think critically, and are life-long learners.

**Evaluation:** Administration, Grade Level Mentors and Grade Level Team meetings will be scheduled regularly to review and discuss the piloted curricula.

**Progress Reports:** Status reports given regularly to all stakeholders via faculty meetings, newsletters and presentations to the Board.



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**Action Plan:** In order to adopt a writing curriculum:

- Establish and convene a writing committee
- Research and collect a pool of potential writing curricula
- Select program(s) to pilot
- Gather teacher and student feedback on pilot
- Program Adoption

### **Goal #3: Increase Depth of Knowledge (DOK) and extended mathematical thinking instruction within our existing math curricula**

**Rationale:** To support student achievement in mathematical thinking and application.

**Annual Goal:** Infuse existing curricula with additional strategies for deeper thinking into real world mathematical applications.

**ESLO Addressed:** All

**Evaluation:** Administration will evaluate progress through assessment, curriculum team discussions, and observational data.

**Progress Reports:** Status reports given regularly via, curriculum team discussions, faculty meetings, network curriculum meetings, and presentations to the Round Table.

**Action Plan:**

- Identify areas of growth in the math curriculum via assessment scores, curriculum team discussions feedback, and teacher survey
- Gather resources to meet needs (trainings, digital, materials, sample extensions, etc.)
- Plan implementations with in grade level and network curriculum teams
- Incorporate DOK and real world problems into curriculum

### **Goal #4: Incorporate technology as a meaningful experience for the child.**

**Rationale:** To support stakeholder requests for more training and resources to provide structured and developmentally appropriate learning opportunities in extension of Montessori Philosophy.

**Annual Goal:** Research developmentally appropriate uses of technology in order to further next steps.

**ESLO Addressed:** All

**Evaluation:** Administration will evaluate progress through regular stakeholder surveys, Curriculum Team Meetings discussions and observational data.

**Progress Reports:** Status reports given regularly to all stakeholders via faculty meetings, newsletters, presentations to the Round Table and the Board.

**Action Plan:**

- Survey all stakeholders to gather perception data
- Research developmentally appropriate technology usage in school
- Disaggregate perception data and research to determine next steps
- Identify Library Mentors to facilitate the development of campus libraries
- Incorporate technology into the school library to provide intra-school resource

### **Goal #5: Reading to analyze and understand a range of literacy texts and informational texts.**

**Rationale:** Our California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress scores indicate that there is



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a need at CMP-EG to focus on how to read closely and analytically to understand a range of literacy texts and informational texts across the curriculum.

**Annual Goal:** Regularly incorporate strategies for identifying Key Ideas and Details, Craft and Structure, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, and reading more Informational Texts, in all grade levels, using existing curricula and materials.

**ESLO Addressed:**

Montessori Learners work independently, demonstrate initiative, utilize the power of concentration, think critically, and are life-long learners. Agents of Change who have a strong sense of community, are socially responsible, connected to their environment, advocate for themselves and others, and are empowered to be problem solvers.

**Evaluation:** Administration will evaluate progress through observational data (mentor reports, student reports, assessment data and classroom observation).

**Progress Reports:** Status reports given regularly to all stakeholders via faculty meetings, newsletters, presentations to the Round Table and the Board.

**Action Plan:**

- Survey staff to gather perception data
- Gather current resources and strategies from teachers who are seeing success in this area
- Research developmentally appropriate resources to utilize in class, as well as after school tutoring
- Plan implementations within Grade Level Teams: discuss resources, strategies and frequency

CMP complies with federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to charter schools including but not limited to:

- CMP shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.
- CMP shall on a regular basis consult with its parents and teachers regarding CMP's education programs.
- CMP shall comply with any applicable jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities.
- CMP shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment.
- CMP shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- CMP shall comply with the Public Records Act.
- CMP shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
- CMP shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- CMP shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum number of school days.



