Mission Statement

Macomb Montessori Academy

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Macomb Montessori Academy is a diverse educational community that incorporates Montessori-inspired practices to foster **c**uriosity, creativity, and critical thinking in its students. The Academy provides an environment responsive to individual student needs, empowering learners to achieve academic excellence, develop a love of learning, and grow into responsible global citizens.

New Ed Program

Educational Program

Kindergarten Level

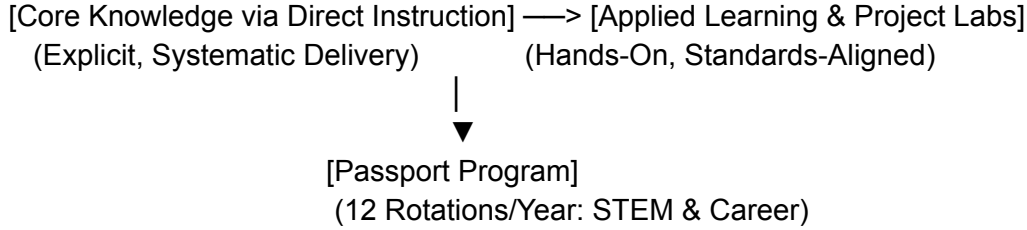
The Kindergarten program systematically integrates teacher-directed Direct Instruction (DI) for core academic mastery with scheduled, intentional blocks for Applied Life Skills, Sensory Exploration, and Project-Based Discovery. This dual framework ensures that the Academy meets students' individual needs to pursue academic excellence while cultivating the early leadership and community-minded behaviors outlined in the school's vision.

1. Applied Life Skills & Environment Care: These activities focus on environmental management, fine motor coordination, and individual responsibility to develop confident, responsible, and community-minded learners. Students learn functional tasks such as carrying objects safely, pouring liquids, proper hygiene, and organizing learning materials. Students develop early civic ownership of their classroom and outdoor environments through hands-on activities like planting, cultivating a school garden, and managing structured clean-up routines.
2. Sensory & Conceptual Exploration: Utilizing concrete, tactile learning materials, students explore and classify physical properties of their environment (such as dimension, color, weight, texture, shape, and sound). These structured exploration periods allow students to apply core concepts learned during Direct Instruction to real-world objects, fostering curiosity and critical thinking through active classification, comparative analysis, and sequencing skills.
3. Language & Early Literacy (Direct Instruction): Primary literacy instruction is delivered through a highly structured, systematic Direct Instruction model. Teachers utilize explicit modeling, strategic scripting, and choral response techniques to ensure baseline mastery of phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondences, decoding, and sight-word recognition. This rigorous core provides the baseline communication skills necessary for students to eventually act as responsible global citizens, and is supplemented with a language-rich classroom environment that transitions students from oral to written communication.
4. Mathematics (Direct Instruction & Concrete Application): Math instruction utilizes explicit, step-by-step teacher modeling followed by guided and independent practice to ensure computational accuracy and numerical confidence. To bridge abstract concepts, students regularly manipulate concrete, hands-on math tools. The program balances explicit computational skills with project-based mathematical problem-solving applied to real-world experiences and everyday life scenarios.
5. Integrated Content & Project-Based Learning: Science, Social Studies, Art, and Music are delivered through an integrated, inquiry-based approach that deliberately fosters student creativity. Students participate in hands-on science experiments, use living plants and animals for observation, and engage in geography mapping projects (learning states, countries, and continents). Artistic and musical expressions are integrated directly into these units to reinforce thematic academic content and widen students' perspectives on the global community.

6. Social & Collaborative Skills: Students alternate between independent focus during Direct Instruction mastery checks and collaborative peer groups during project-based blocks. The curriculum emphasizes the balance between individual responsibility and group cooperation, explicitly teaching peer collaboration, mutual respect, and positive communication as part of developing a cohesive, diverse educational community.
7. Character, Leadership & Community Development: Kindergarteners practice explicit social skills and common courtesies to build leadership traits. Dedicated circle times utilize a formalized character education curriculum and reflective practices to teach appropriate situational peer interactions, emotional regulation, and community expectations.
8. Physical Education & Movement: Activities emphasize purposeful movement and physical development. Structured Direct Instruction lessons incorporate active response techniques, which transition into organized games, cooperative physical challenges, and rhythm-and-movement exercises.
9. Health & Wellness: Children receive explicit instruction regarding personal grooming, health habits, basic safety rules, and the mechanics of illness transmission. Lessons include practical demonstrations of self-care and maintaining sanitization within the immediate learning environment.
10. Early Career & Interest Exposure: To prepare students for the elementary rotational model, Kindergarten students participate in foundational, introductory sessions that preview the multi-disciplinary themes of the school's career and interest exploration initiatives.

