

Board Notes...from our MMS Board Member

Mary Lamos



Summer
Make
&
Take
July 29

Greetings fellow MMS members,

I'm proud to say that I've been serving on the Michigan Montessori Society Board for 23 consecutive years. In October of 2000, I received a phone call from my trainer, mentor, and friend, Joyce Fruge, urging me to take a vacant seat on the board. If you knew Joyce, you'd know how impossible it was to say no to her. I was honored to serve on the board with her for many years. My first year was spent just listening and trying to find my place.

I have always been passionate about Dr. Montessori and her works and methods. I wanted to direct that passion to reach others and carry on her great work. I've served many roles, including Secretary, President, and, currently, Treasurer. The most rewarding and challenging role has been developing and organizing workshops for our members. I enjoy the opportunity to bring in speakers who will inspire us and keep us relevant and moving forward.

As owner and administrator of the Montessori Center of Downriver in Southgate, I understand the importance of ongoing training in the Montessori Method and encourage my staff to attend our Spring and Fall workshops. I urge all members to encourage others in the Montessori field to become members of our organization and join us at these events. Being a part of the community and seeing fellow Montessorians is invaluable.

Let's continue to do Dr. Montessori's work inside and outside of our school community and keep Montessori education alive and well in Michigan.

Michigan Montessori Board of Directors 2022-23

Karen Lumsden, President
Children's Place Montessori
cpmontessori@gmail.com

Theresa Weber, Secretary
Adrian (ADMTEI) Training Center
tweber@comcast.net

Sue Szczesny, VP
Birmingham Community Montessori
suemariesez@gmail.com

Mary Lamos, Treasurer
Montessori Center of Downriver
Mary.lamos@gmail.com

Shannon Tyrybon
MMTEC
shannont@montessoriedu.com

Erin Compton
Adrian (ADMTEI) Training Center
erin.m.compton@gmail.com

Denise VanPelt
Grand Rapids Montessori
vanpeltd@students.GRPS.org

Maggie Bischoff
Brookview School
mbischoff@brookviewschool.org

Cyndi Iannuzzi
Montessori Children's Academy
ciannuzzi@montessori-childrens-academy.org

Mona Ahuja
Maria Montessori Center
mrsahujammc@gmail.com

Cathé Calder
Meadow Montessori
ccalder@meadowmontessori.org

Jasmin Reynolds
Ferndale Montessori Center
jasminh@montessoriedu.com

Kathy Smoko, Administrative Asst.

Kathy@mmsoc.org

MMS Phone (313) 405-0668

MMEAN Update

Michigan Montessori Education Advocacy Network is working for YOU!

This group of passionate volunteers has been busy working on behalf of all of you in the greater Michigan Montessori community to ensure that Montessori programs and teachers are included in and protected by any legislation and regulations that will impact them.

By Denise Van Pelt

Montessori Public Policy Initiative (MPPI) is a joint collaboration between AMS and AMI/USA. As the experts on Montessori policy and advocacy, MPPI unites, supports, and equips the Montessori community, creating an effective advocacy voice for authentic Montessori education. MPPI drives education policy change so that all children have access to the gifts of a Montessori education.

“We advocate for the validation and advancement of Montessori Education in the State of Michigan”

The Michigan Montessori Education Advocacy Network (MMEAN) shares this update on two key things which have been going on recently. First, the update on the former State Senate Bill 1010; second the update on other pathways we are pursuing in support of Montessori educators.

Update on the former State Senate Bill 1010.

It is an exciting time for Montessorians in Michigan. We are working toward having a pathway for state certification for those who have successfully completed their Montessori certification through one of the MATCE accredited programs. This was, prior to the election last year, known as State Senate Bill 1010. Because of the timing of the election, this bill did not move out of committee. With the election bringing a new set of senators, we are working to get the document back into the standing of a bill. We have had one in-person meeting and are attempting to connect with others that can help the pathway to licensure proposal become a bill once again.

While some may think we are back at square one, we are not! We are moving ahead faster as this proposal already has the language which had been approved with the previous standing of State Senate Bill 1010.

The movement will rely on the support of as many Montessorians and education advocates we can procure. We are requesting that people become familiar with the language of the proposal and reach out to their state senators to ask for their support. Individually, everyone can contact their representatives to help spread the word about our need for a bill. First, familiarize yourself with the proposal by following this link, [Montessori Talking Points](#). Then [Find Your Representative](#) and call or write to share your thoughts. We thank you for your support in this!