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**SECTION IV: AMS Standards and Criteria Dual Accreditation Verification Checklist**

<b>STANDARD 2: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT—Strategic Plan</b> 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.		<b>STANDARD COMPLIANCE:</b>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
<b>CRITERIA:</b>			
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.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
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.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
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). <b>NOTE: The organizational chart was added to the employee handbook immediately following the visit.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
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.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
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).	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

Leadership

<b>CRITERIA:</b>			
2.6	Fosters a learning community through collaboration with all stakeholders.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
2.7	Employs a system that provides for analysis and review of student performance and school effectiveness.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
2.8	Provides teachers and students opportunities to lead.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
2.9	Provides stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
2.10	Manages curricular and extracurricular activities that are sponsored by the school.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
2.11	Seeks and responds to community concerns in order to establish appropriate community expectations and to maintain stakeholder satisfaction.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO



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CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT – Strategic Plan

<b>CRITERIA:</b>				
2.12	Engages all constituents in a continuous process of improvement that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulates the mission and vision of the school</li> <li>• Maintains a detailed and current description of students, learner outcomes, program effectiveness, and the school community</li> <li>• Employs goals and interventions to improve learner outcomes</li> <li>• Documents and uses the results to inform goals</li> </ul> <p>...as outlined in a written 3- to 5-year Strategic Plan.</p>	X	YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
2.13	Engages and supports stakeholders in the process of continuous improvement.	X	YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
2.14	Ensures that plans for continuous improvement are aligned with the mission and vision of the school and the expectations for student learning.	X	YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
2.15	Annually monitors, updates, and communicates the progress and results of improvement efforts to stakeholders.	X	YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
2.16	Annually evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous improvement process as outlined in the Strategic Plan.	X	YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

*NOTE: To mark the checkbox, double-click the checkbox. A window will appear and offer the option of "not checked" and "checked" (under "Default Value"). To check the box, select "checked" and click "OK". If this does not work, then type in "X" next to the checkbox.*

**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.

**Comments:**

*“The Mission of the California Montessori Project is to provide a Quality, Tuition-Free, Montessori Education that challenges our students to reach their full potential”.* During the 2015-16 school year 105 students (23.7%) qualified for free/reduced meals. This percentage is a 5.2% increase from the 2014-15 school year. The increased enrollment of free/reduced lunch students may be a result of community outreach and word of mouth. As the mission of the school and details of the program reach further into the Elk Grove and surrounding communities, parents, who were previously unable to enroll their children in a private Montessori school, can now take advantage of this type of education.

As part of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), school districts, COEs, and charter schools are required to develop, adopt, and annually update a three-year Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). On the California Montessori Project’s website there is a link that clearly displays CMP’s Strategic Plan and LCAP. It is apparent when reviewing these documents: Children and learner outcomes are preminent. CMP uses a “Tower of Focus”, of which, the children are the foundation.



## **COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

### **Commendations:**

- The On-Site Visiting Team commends CMP for the succinct, comprehensive, Strategic Plan that emphasizes learner outcomes and readiness for successive levels.
- The On-Site Visiting Team commends CMP-Elk Grove for their commitment of growth to serve over 2,500 students (458 at the Elk Grove site) and their realization that sustainability of programming and a commitment to Montessori best practices will mean a deeper examination of programs that are already in existence.

### **Recommendations:**

- The On-Site Visiting Team recommends that CMP include their organizational chart in the employee handbook. (Criteria 2.3)
- The On-Site Visiting Team recommends that School leadership consider soliciting input from all stakeholders from each campus when writing the next strategic plan and explore the possibility of adding Annual Goals that are needs specific to each campus.





**COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

<b>STANDARD 3: TEACHING AND LEARNING – Educational Nature</b> <b>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.</b>		<b>STANDARD COMPLIANCE:</b>	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
<b>CRITERIA:</b>			
3.1	Develops and implements a Montessori curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES X NO
3.3	Gathers, analyzes, and uses data, research, and classroom observation in making curricular and instructional choices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES X NO
3.4	<p>Designs and uses instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that are research- and observation-based, meet student needs, and reflect best practice.</p> <p><b>Curriculum Design and Implementation of Instructional Programs</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>Schools are expected to demonstrate the following curriculum planning and implementation indicators:</p> <p>3.4.1 <i>Infant/Toddler (Birth-3)</i></p> <p>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.</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>X N/A</p>





**COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

<b>CRITERIA:</b>	
<p>3.4.2 <i>Early Childhood (2.5 – 6)</i></p> <p>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.</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p>(CMP has a multi-age variance. The classrooms are stand-alone kindergarten.)</p>
<p>3.4.3 <i>Elementary I (6-9) and Elementary II (9-12)</i></p> <p>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.</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p>



**COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

<b>CRITERIA:</b>		
<p>3.4.4 <i>Secondary I (12-15) and Secondary II (15 – 18)</i></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 through self-construction, extensive self-reflection, and opportunities for leadership and personal responsibility.</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p>	
<p>3.5 Structures classes with multi-age groupings</p> <p>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.</p> <p>A 3-year age span is the optimal configuration for early childhood and elementary Montessori classrooms allowing the maximum opportunity for students to interact and learn from one another.</p> <p>AMS acknowledges that for various reasons a 3-year age span may not be possible. A school seeking accreditation must apply for a variance if this specified age span standard is not met.</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>(CMP has a multi-age variance. The classrooms are stand-alone kindergarten.)</p>	



**COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

<b>CRITERIA:</b>																					
<p>3.6 Maintains ratios and maximum group sizes as follows:</p> <p>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:</p> <p>The ratios of students to teaching staff, both Montessori-credentialed and assistant teacher/aide/paraprofessional, is appropriate for the age level:</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>Infants (Birth to 18 months):</td> <td>4:1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Toddler (18-36 months):</td> <td>8:1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Early Childhood (2.5-6 years):</td> <td>15:1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Elementary (ages 6-12 years):</td> <td>20:1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary (ages 12-18 years):</td> <td>20:1</td> </tr> </table> <p>The school assigns no more than the maximum number of students to each Montessori credentialed teacher that is appropriate to the age level:</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>Infants (Birth to 18 months):</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Toddler (18-36 months):</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Early Childhood (2.5-6 years):</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Elementary (ages 6-12 years):</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary (ages 12-18 years):</td> <td>30</td> </tr> </table>	Infants (Birth to 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	Secondary (ages 12-18 years):	20:1	Infants (Birth to 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	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
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Elementary (ages 6-12 years):	30																				
Secondary (ages 12-18 years):	30																				
<p>3.7 Offers a curriculum that challenges each student to excel, reflects a dedication to equity, and demonstrates a commitment to diversity.</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>																				
<p>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.</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>																				
<p>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.</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>																				
<p>3.10 Provides accommodations and interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning.</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>																				
<p>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.</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>																				
<p>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.</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>																				
<p>3.13 Maintains an environment that incorporates materials, structure, and leadership to best meet the needs of all students.</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>																				



**COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

<b>CRITERIA:</b>	
<p>3.13.1 <i>Facilities, Instructional Materials</i> 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.</p> <p>Classroom environments in quality Montessori schools are equipped with furnishings (tables, chairs, etc.) of sizes and quantity to meet the needs of students.</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p>3.13.2 <i>Physical Environment</i> The environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is clean, orderly, neat</li> <li>• Has logical organization of materials/resources/activities, by level of difficulty and sequence of skill development</li> <li>• Is aesthetically pleasing</li> <li>• Is appropriate in size (follows licensing regulations)</li> <li>• Has adequate furnishings for size and ages of students</li> <li>• Has accessible, neat storage area for students' belongings</li> <li>• Has accessible, neat storage of teacher materials</li> <li>• Has a water source available</li> <li>• Allows for a variety of activities such as individual/group, floor/table, noisy/quiet, and active/sedentary</li> <li>• Accommodates different learning styles and different kinds of work</li> </ul>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p>3.13.3 Provides for display of students' work</p>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p>3.13.4 <i>Structure and Curriculum</i> Classroom schedule:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages the student's spontaneous activity</li> <li>• Provides community building and leadership opportunities appropriate to each level</li> <li>• Allows for a balance of uninterrupted, self-directed, self-teaching, and collaborative activities with the presentation of individual, small, and large group lessons</li> </ul>	<p>X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>



**COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

<b>CRITERIA:</b>	
<p>3.13.5 <i>Classroom leadership</i></p> <p>The teacher exhibits the following characteristics and abilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans, implements, and keeps records of clear, meaningful individual, small, and large group lessons and activities</li> <li>• Monitors the overall environment during individual lessons and through general observations</li> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• Facilitates regular, ongoing communication of student development through parent and/or family conferences as needed</li> <li>• Implements accommodations and interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning, with appropriate consultation with administration and parents</li> <li>• Uses a comprehensive record keeping system that accurately reflects the student’s development</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Shares knowledge of the students’ development and concepts appropriate to each level with staff and parents</li> <li>• Recognizes and provides opportunities for students to participate in meaningful, age-appropriate leadership activities</li> </ul>	<p>XYES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>
<p>3.13.6 <i>Professionalism</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• The teacher has a written plan for and documentation of continuing professional growth that includes evidence of personal reflection in preparation of self</li> <li>• The teacher has fundamental communication skills to support the social and emotional development of students and advisory skills appropriate to the age level</li> <li>• The teacher interacts appropriately, respectfully, and professionally with students, colleagues, and parents</li> <li>• The teacher develops and refines fundamental communication skills with parents about student’s social/emotional and academic progress</li> <li>• The teacher is guided by the AMS Code of Ethics</li> </ul>	<p>XYES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>

**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.

## **COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

### **Comments:**

The On-Site Team saw beautiful physical learning environments that were extremely neat and warm. Small intimate areas and individual desks, as well as group work areas are provided to meet individual student's needs. Materials and activities are changed periodically, particularly for the younger children, to create excitement for new discoveries. The Lower Elementary "pods" are built with space in between to store cultural materials to be shared. The classrooms are designed to foster independence and autonomy. The detailed preparation of the environments, including structures and routines, enabled students to move about the classroom while not interrupting the work of others.

Classroom schedules allow for a two hour uninterrupted work period. This allows for sufficient work time and to build sustained concentration, time management skills, order, and independence. Physical Education is the only "pull-out" special area class. Music and art opportunities are offered when possible within the classroom. Art materials are available on shelves in the classrooms. Students were observed doing cut and paste activities in Lower Elementary. Kindergarten students were observed during a lesson drawing the classroom pet tortoise and his habitat. Vocabulary was emphasized and the children were excited to share their artwork. Music is used for ambience in some classrooms.

Teachers were observed, in most classrooms, moving about the classrooms aiding students when necessary. Small group lessons were observed in the Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary classrooms. During the uninterrupted work cycle Middle School teachers were available to provide guidance when needed. The school reports that whole-group instruction is utilized for subjects such as cultural. However, it was observed that large groups (more than 4 students and at times the whole class) received lessons for language arts and math at all levels at both sites.

Teacher Assistants serve as support for the Montessori teachers in all classrooms, often working one-on-one with students with materials or on abstraction. The Teaching Assistants (TAs) at CMP-EG appear to be caring and dedicated. This is evident in each classroom. The TAs are responsible for helping maintain classroom management, record keeping, and checking of work. Often, a TA was observed working with a student with special needs, one-on-one, with Montessori materials.

Students were engaged in work ("jobs") in every classroom at every level. In the majority of classrooms, students moved around the classroom quietly and purposefully. We observed students quietly speaking to one another to offer assistance or redirection. One younger boy approached an older classmate during the work cycle and whispered a question. The older boy turned to the white board, placed his hand on his classmate's shoulder, and whispered, indicating a spot on the board. Kindness and respect were evident in several similar situations.



## **COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

### **Commendations:**

- The On-Site Visiting Team commends the faculty and staff of CMP-Elk Grove Montessori (Elk Grove site) for creating beautiful classroom environments in an older building that was previously a traditional public school.
- The On-Site Visiting Team commends the CMP-Elk Grove faculty for the interesting array of classroom animals - a snake, rabbit, bird, guinea pig, turtles, trout, and walking sticks - and for including a service dog at the Bradshaw campus.
- The On-Site Visiting Team commends the California Montessori Project for making a commitment to maintain low student/teacher ratios.
- The On-Site Visiting Team commends the faculty of CMP-Elk Grove for investigating outside resources of curricular best practices that complement Montessori philosophy.

### **Recommendations:**

- The On-Site Visiting Team recommends that the school revisit a strong developmentally appropriate Practical Life curriculum. This should include cooking activities for students to prepare snacks and meals and, once gardens are installed, for transforming garden-grown produce into salads and condiments.
- The On-Site Visiting Team recommends hooks and devices for middle school coats and book bags.
- The On-Site Visiting Team recommends revisiting the arrival and dismissal process at both GMP-Elk Grove campuses to facilitate the Montessori philosophical premise of guiding the child towards independence.
- The On-Site Visiting Team recommends investigating the feasibility of an indoor gross motor facility at the Elk Grove site.



**COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

<b>STANDARD 4: DOCUMENTING AND USING RESULTS – Learner Outcomes</b> <b>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.</b>		<b>STANDARD COMPLIANCE:</b>	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fully Met <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
<b>CRITERIA:</b>			
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.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
4.2	Uses student assessment data in making decisions that impact continuous improvement of teaching and learning processes.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
4.3	Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional effectiveness and uses the results to improve student learning.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
4.4	Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

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

<b>CRITERIA:</b>			
4.5	Communicates the results of learner outcomes and school effectiveness to all stakeholders.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
4.6	Uses comparison and trend data of learner outcomes from comparable schools in evaluating its effectiveness.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
4.7	Demonstrates verifiable growth in learner outcomes.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**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.

**Comments:**

CMP utilizes the following data collection instruments to determine the learner outcomes of its Montessori Students:

- Beginning Phonics Skills Test (BPST) is administered to kindergarteners and as intervention to first graders to determine knowledge of beginning reading skills.
- Screener of Handwriting Proficiency is given to Kindergarten students and measures the following skills: letter recognition, letter orientation, letter placement, sentence skills.





## **COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

- Kindergarten Math Assessment is a CMP created assessment that measures the students' understanding and skill with regard to time, geometry, counting and cardinality, addition and subtraction, number operations in base ten.
- Kindergarten Story Comprehension is a CMP created assessment that measures story sense, indicating early reading comprehension skills.
- Albanesi Math and Language Grade Achievement Test (GAT) is administered to Lower Elementary at the end of the year to determine mastery.
- Albanesi Junior Review Test (JRT) and Advanced Review Test (ART) are administered to Lower and Upper Elementary to determine placement and mastery in the curriculum.
- Montessori Achievement Test (MAT) is a CMP created curriculum placement tool administered to Upper Elementary students at the beginning and end of the year.
- Dynamic Indicator of Beginning Literacy (DIBELS) is administered two to three times a year at the beginning, middle (optional) and end of the year to determine the early literacy of students in first through sixth grades.
- Math facts quizzes are taken in the Lower and Upper Elementary to assess progress toward automaticity.
- Weekly spelling tests are given to Lower and Upper Elementary throughout the school year assessing weekly spelling units.
- An initial writing sample is collected at the beginning of the year for all students. Additional samples are taken throughout the school year.
- Accelerated Reader is a supplementary on-line program used by most students that encourages students to read in their zone of proximal development and measures vocabulary and comprehension.
- Renaissance Place STAR Reading/Math Tests are given five times a year to in order to measure progress, plan instruction and track longitudinal progress.
- Accelerated Math is a supplementary on-line program used for on-going practice, intervention and assessment of grade level California Common Core State Standards.
- California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) is administered as both formative and summative assessments for grades 3rd through 8th to provide achievement scores in Math and English Language Arts. Standardized Science tests are administered in the 5th and 8th grades; while Physical Fitness testing is administered in 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade.



## **COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

- Classroom work is utilized by teachers as formative assessments to evaluate students' understanding of concepts Learning.com (3rd-6th) is an on-line technology program that allows for individualized lessons followed by assessments.
- Rosetta Stone(Tk/K-8th) is an on-line, self-paced foreign language program. Progress is measured through grade level benchmark expectations.
- Student progress reports, report cards, and student/teacher conferences.

The On-Site Visiting Team members were greeted and warmly welcomed by students at all levels, staff, parents, and teachers. Kindergarten and elementary classrooms were equipped with a peace table, and the Middle School classrooms had peaceful elements. It was apparent that Grace and Courtesy is valued, modeled, and emphasized at CMP-Elk Grove. During the classroom observations, several times, the On-Site Visiting Team was greeted by individual students with a smile and a handshake.