Elementary Level (Grades 1–6)

Students are grouped into single-year traditional grade levels. For collaborative, project-based learning and multi-tiered academic tracking, the school recognizes distinct developmental bands: Lower Elementary (Grades 1–3) and Upper Elementary (Grades 4–6).



1. Language Arts: Core Knowledge (CKLA) reading, language arts, and writing are delivered through research-based Direct Instruction programs to guarantee systematic, explicit mastery of phonics, decoding, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence mechanics. Reading comprehension and fluency are systematically cultivated using explicit strategy instruction, giving students the tools to become life-long learners. This foundational core is directly applied across the curriculum: students engage in multi-disciplinary research projects, analytical writing, library research, and exposure to diverse classical and contemporary literature. Creative expression, leadership, and public speaking are cultivated through structured student presentations, recitations, and oral reports generated during project-based units.

2. Mathematics: Mathematics instruction follows a rigorous Direct Instruction framework, utilizing explicit teacher-led demonstrations, immediate feedback, and structured practice to ensure procedural mastery of arithmetic operations, fractions, decimals, and algebraic concepts. To ensure deep conceptual understanding and accommodate individual learning paths, the academy utilizes a Concrete-Representational-Abstract (CRA) instructional sequence. Students use hands-on manipulative tools and mathematical labs to master spatial concepts, geometric properties, and data analysis before transitioning fully to abstract computation.
3. Science & The Scientific Method: Science instruction prioritizes an experiential, inquiry-based approach aligned with the Michigan Science Standards, actively fostering curiosity and critical thinking. Students learn to utilize the scientific method by formulating hypotheses, designing controlled experiments, gathering empirical data, and presenting observations in physics, biology, and chemistry labs. The curriculum features extensive life-science units (botany, zoology, ecology, and human anatomy) alongside earth and space sciences. Field experiences at local nature centers, museums, and zoological parks are utilized as extensions of the classroom to provide real-world, hands-on scientific observation.
4. History, Social Sciences & Global Citizenship: The history and social sciences curriculum follows a coherent, chronological sequence that moves systematically from broad global frameworks to local civic applications, intentionally building responsible global citizens. Units are framed around deep, essential questions designed to spark curiosity and drive independent project-based research. The curriculum progresses from universal concepts, through the development of world cultures and governance systems, into comprehensive United States history, concluding with Michigan history and local municipal structures. Students demonstrate civic understanding through integrated research papers, presentations, and mock civic exercises.
5. Music & The Visual Arts: Technical artistic skills—including music theory, rhythm, melody, vocal performance, and diverse artistic mediums—are developed through targeted instruction led by qualified specialists. Cultivating creativity as a core school tenet, arts are also intentionally integrated into general education units; students complete visual arts and media projects to synthesize and demonstrate their learning in Social Studies, Literature, and Science. Art and music appreciation are highlighted through the systematic study of historically significant artists, composers, and cultural movements.
6. Physical Education: Elementary students participate in regular physical education classes where motor skills, physical fitness, and tactical cooperation are developed through organized sports, fitness tracking, and team games. Instruction emphasizes lifelong health, physical wellness, basic anatomy, and nutritional science.
7. Applied Life Skills, Leadership & Project Management: To balance the teacher-led nature of Direct Instruction, daily schedules include dedicated blocks for student-driven project management, applied life skills, and collaborative design challenges. These periods are explicitly designed to develop confident, responsible, and community-minded learners through leadership, real-world experiences, and reflective practices. Students manage project timelines, maintain responsibility for classroom and school-grounds environmental stewardship, and develop practical problem-solving skills. Community involvement, career exploration field trips, and service-learning volunteer projects are scheduled throughout the year to connect classroom learning with the broader working community.

The Passport Program (Interest & Career Pathway Rotations):

To systematically foster curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking, the Academy operates a formalized "Passport" program. Elementary students participate in twelve (12) distinct instruction and exploration rotations per academic year. This program acts as a dynamic incubator for students to explore diverse interests and realize future career pathways.