Update on other pathways

Advocacy members are communicating with Schoolcraft College and TEACH regarding the possibility of providing a pathway to state licensure for the Montessori adult students. We want to ensure every program shares common expectations and does what is best regarding obtaining a state recognized alternative pathway for teacher licensure. However, we are treading carefully as we don't want to jeopardize the pathway which would be covered by the proposal to reinstate the previous Senate Bill 1010.

MPPI Essential Elements

By Denise Van Pelt

Michigan Montessori Educators Advocacy Network (MMEAN) is working closely with MPPI in our efforts to secure equitable recognition for Montessori teachers. This work is being done in connection with LARA and MDE. Recently, Michigan Montessori Society (MMS) adopted the MPPI Essential Elements as standards for Affiliate and Member Schools. This article examines one of the Essential Elements of an authentic Montessori program.

Montessori Essentials #6

“Having a lead teacher in each classroom with an AMI, AMS, NCME , and/or MACTE accredited teacher education program credential at the level being taught.”

The *Montessori Essentials* which MPPI (Montessori Public Policy Initiative) have set in place are broken into four broad categories. The first addresses the curriculum, the second the training of the instructional staff, the third focuses on the classroom itself, and the final aspect covered speaks to how students are assessed.

One of these essential elements speaks to Montessori schools which are of high quality, “Having a lead teacher in each classroom with an AMI, AMS, NCME, and/or MACTE accredited teacher education program credential at the level being taught.”

While this seems an easy enough element to achieve, many schools struggle. The reasons range from financial restraints to the availability of qualified teachers.

Why is this one of the essential elements? One answer is found in what goes into becoming an accredited Montessori teacher.

If you are already an accredited Montessori teacher, you are aware of what goes into training. The amount of rigor which the adult student is required to put into the studies is equivalent to those who are obtaining a Master’s Degree. The adult learner is to listen to and demonstrate having understood hundreds of hours of theory on child development, psychology, and age-appropriate curriculum. Beyond the understanding of the theory, the adult learner is required to know how to demonstrate each of the lessons which will be given to the young students by memory. This is impressive due to the number of lessons which this entails.



The adult learner who has become a Montessori trained teacher through one of the accredited programs has demonstrated having internalized the theory and been able to place what has been learned into practice. Because of the rigor which these accredited programs (AMI, AMS, NCME and MACTE) entail, those who seek out and accomplish their training develop a strong desire to do what Dr. Montessori observed as best for children. This is also why the second half of the essential element includes being trained “...at the level being taught.” This second portion of the essential elements tells us why it is a key component.

Adult learners in a Montessori training program learn that as children grow and develop, their needs shift because the child moves from one plane of development to the next. Six-year-olds are an example of this. Some children who are six are still in what Maria Montessori called the first plane of development. In this stage, the children are still forming themselves. They are working toward gaining independence and are in many of the sensitive periods which the primary class is set up to assist.

However, some six-year-old children have moved into the second plane of development. In this plane, students are beginning to discover where they are in social terms. They shift how they learn best, and are more motivated by their peers. The social interaction these students need is reflected in how the classroom is structured. For this reason, it is not enough that the teacher be Montessori trained, but must be trained in the correct ways of how to best assist the age group which is being taught.

A Review of....

Spring Cleaning: A Time to Reflect and Refresh

With Shannon Tyrybon

Those of us that attended the first in-person MMS workshop MMS know what a thrill it was to finally be able to interact with real humans after years of Zoom presentations. Shannon Tyrybon's presentation, guiding us through a personal reflection of our understanding of Montessori's philosophy and wisdom, was a perfect first excursion back into the world. Her well-organized personal journey was enhanced by the materials provided and helped us all absorb and connect with the ideas she presented. Her lively nature coupled with several videos of children working, interacting, persisting, observing and just dreaming helped to link us to the concepts she shared with us.



Vendors!
So nice to see and
touch before you buy!

This presentation was so successful, MMS is hoping to "take the show on the road" and organize a workshop in Grand Rapids this fall where Shannon will reprise this presentation for those for whom the southeast corner of Michigan is just too far to travel. Keep an eye out for information on this valuable opportunity to those on the west side of the state.

This workshop included vendors and an opportunity to visit Montessori Center of Downriver. The classrooms were inspirational and the school's new playground was lovely. Many thanks to Mary Lamos and her staff for welcoming us into their school.