Special Education students (10% of CMP-Elk Grove's population) are integrated into the classroom environment whenever possible and as determined by their Individualized Education Program (IEP). The California Montessori Project Special Education Director indicated, during her interview, that whenever possible, depending on the child's exceptionality, the least restrictive environment is the Montessori classroom. Three students have a one-on-one assistant to ensure individual students' needs are being met. Careful adherence to student's IEP compliance was evident. Special Education trained staff (2 special education teachers, 1 Speech Language Pathologist, 1 Speech Language Pathologist Assistant, and 1 part-time Occupational Therapist) are on site to support students and classroom teachers.

The CMP network specialists work with local school personnel to systematically analyze the effectiveness of instruction. To improve student learning, meetings are held by the administrative team as well as across CMP network schools to make decisions about curriculum modifications and services that could benefit those areas of need. The RTI (Response to Intervention) process ensures that all students are served appropriately. Records are kept in computerized documents and platforms, including Google Classroom and Aeries Student Information System.

Students, families, and the educational professionals at the school and in the network communicate student, school, and network progress. Appropriate to the level of communication, these include phone and in-person conversations, written notes, parent and student-led conferences, progress reports and report cards, and through website school report cards.



## **COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

### **Commendations:**

- The AMS On-Site Visiting Team commends the school for developing rubrics that define and assess objectives and behaviors that are not assessed on standardized tests.
- The AMS On-Site Visiting Team commends the school for aligning the California state standards with the Montessori Scope and Sequence.
- The AMS On-Site Visiting Team commends the Special Education Department for their commitment to ensuring every child in their care is learning and growing to their fullest potential.

### **Recommendation**

- The AMS On-Site Visiting Team recommends examination of reporting periods, progress reports, and report cards to ensure effective use of teacher time and clear communication of learner outcomes to families.



**COOPERATIVE ACCREDITATION ON-SITE VISITING TEAM REPORT**

<b>STANDARD 5: PERSONNEL</b> <b>The quality Montessori school provides for ethical, fair, and non-discriminatory practices for all employees, teaching and non-teaching.</b>		<b>STANDARD COMPLIANCE:</b>	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fully Met <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
<b>CRITERIA:</b>			
5.1	Provides written employment agreements for all school personnel annually, including written job descriptions, compensation, benefits, and terms of employment.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
5.2	Provides an employee handbook that includes a written non-discrimination policy.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
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.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
5.4	Provides opportunities for faculty and staff to provide input in decision-making.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
5.5	Ensures that the Head of School and at least 50% of credentialed lead teachers maintain active membership in the American Montessori Society.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
5.6	Maintains copies of lead teachers' Montessori credentials, licenses, teaching certificates, and transcripts and updates this information with AMS as changes occur.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
5.7	Implements an annual evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel and maintains records of all evaluations.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
5.8	Assigns professional staff responsibilities based on their qualifications (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience).	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
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.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
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.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
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.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
5.8.4	Elementary and secondary lead teachers must hold a Bachelor's degree from a regionally-accredited institution or equivalent.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
5.9	Provides and assigns staff that are sufficient in number to meet criterion 3.6 and the mission and vision of the school.	X	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

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### **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.

### **Comments:**

The GMP Governing Board consists of a broad cross-section of the school community, bringing together the skills necessary to appropriately oversee the operation of the organization. The Governing Board is comprised of the following positions:

- One public member from the community-at-large
- One charter school representative
- One business community member
- One Montessori representative
- One teacher representative at large
- Up to four parents (representing each of the four charters)
- Up to four District Superintendents, or designees (one from each authorizing District)

The Governing Board is responsible for the operation and fiscal affairs of the school, including, but not limited to:

- The general policies of CMP
- Approval and monitoring of the school's annual budget
- Receipt of funds for the operation of the school in accordance with the charter school laws
- Solicitation and receipt of grants and donations consistent with the mission of the school
- Oversight and final approval of the hiring, discipline or dismissal of School employees as recommended by the Principal, or by the Executive Director for the hiring of principals
- Approving the school's personnel policies and monitoring the implementation of these policies by the Principal and/or duly constituted committees
- Hiring and evaluating the Executive Director
- Approval of contracts with outside entities or persons over ten thousand dollars
- Financial audit oversight
- All matters related to charter approval, amendment, or revocation
- Review of standardized test results as they become available
- Review of monthly report from the principal of each campus

The Elk Grove Campus elects a parent representative to serve on the CMP Governing Board. Teachers elect a teacher representative from the CMP network to serve on the Governing Board. Each Board meeting has a public comment component where parents and others are invited to address the Board.

