

# MONTESSORI REGIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL

## Open House



### Frequently Asked Questions



#### What is a Charter School?

Charter Schools are public schools that are “schools of choice”, which means parents elect to send their children to a charter school instead of their district public school. There is no cost to attend a charter school (other than fees for special programs or services such as childcare or meal plans). Unlike private schools, public Charter Schools are accountable for upholding Pennsylvania state standards related to curriculum, standards testing and financial records. At the same time, Charter Schools must be better than their local counterparts to grow and prosper.



Montessori Regional Charter School differentiates itself by offering a superior, child centered education using the Montessori Method. Maria Montessori’s philosophy and educational method was a belief that no one is educated by another person, but by an individual’s desire to learn. At MRCS, we use the “Whole Child” Approach by helping each child reach their potential in all areas of life.

- Social Skills
- Emotional Growth
- Cognitive Preparation

We foster the joy of learning through experimentation and self-development and believe that will lead to a love of learning and an internal or intrinsic desire to know more.

#### What Makes a Student successful in a Montessori Environment?

A child who has the following traits superior for their age:

- ▶ Able to **work independently** and **cooperatively** in groups
- ▶ Intrinsically motivated – Loves to explore and learn
- ▶ The **ability to focus** on the task at hand in a dynamic environment
- ▶ Can **establish own boundaries** and, with assistance, meet goals

#### For Example:

Kindergarten – Can Work independently for 5 minutes  
Can work with puzzles and books

First – Third - Can cooperate with other students for 15 minutes  
Can initiate and finish work  
Can follow and complete two and three step instructions

Fourth – Sixth - Excited about learning- asks, “What’s next?”  
Have high expectations



## Who pays for Montessori Regional Charter School?

As a public school, a percentage of your local school tax dollars follows your child and funds the Montessori Regional Charter School. Our financial records are audited by a CPA firm and submitted to the State of Pennsylvania annually.

## How many years has this school been here?

A Montessori program has been in this location for over 25 years as a private school. When the Pennsylvania Charter School laws changed in 1997, a group of parents, teachers and board members took this opportunity to broaden the reach of the Montessori educational philosophy and offer this education as a public school. The Charter School opened in 2004. This is our eighth year of public school operation.



## What is the teacher/student ratio?

The student/teacher ratio is approximately 11 – 1.

## What is the application process?

Pre Lottery Enrollment forms are available at the school and on line at [www.mrcserie.org](http://www.mrcserie.org) . Forms must be filled out completely and turned in with a copy of the child's birth certificate and proof of residency (such as a utility bill, lease or mortgage statement). **Applicants must be PA state residents.**

If we receive more enrollment forms than there are class openings for the 2012-2013 academic year, there will be a lottery on Wednesday, March 14th at 6 pm. Our chartering districts' resident's children (Erie and Millcreek) will be entered into the lottery first, then all other PA residents.

**ALL ENROLLMENT FORMS MUST BE IN BY:  
FRIDAY, MARCH 9TH AT 4 PM TO BE ENTERED IN THE LOTTERY**





## Do District School Buses provide transportation?



MRCS students who live in townships whose borders are within 10 miles (driving distance) from the school property are eligible for bus transportation to and from school for scheduled school hours. Montessori Regional Charter School coordinates with district transportation departments regarding student lists, the school calendar and hours of operation.



## Do MRCS students take standardized tests?

As a public school, MRCS takes the Pennsylvania state tests that are administered annually (PSSA). MRCS students' scores have met or exceeded state requirements every year. In fact, Montessori Regional Charter School is one of a few elementary schools in the state that have earned the Keystone Achievement Recognition for every year since we opened our doors.

## Are Montessori teachers certified?

Montessori teachers are among the best-trained teachers in the country. Unlike private schools, **our teachers** and many of our teaching assistants hold a **Pennsylvania State teaching certification**. In addition, all of our teachers are required to complete a rigorous **Montessori teacher training**, the equivalent of another year of teacher training. Further, our PA certified teachers are required by the state to continue their education with Act 48 credits.



## What are the school hours?

The School operates two Campuses as listed below:

### **South Campus – 2910 Sterrettania Road, Erie, PA**

**Kindergarten – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade**

**8:30 am 3:00 pm**

**(Carpool begins at 8 am and ends at 3:30 pm)**

### **North Campus – 606 Raspberry Street, Erie, PA**

**4<sup>th</sup> Grade to 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

**8:15 am – 2:45 pm**

**(Carpool begins at 7:45 am and ends at 3:15 pm)**

## Do you offer before and after school Childcare programs?

Our childcare program begins on the first day of school and is provided at minimal cost. Families are billed monthly for childcare. Our childcare program is staffed by our teachers and teaching assistants. During afternoon childcare, your child will receive a snack, participate in homework or quiet reading time and then have a free playtime, either outside or indoors depending on the weather.



## Do you offer extracurricular programs?



Montessori Regional Charter School offers a **variety of after school activities** including art classes, music lessons, dance, theater and a Sports Program. Our Sports program includes intramurals in cross-country, basketball and soccer. We also have competitive teams for the upper grades (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>) for cross-country and soccer. All of our after school programs are taught by our highly qualified academic staff. We run the after school activities in three semesters:

Fall (September to December), Winter (January to March) and Spring (April to May).



Finally, our sixth graders are able to apply to participate in our **Model UN program**. In Model UN, students step into the shoes of ambassadors to debate current issues. Students who participate in the program prepare for several months by researching the assigned topics. The program culminates with a trip to New York City to attend the Model UN conference held at the United Nations building. Many Model UN programs are held at the High School and University level but the Montessori Model UN program is the only one that includes elementary school students. Many of its graduates have moved into leadership positions in every walk of life, including two US Supreme Court Justices, a High Court Commissioner and even an Academy Award© winning actor.

## How is the Charter School governed?

A highly qualified Board of Trustees, comprised of professionals in the community, educators and parents, leads the Charter school.



**Where can I get more information on the Montessori Method and the Montessori Regional Charter School?**

Please visit our website at [www.mrcserie.org](http://www.mrcserie.org), call our office at 833-7771 or email your questions to [office@mrcserie.org](mailto:office@mrcserie.org).