The following schools sent representatives to this spring workshop:

- Ann Arbor Children's House
- Birmingham Community Montessori
- Brookview Montessori
- Children's Place Montessori
- Chiquitos Montessori
- Christian Montessori of A2
- Ferndale Montessori
- Grand Rapids Montessori
- Lakes Area Montessori
- Maria Montessori Center
- Meadow Montessori
- Montessori Center of Downriver
- Montessori Children's Academy
- Montessori Children's House of Oak Park
- Northstar Montessori
- Premier Academy
- STEPS Montessori
- Utica Montessori
- The Basilica of St. Mary Montessori

North Star Montessori – An MMS Member School

By Barb Barnes

Several years ago, MMS began discussing how we could create a level of membership to include wonderful Montessori schools that did not quite meet our requirements for becoming an Affiliate School, mainly the five-day attendance requirement. This past year, the board created the Member School level for those excellent programs that wanted to have a closer relationship with MMS.

North Star Montessori in Jackson is one of our first Member Schools.

Throughout my 20 years as Director of North Star Montessori, the most frequently asked question I hear from parents is, “What makes you unique as a Montessori school”?

The answer is simple, we follow the child’s development and meet their individual needs based on the Montessori method and philosophy. Traditional classrooms are teacher-centered. The same lesson is given to the class based on age, regardless of whether the students are performing above or below grade level. North Star’s curriculum is not solely based on the child’s chronological age, but on the child’s ability, specific needs, and interests.



North Star Montessori Preschool & Kindergarten is a small, independent school that offers multiage classrooms, individualized learning opportunities, a Spanish language program, a focus in world culture and geography, hands-on science, an outdoor natural play yard with lots of green space, butterfly gardens, and nature trails, music, art and more.

Founded in 2003, North Star has provided an authentic Montessori education for children for over 20 years. Educators at NSM hold Montessori Credentials for children 3-6 years old from accredited schools as well as teacher certifications through the state of Michigan.

Children are learning all the time and building the person they will become in the future. How they interact with others, develop their movement and coordination, create, and problem solve all happen in their daily routines and activities. North Star is passionate about Montessori education and we observe



children and take note of their interests and abilities, choose hands-on activities based on our observations that allow children to make choices independently, every day during their uninterrupted work time.

Our classroom is a place where children can learn to become a part of a community. We emphasize how to be kind to yourself, others, and the environment. Children in a Montessori environment have the freedom to choose materials and activities during classroom work periods. Our teachers model handling the materials with care as they demonstrate how to use them. Our classrooms are peaceful places where kids can concentrate and learn.





ways that we can show kindness. North Star teachers cultivate kindness in the classroom by role playing prosocial behavior and phrases at circle time to help children navigate social interactions such as asking to play with another child, and using manners like please, thank you, and excuse me.

At North Star Montessori we focus on the whole child by challenging children with academics, and at the same time creating an environment that values kindness and respect where everyone can feel welcome and have a sense of belonging. The emphasis of getting along builds each year as children attend North Star Montessori, as the curriculum spans over 3 years. Our multi-age classrooms serve children who are 3, 4, and



5 years old. Older students (second and third years) are eager to have the opportunity to help teach new students. They happily show a new friend how to take out a rug, and how to choose a work from the shelf to share. One of their favorite activities is to teach a new friend how to serve their own snack. If a friend feels sad, they can use encouraging words, a gentle hug, or picture to help their friend feel better. Children's social development will be a part of who they are for the rest of their life. Investing the time to understand and respect children nurtures their sense of well-being.



When I founded North Star Montessori, it was based on the belief that the Montessori method embodied all of the things that helped the whole child reach his/her potential. I am just as passionate today about Montessori education as I was when I started, and I have had the privilege to be a part of and witness North Star students' successes. North Star Montessori is a full member of AMS and has achieved the high standards of Montessori education like ensuring the multi-age three-year cycle, the Montessori certification of all teachers in a school, and a deep understanding and commitment to the Montessori method and philosophy.



This year we also became one of the first MMS Member Schools and are proud to reflect the high standards that MMS uses to ensure the highest quality Montessori schools. MMS is an invaluable resource and advocate of Montessori education and philosophy. I am thrilled to have the opportunity to connect with this great organization which supports, encourages, and connects Montessorians in Michigan.

To learn more about our program visit :

<http://www.northstarmontessorijackson.com>.

MMS



Make & Take Workshop – Members Only!

By Karen Lumsden

This summer, MMS will host a Make & Take workshop on July 29 from 11:00 – 2:00 (or whenever your projects are completed). The projects offered include: 4-part cards with polished semiprecious stones, 4-part cards with raw stones, a potty sequence work, a visual handwashing instruction (that is DHS compliant) and a booklet on North American countries for the children to complete. (Participants will be making a control booklet). You may choose one or all. The charge for the event will depend on the projects you choose and the supplies you will need. We have paper cutters available or you can bring scissors. Laminating machines will be available for your use for a nominal fee. An afternoon tea with goodies is included.