All six schools in California Montessori Project network are supported by one central administration office, residing in Sacramento County. Currently, there are 17 employees operating out of the central administration office. Their roles include Executive Director, Director of Program, Human Resources Director, Two Human Resources Staff, Student Information Services Manager, Information Services Staff, Student Services Director,

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Four Technology Specialists, Special Education Director, Special Education Administrative Assistant, Accounts Payable, Special Project Coordinator, and two Administrative Assistants. The central administrative office has two large meeting rooms where members of the central administrative team and the leaders from the campuses meet regularly.

Elk Grove Montessori has been successful in its hiring of qualified Teachers and staff. Lead teachers provide documentation that they are in compliance with AMS Certification Standards and Teacher Credentials hang proudly on the walls of their classrooms. All Staff are given a copy of the Employee Handbook which informs them of miscellaneous policies and procedures, including a Non-Discrimination Policy. As an At-Will employer, either the employee or CMP may end the employment relationship at will at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. As such CMP does not require a specific probationary period. All new employees have an individual personnel orientation meeting after their 60th day of employment, from the date of hire. All employees complete a self-evaluation, as well as, a review by the Principal on an annual basis. The purpose of the reviews is to identify strengths, set goals by recognizing areas for improvement, to encourage growth, and develop strategies. The Executive Director and other staff members are permitted to conduct formal observations of teaching staff and other non-teaching staff at a mutually agreed upon time.

Beginning in the 2015-16 school year, bi-monthly Early Release Professional Development Days were implemented to support staff development. Feedback provided by teaching staff helps the administration to design purposeful professional development. Topics presented at staff development days, include:

- Special Education – supporting students with special needs
- Technology training
- Vertical and horizontal planning
- Curriculum trainings
- Best practices for teaching
- Assessment
- Montessori peace education
- Behavior interventions

During teacher and assistant interviews it was clear that staff have a desire for more professional development in the area of supporting students with special needs and Tier 2 RTI process.

Beginning teachers participate in the Sacramento County Office of Education Teacher Induction program. Curriculum Level Leads are utilized at each level in the areas of curriculum and instruction. Deans of Students provide leadership and are regularly in the classroom observing teaching practices, evaluating learning environments, and providing feedback to new and seasoned teachers. Documentation of professional growth is completed and shared with campus principals.

California Montessori Project hosts two to three in-service days per year, with one offering breakout sessions, as well as featured presenters. During the interview, teachers expressed being able to ask for special professional leave request and having their request honored.



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The Elk Grove substitute pool consists of employees who have completed all the necessary paperwork for working with children. As stated in the California Montessori Project Employee Handbook it is the teacher's responsibility to contact and acquire their own substitute. However, during the teacher interviews, it was shared that at the Elk Grove Campus, the school secretary contacts and acquire substitutes when needed.

### **Commendations:**

- The AMS On-Site Visiting Team commends California Montessori Project for its commitment to examine and adjust teacher salaries to attract and hire the best and brightest teachers in the Elk Grove District.
- The AMS On-Site Visiting Team commends California Montessori Project for its commitment to hire sufficient number of staff members in order to meet the needs of a diverse population which includes students with learning differences and to meet the mission of the school.

### **Recommendations:**

- The AMS On-Site Visiting Team recommends that California Montessori Project examine the feasibility of offering TA's full time hours in order to offer a comprehensive benefit package.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team recommends that the school clearly re-define expectations of the roles and responsibilities of the Dean of Students and Curriculum Level Leads as support to classroom teachers in Montessori best practices and clearly communicate to faculty and staff the roles of said positions.