Come and enjoy an afternoon with friends making new materials for your classroom! This is a “members only” invitation, so please remember to renew your MMS membership at the end of this school year.



Potty Sequence Work w/ control



Hand Washing Sequence



4 Part Cards with polished (10) & raw (15) pictures
Matching rocks (15 raw, 10 polished) included
Limited supply, so please register early

If interested, please list items you'd like to make and email Kathy.

A price list will be sent to you.

Kathy@mmsoc.org



North America Booklet
Create control and take copies for your children
Permission to reprint for your use included

MMS Board of Directors – Slate of Candidates

Sue Szczesny, Membership/Election Chair

You will be receiving your MMS ballot shortly. Please choose 4 candidates from the slate.



Erin Compton received her BA in Early Childhood Education from MSU in 1999, with an emphasis in Psychology and Child Development. Her Montessori training includes a Certificate in Primary Education from the American Montessori Society (AMS), from Adrian Dominican Montessori Teacher Education Institute. She returned to Adrian this year to teach science and family involvement, as well as review year-long practicum projects for ADMTEI. Erin has experience with lead in a primary classroom, has taught parent education classes, trained assistants, run professional development for staff, was interim Head of School, and a parent. Erin has been involved in Montessori education in Michigan for 25 years. Her passion for Montessori education has led her to a position on the board where she can work with dedicated individuals to preserve authentic Montessori in our state. Erin lives in East Lansing, Michigan with her husband Chris, their daughter Emma and son Max.



Karen Lumsden has been the owner and administrator of Children's Place Montessori in Farmington Hills since 1985. She opened her first school, Open Meadow Montessori, in 1978 with her husband who is also Montessori trained. She has her BS in Music Education and her MA in Early Childhood Curriculum Development. Karen taught general music in public schools for many years in addition to teaching Montessori. She took her Orff Schulwerk training in Salzburg, Austria in 1972 and operated the Orff Music School for Children with her mother, also an Orff trained music teacher in the 70's. She is married with two grown Montessori children and has six grandchildren, two of whom currently attend her school. She is a current member of the Board and serves as editor of the MMS Newsletter and President.



Frances Olesen, who lives in West Michigan, is passionate about the Montessori Way. She earned her Bachelor of Arts, Reading Specialist, and MA in Education Degrees at Aquinas College. This was followed up by her Level I and Level II Montessori training at Michigan Montessori Teacher Education Center. Fran started her Montessori teaching career at Lakeside Montessori School in Holland, MI, followed by Stepping Stones Montessori School in Grand Rapids, MI. Over twenty years ago she started the Black River Public School Elementary Montessori Program once she realized there was a need for it. The program has grown from one classroom to 18 classrooms, 400 students, and a waiting list. In addition to her role at Black River, she is currently working with Sheila Linville, a Montessori consultant, the Stepping Stones Educational Committee, and has recently joined the Michigan Montessori Education Advocacy Network.



Shannon Tyrybon has a BA in psychology, with a concentration in early childhood, her MA in education, concentration in Montessori, and early childhood credential through AMS. However, her biggest education has come from raising her three children. Shannon has had the role of a Montessori aid, lead teacher, and parent. She is now the Early Childhood Level Coordinator, field consultant and an instructor for the MMTEC, and a teacher instructor and field consultant for The Montessori Teacher Education Institute out of Atlanta, Savannah, and Omaha. Along with teaching adults, Shannon holds administration positions at Meadow Montessori in Monroe and The Maria Montessori Center in Farmington Hills. Shannon's work on the MMS board consists of school visits for affiliation, speaking to her state senator on behalf of the advocacy team, and collaborating with the workshop committee to create educational content. She would appreciate the opportunity to continue and expand her service as a board member.

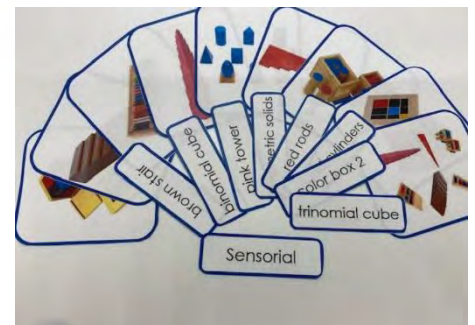
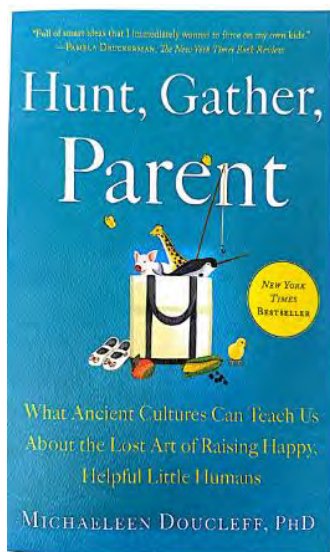


Denise VanPelt began as a child who attended Gateway Montessori School through first grade. She obtained her AMI Primary diploma in 1997 from the Washington Montessori Institute in Washington D.C. Denise began her Montessori teaching at Joliet Montessori School in Illinois. In 1999, she moved to Libertyville, Illinois where she assisted in opening the Alta Vista Montessori School. Denise took a pause in teaching when she had her second child in 2002. She returned to teaching as a Parent-Infant coordinator at the Montessori School of Lake Forest for one year. Denise took a position teaching kindergarten at Our Lady of Humility Catholic School in Beach Park, Illinois and remained there until moving back to Michigan in 2013. In 2015, she began teaching at Grand Rapids Montessori School and currently teaches in one of the Children's House classrooms. Denise lives in Rockford, Michigan and has been happily married for over 23 years with two children who are 20 and 22 years old.

3rd Annual MMS Summer Raffle



MMS is again sponsoring a “Members Only” raffle this year! Make sure to renew your membership to have a chance to win one of our valuable prizes! This year, the prizes are Hunt Gather Parent by, Michaelleen Doucleff, a “Community Helpers” work with tools to sort, sensorial cards with labels, AND a podium, multiplication work and counting work from Teaching Timbers! Don’t miss out on a chance to win one of these great items! Renew your membership for 2023-24 today!



GSRP (Great Start Readiness Program)...GSQ... (Great Start to Quality)

What does it mean for us and why does it matter?

By Karen Lumsden

Recently, I had an opportunity to attend two informational meetings to determine whether or not either of these state organizations is a good fit for Montessori programs. The reason for my renewed interest in examining these programs is that Gov. Whitmer has committed to increasing access to no cost high quality preschool for 4-year-olds in Michigan through Universal Pre-K. The details are yet to be determined, but it is anticipated that it will expand access to Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). While there are currently income requirements, the income guidelines will increase over the next few years potentially making this free preschool offer available to many families currently attending Montessori programs

Great Start Readiness Program has published a great deal of information to help you determine if GSRP is right for your school. I've provided a link to a list of required materials in the areas of literacy, math, perceptual motor, social studies & emotional development, and science. Also in this attachment is a list of other requirements for the learning environment, the teacher/child interactions, curriculum, planning, assessment and family engagement. ([This list](#) reflects goals and not necessarily things expected to be fully in place at start up). Looking over these lists, I could envision a Montessori classroom "adjusting" a bit to include these minimum materials requirements, the interaction suggestions, the record keeping requirements and the family engagement elements. GSRP also provided the [assessment tool](#) observers will utilize when visiting your program to assign points for the level of compliance your program exhibits. (Please note that this information is for Oakland County and may or may not be consistent with your ISD (Intermediate School District.) While this quantity of information is daunting, it is important that you understand what will be expected of you should you choose to partner with GSRP to provide free preschool to the four-year olds in your community. However, here are a few more requirements that you must consider:

- The center or classroom must have a GSQ Enhancing Quality Level (3) or higher.
- The classroom must maintain a 1:8 teacher to child ratio with a maximum of 16 students per class (18 with three adults)
- The school program must be 7 hours/day, minimum of 4 days/week.
- Providing meals for the children is required, but parents cannot be charged for the meals.
- There are increased educational requirements for teachers with three years to attain qualifications.
- In Oakland County (and some others) financial record keeping can be assisted by a support group called HINGE. Your records must reflect clearly how the money has been spent. More information on these and other regulations can be found at www.michigan.gov/gsrp.
- There is support and observation to ensure GSRP rules are followed. This includes reviews of program records, finances, children's files and completing quality assessments.

Each school must determine whether or not their programs will be impacted by the state's commitment to provide free preschool to 4-year-olds. Each school must look at the requirements and determine if it is capable of maintaining a Montessori philosophy while tweaking their program to meet the GSRP requirements. Many counties want more GSRP partners. They have children that meet the current criteria for free preschool and they need more facilities to offer a place for these children. They are willing to help you "find a way" to qualify your school, if you want to. If you are still unsure, <https://www.greatstartoakland.org/professionals/gsrp> or <https://www.smores.com/s3dpx> has everything you need to know to make a decision. Please contact Darlene Zimny at Darlene.zimny@oakland.k12.mi.us or 248-209-2558 if you have questions about becoming a GSRP Partner in Oakland County. If you are located outside of Oakland County, here is the link to find out who to contact in your county - <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/early-learners-and-care/gsrp/intermediate-school-district-search-tool>.