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### **SECTION V: Commendations and Recommendations**

#### **COMMENDATIONS**

- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team commends the students of CMP-Elk Grove Montessori for their grace and courtesy, obvious pride in their school, and joy of learning.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team commends the parents of CMP-Elk Grove for their openness in trusting of the accreditation process, their knowledge and understanding of Montessori, and their pride in the school.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team commends the California Montessori Project Governing Board and Senior Administrative Team for their commitment to the mission of the school to offer a tuition-free Montessori education to **all** children.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team commends the faculty of Elk Grove Montessori for their passion, drive, and commitment. They give 100 percent of themselves without reservation to the fulfillment of the mission of the school.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team commends the leadership team in their commitment to seek best practices in Montessori education and fulfill their public school demands while providing guidance and support to their staff.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team commends the California Project Network for its commitment to offering diverse Professional Development including the new “Super Saturdays”.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team commends the teachers of Elk Grove for the beautiful well prepared physical environments.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team commends the California Montessori Project Network for its commitment to maintain low student/teacher ratios.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team commends the CMP-Elk Grove campuses for clearly articulated organizational processes and procedures that are clearly visible in all environments.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team recommends that the school revisit and renew their commitment to fidelity of Montessori pedagogy.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team recommends that the school examine and clearly communicate the Response to Intervention (RTI) process for behavioral support of students who require and/or may require Behavior Intervention Plans.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team recommends that the school offer cultural diversity and sensitivity training due to the educationally diverse population and varied demographics at CMP-Elk Grove.
- The On-Site Visiting Team recommends that CMP-Elk Grove (Elk Grove site) examine and implement safety strategies and a risk management plan that will allow students the freedom to access the restroom independently and in a safe manner.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team recommends that classroom teachers investigate and





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collaborate on ways to include opportunities to explore application of higher-order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to demonstrate third period learning. (Criteria 3.2)

- The On-Site Visiting Team recommends that teachers recommit to the essential Montessori practice of classroom observation and site observations that occur outside the California Montessori Project network and the use of these observation to guide and improve their instruction. (Criteria 3.3)
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team recommends that the school revisit developmental best practices in the use of technology.
- The AMS Accreditation On-Site Visiting Team recommends that the school revisit and reduce the use of third period, paper pencil, and abstract tasks and embrace the use of hands-on Montessori materials that meet developmental needs in all classrooms.



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**SECTION VI: Self-Study Verification Checklist**

(Please mark each item as *Yes, No, or N/A* (not applicable). Any items marked as “No” must be addressed by the on-site team with a recommendation.)

- \_\_\_\_\_ yes    The school meets all Standards for American Montessori Society schools.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes    The following criteria for American Montessori Society schools are not currently in compliance (for example, criterion 3.1): 2.3\*, 3.2, 3.3. **NOTE\*: An organization chart was added to the handbook immediately following the onsite visit.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ yes    A recommendation has been made for any unmet standard. (Required)
- \_\_\_\_\_ yes    The self-study was comprehensive, organized and clearly a collaborative process.
- \_\_\_\_\_ yes    Profile of the School is in congruence with the self-study.
- \_\_\_\_\_ yes    The school’s Guiding Principles and Mission are in congruence with the self-study

\_\_\_\_\_ yes    The Educational Nature of the school is in congruence with the self-study and includes all of the six essential characteristics of an American Montessori school. These are:

  1. Montessori Learning Environment - *Child-centered, responsive, adaptive with individually construed competence;*
  2. Montessori’s Learning Activities - *Materials, spontaneous activity, active learning, self-directed, freedom within limits, intrinsic motivation;*
  3. Montessori Learning Relationships - *Mixed-age grouping, social community setting, cooperation, collaboration not competition;*
  4. Montessori Spirituality - *The child as a spiritual and moral being;*
  5. What the Montessori Teacher Is - *Authoritative, observer, resource, consultant, role model;*
  6. What the Montessori Teacher Does - *Respectfully engages with learner, able to match learner with knowledge and materials, environment designer, organizer, and preparer*
- \_\_\_\_\_ yes    In the self-study report, The Educational Nature of the School discusses the school’s strengths as well as areas that need to be improved.
- \_\_\_\_\_ yes    The Learner Outcomes of the School is in congruence with the self-study and includes all of the nine essential characteristics of an American Montessori school. These are:

  1. Independence
  2. Confidence and Competence
  3. Autonomy
  4. Intrinsic Motivation
  5. Social Responsibility
  6. Academic Preparation
  7. Spiritual Awareness
  8. Global Citizenship
- \_\_\_\_\_ yes    The school has updated or written a strategic plan.
- \_\_\_\_\_ yes    The strategic plan contains goals, objectives, timelines, resources, and monitoring