Now what about **Great Start to Quality**? One can hardly be blamed for mixing up these two programs, but they are two very distinct groups with very different objectives. Participation in Great Start to Quality provides two basic benefits to schools. **First and foremost, GSQ provides a support network to help schools improve their programs.** Coaches are

assigned to a geographical area and their job is to help schools navigate GSQ. There are five levels of involvement and schools make the decision as to how involved they choose to be with Great Start to Quality.

The first level (Maintaining Health and Safety) is open to any program that has a license to operate a child care center.

The second level (Reflecting on Quality) is achieved by enrolling in MiRegistry and completing an application. At this level, you will be given a Self-Reflection tool including:

- Family and Community Partnership,
- Inclusive Practices,
- Curriculum,
- Instruction,
- Learning Environment, Professional Development, and Staff Qualifications.

The third level (Enhancing Quality), is attained when the school completes the Self-Reflection tool and sets a goal for improving its program. Reaching this level brings us to the second benefit...money. Simply by completing the self-assessment, your program will attain the third level and qualify for a higher rate for children receiving DHS funds for tuition and will increase any grant funds amount you may receive in the future.

Should a school choose to continue with GSQ, it would move on to the **fourth level (Enhancing Quality-Validated).** **At the fourth level, program directors utilize either the ERS (Environment Rating Scale) or CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) to compare their programs with one of these instruments designed to provide the teachers/administrators with suggestions for improving their programs.** A GSQ Coach can share the details of both tools so programs can decide which tool aligns best with their philosophy.

During the fifth and final level (Demonstrating Quality), the school is visited for an on-site assessment to determine if the goals have been met.

GSQ has created a website that has a great deal of information including descriptions of the two assessment tools. Looking through the various descriptions and listening to the informational videos will give you the opportunity to determine which tool will be most helpful to your program. www.greatstarttoquality.org.

ECERS (Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale) is used for early childhood/preschool classrooms and offers suggestions in six areas: space and furnishings, personal care routines, language and literacy, learning activities, interactions and program structure. (A section of the ECERS tool is shown at the end of this article. The others are available on the GSQ website.)

CLASS is used mainly to assess teacher / student interactions. While the CLASS tool is not available on the website, the domains listed below for each level indicate what the assessment looks for. The Coaches have copies of the CLASS Dimensions and will provide them to you. (An example section is at the end of this article.)

- Infants - Responsive Caregiving.
- Toddler - Emotional and Behavior Support and Engaged Support for Learning.
- Preschool - Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support.

Scores of 1-2 mean the quality of teacher-child interactions is low. Classrooms in which there is poor management of behavior, teaching that is purely rote, or that lack interaction between teachers and children would receive low scores. Scores of 3-5, the mid-range, are given when classrooms show a mix of effective interactions with periods when interactions are not effective or are absent. Scores of 6-7 mean that effective teacher-child interactions are consistently observed throughout the observation period.

To simplify, the fourth level consists of creating goals for improvement and the fifth level involves an observation that will confirm the goals have been attained. With GSQ, this self-evaluation process is repeated every two years. To reach the coach for your area, contact a [Resource Center](#) at 1-877-614-7328 or email greatstarttoquality@ecic4kids.org

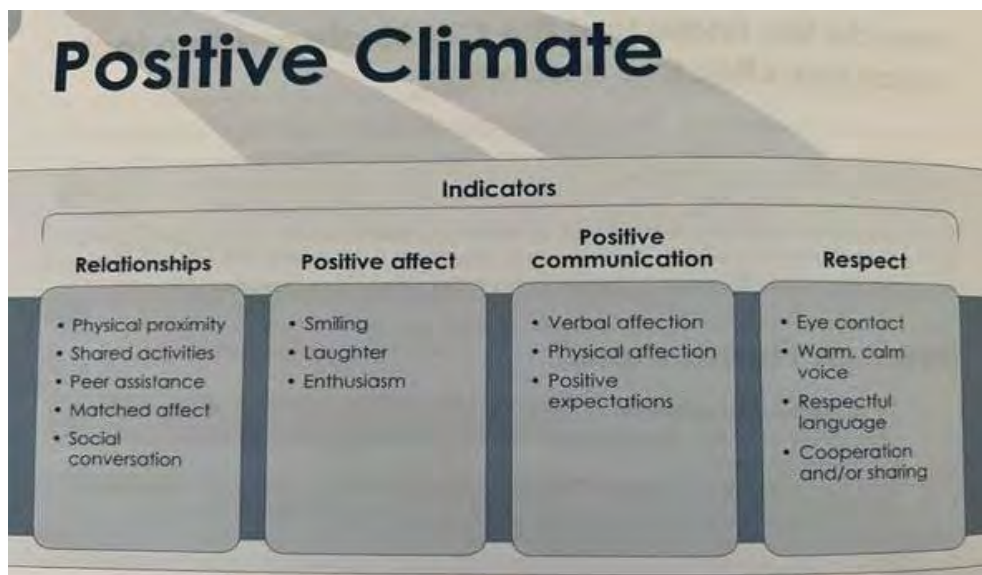
When Great Start to Quality was initiated several years ago, the assessment tool used was the PQA (Preschool Quality Assessment). This was developed for HighScope programs and did not align at all with the Montessori philosophy. MMS was able to send a representative to the initial discussions to provide input and present the objections Montessori schools had with the PQA. These open and frank discussions resulted in a revised PQA. However, ultimately it was determined that the PQA, revised or otherwise, did not provide a level playing field for not only Montessori, but also Waldorf or Reggio schools. It was finally decided that the ERS (Environmental Rating Scale) which has tools for infant/toddler, preschool and elementary levels was a more useful tool.

While I've tried to give you a succinct look at these two programs, I encourage you to look at the websites of both and decide if your school would benefit from association with either the GSQ or GSRP. The goal of the Great Start initiative is to improve the quality of early childhood education. While we all try to do our best for the children in our care, there's always room for improvement. If we are open to discovering ways we can make small changes that will enhance our children's early experience through one or both of these programs, we should look seriously at the opportunities they present.

ECERS
Example

Space and Furnishings	YES	NO	N/A
1. Indoor space and furnishings for children and adults are sufficient. Space is in good repair, clean and well-maintained.			
2. Some adult seating is available for routine care. ITERS only			
3. Individual space for storage of children's individual belongings which do not touch other children's belongings is made available. Most furniture is child-sized, sturdy and in good repair. Some storage used for extra toys and supplies is available. Furnishings built for specific purposes accessible.			
4. Furnishings and toys providing a substantial amount of softness are accessible to children. Toys are clean and in good repair. A protected cozy area is provided for one or two children to play without intrusion by others.			
5. Three to five interest areas OR experiences and/or routine care areas are defined and conveniently equipped. ITERS & ECERS only			
6. Areas for quiet and active play are separated. ITERS & ECERS only			
7. Space is provided to allow different kinds of play to go on at the same time. FCCERS only			
8. Toys are stored for easy access by children.			
9. Space is set aside for privacy. ECERS only			
10. Space is arranged to provide visual supervision of children at all times.			
11. Pictures, photos, posters, and children's work are displayed at child's eye-level where children can see them, and staff/provider talk with children about display materials. Most of the display is work done by the children, is rotated frequently, and reflects recent activities, interests, and developmental levels of the children.			
12. Sufficient outdoor space is easily accessible for children in the group. Gross motor spaces are generally safe, indoor & outdoor. Children play outside daily, weather permitting. ECERS only			
13. Gross motor equipment is age-appropriate for children. Ample materials and equipment for vigorous physical activity are available so children have access without long periods of waiting. Both stationary and portable equipment is used. ECERS only			
NOTES			

CLASS Example



Employee Retention Credit – Do You Qualify?

Many schools have already applied for and received their payment!

The Employee Retention Credit

From the IRS website...

The Employee Retention Credit (ERC) is a refundable tax credit for businesses that continued to pay employees while shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic or had significant declines in gross receipts from March 13, 2020 to Dec. 31, 2021. Eligible employers can claim the ERC on an original or adjusted employment tax return for a period within those dates.

Only recovery startup businesses are eligible for the ERC in the fourth quarter of 2021.

Who Is Eligible

An employer is eligible for the ERC if it:

- Sustained a full or partial suspension of operations limiting commerce, travel or group meetings due to COVID-19 and [orders from an appropriate governmental authority](#) or
- Experienced a [significant decline in gross receipts during 2020](#) or a [decline in gross receipts during the first three quarters of 2021](#) or
- Qualified in the third or fourth quarters of 2021 as a [recovery startup business](#).

Limitations

- Wages reported as payroll costs for PPP loan forgiveness or certain other tax credits can't be claimed for the ERC in any tax period.

Looking at the last line regarding PPP loan forgiveness, I had assumed that I did not qualify. Turns out I was wrong....and at least three other Montessori schools I surveyed also qualified.

You may have heard advertisers urging you to apply through organizations ready to help you submit the required paperwork. Many of these groups typically charge 30% or more of the amount you qualify for. You need to shop around to find a reputable CPA that can complete your application accurately and charge a fair amount for their work, typically 9 – 10%. Your accountant might be the best place to start. However, if your accountant cannot provide that service and you need some help, two of the schools mentioned above contacted a reputable CPA that was happy to work with them to complete the forms. Your payroll records and a copy of your PPP loan application is needed.

If you are unable to secure an accountant that is able to help you for a fair price and would like help, please reach out to MMS for a list of accountants that are able to provide this service.

MMS - What's In It For Me?

Individual membership and school affiliation in the Michigan Montessori Society help you keep in touch with other active Montessorians! Networking with others committed to promoting authentic Montessori programs is vital to your professional growth. Don't miss the opportunity to join our vibrant organization.

- MMS presents two professional development seminars every year. Members enjoy a significant reduction in seminar fees.
- A newly designed website has launched! We continue to work on ways to make your experience as a MMS member more timely and exciting!
- You can register for seminars and become a member online using your credit card.
- MMS publishes a newsletter online, posts job openings, promotes educational opportunities and disseminates other helpful information.
- Because most MMS communication will be sent electronically, it is imperative that you provide us with your email address. Please be assured that we do not sell or share our electronic list with anyone.
- We have also assumed the important task of advocating for Montessori education at the State level. There is power in numbers; your membership supports our efforts.
- You will be notified when affiliated schools offer mini workshops that may interest your staff.

The Michigan Montessori Society's objectives are to:

- Broaden understanding of the Montessori method
- Encourage the growth of Montessori education
- Act as an information center
- Support existing schools
- Provide professional development

In order to continue to receive these benefits and more, join MMS today!



MMS Trading Places...For Sale...For Trade...For Free

Have something you no longer want, but think it could be useful to someone else? Have something that you just can't throw away, but don't have a need for it?

Here's where you can avoid adding to landfills, help someone out, and possibly earn a little cash! If you see something here you might be able to put to good use, please send an email to Kathy at Kathy@mmsoc.org. If you have something you'd like to offer in the next newsletter, contact Kathy @ (313) 405-0668.

The materials below are being offered free of charge. If interested, please contact Kathy to get the contact information of the donor.

Montessori Materials

- history timeline in felt, with red marking at end
- sorting box
- shelves, 2 full boxes, approx.. 3000 total
- pocket folders, approx. 50
- pocket folders with 3 hold center insert
- Montessori magazines,
- autoban magazines
- storage boxes, cardboard, various sizes
- red card stock
- dinosaur set, 5 folders
- cotton
- paper chromatography strips
- overhead projector
- tri corner hat costume
- maps, lots
- dinosaur excavation game
- metal rack for charts
- large wooden box for large charts
- files for holidays
- files for mystery guest
- files for math, Brian Campbell reference
- files, zoology, Brian Campbell reference
- files, botany , Brian Campbell reference
- files, geometry, Brian Campbell reference
- charts, climate zones
- ink quills set
- Michigan history information
- 3 hole binders, 1 inch, 2 inch, 3 inch, 4 inch, multiple of each
- charts, black and white
- additional botany charts, multiple sets
- botany descriptions
- zoology, 5 kingdoms
- history charts
- history chart, rolled long chart
- botany charts for parts, fruit, seed, root, angeiosperm, stem, flower 2x
- functional geography charts, 2 sets
- math charts
- language arts charts
- economic geography charts, 2 sets
- positive / negative number chart
- plant kingdom, old style
- decks of cards, 12
- paper dinosaur
- more math files, reference Brian Campbell
- zoology, five classes vertebrates, verses fill in chart
- lots of feathers
- science, droppers
- battery holder /electrical wires – alligator clip
- socket for a lightbulb, with wires
- glass jars
- zoology, 5 classes of vertebrates, 5 part cards for internal parts
- zoology, 9 fila with cards
- zoology, external parts, 5 classes of vertebrates
- original albums, Brian Campbell, all subjects
- landforms and bodies of water, 6 charts and cards
- geography manual 1 and 2
- botany, plant kingdom, cells, tree of life
- build a bridge set
- rock set, with descriptor cards
- classroom fountain, rocks
- classroom washer fountain
- chemistry cards
- colored pencils
- Carram board
- mini tool kit, (small hammer, 2 screw drives, tape measure, pliers)
- soldering iron with lead
- security lock for door
- washed sand
- mineral kingdom with lots of rocks, descriptions also