- Rotational Domains: Rotations are standards-aligned and cover highly engaging, real-world disciplines including, but not limited to: Computer Coding & Technology, Culinary Arts & Cooking, Podcasting & Digital Media Communications, advanced STEAM Labs, Conversational Spanish Language & Culture, and Instrumental/Vocal Music Production.
- Instructional Mechanism: Each of the 12 annual sessions delivers intensive, hands-on immersive learning where students engage with technical tools, collaborate on rapid design challenges, and interface with real-world applications of the discipline.
- The Passport Framework: Students maintain a "Passport." At the conclusion of each rotation, students engage in formal reflective practices, documenting the core competencies they developed, analyzing real-world career lines connected to that field, and evaluating their personal affinity for the discipline. This data helps guide individual student goal-setting and future pathway selections.
- Computers & Technology: Students utilize digital devices on a one-to-one basis as active tools for research, data analysis, document creation, and project presentation. Digital literacy, typing efficiency, and internet safety are explicitly taught. The academy maintains the capacity to transition learning to a virtual environment via an established Learning Management System (LMS) in the event of emergency building closures.
- Civic Grace, Courtesy & Reflection: Students practice explicit social-emotional skills, conflict resolution, and leadership attributes. The academy utilizes a dedicated character development curriculum and regularly scheduled classroom community meetings to cultivate accountability, civil discourse, reflective practices, and a collaborative school culture.

Differentiated Instruction

The Academy addresses the individual learning needs of each student by pairing the high-frequency feedback and flexible grouping inherent in Direct Instruction with a comprehensive Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). This approach ensures that the Academy fosters an environment that meets students' individual needs to pursue academic excellence. Core Direct Instruction programs utilize regular placement testing and bi-weekly formative data checks to group students homogeneously by current instructional target, allowing teachers to accelerate students who demonstrate mastery beyond grade-level expectations or provide immediate remediation for those who require further practice. Students capable of advanced work are provided with accelerated curriculum pacing, higher-level source texts, and extended project-based inquiry options—including advanced leadership tracks within the Passport program—to continue fostering their development as life-long learners.

For each student who does not meet state performance levels in reading, writing, mathematics, and/or science, the Academy, in consultation with the student's parent, will develop and

implement progress monitoring to assist the student in meeting expectations for proficiency. Strategies may include, but are not limited to, summer school, research-based interventions, targeted small-group intensive instruction, and after-school tutoring. If upon subsequent evaluation the documented deficiency has not been remediated, the student may be retained in accordance with board policy and state law.

The framework used to identify student learning deficiencies, develop hypotheses, formulate a plan, monitor progress, and analyze results follows the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) model:

- Tier 1 (Core Instruction and Universal Support): Consists of high-quality, evidence-based Direct Instruction general academic and behavioral programming delivered to all students in all settings. School-wide universal screening and benchmark assessments are conducted three times per year to ensure core instruction is effective and to identify students who require additional targeted support.
- Tier 2 (Supplemental Targeted Intervention): Consists of focused, explicit, small-group instruction (typically 3 to 6 students) provided in addition to, and aligned with, the Tier 1 core curriculum. For example, tier-identified students receive an additional 30 minutes per day of targeted reading or math instruction focusing on specific sub-skills (e.g., automatic word decoding, math facts fluency). Group sizes and instructional pacing are optimized to close performance gaps rapidly.
- Tier 3 (Intensive Individualized Intervention): Consists of the most intensive, highly individualized academic or behavioral interventions. Tier 3 supports feature minimized group sizes, narrowed skill focus, and increased daily instructional duration. These interventions are provided in addition to Tier 1 core instruction and are monitored with high-frequency progress checks.

The tiers are fluid and flexible; data-driven decisions allow students to transition between tiers based on documented instructional needs. If the Academy's MTSS implementation team determines that a student is not making adequate academic or behavioral progress after the provision of verified Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 supports over an appropriate duration—or if the child requires sustained, highly intensive accommodations to maintain progress—the team will formally refer the student for an evaluation under Special Education guidelines.

The Academy provides comprehensive support for English Learners (EL). To ensure equitable access to the core curriculum and support our diverse educational community, the Academy employs an EL Coordinator and instructional aides who deliver targeted English language development support based on annual WIDA testing results and ongoing linguistic data.

Special Education and Section 504

When making educational placement decisions for students with disabilities, the Academy will ensure that parents are contributing members of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, and together the team will make decisions that are subject to requirements regarding provision of the least-restrictive environment. When determining how services will be delivered to students with disabilities, the Academy will follow all Special Education Rules as issued by the Michigan Department of Education. If a child with a current IEP enrolls in the Academy, the

Academy will implement the existing IEP to the extent possible or will provide an interim IEP agreed upon by parents until a new IEP can be developed. IEPs will be developed, revised, and implemented in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and state law and regulations.

The Academy will fully comply with federal laws and regulations governing children with disabilities as follows:

1. The Academy is responsible for providing a free, appropriate public education to children with disabilities enrolled in the Academy that have been determined through an IEP to require Special Education programs and services.
2. The Academy will ensure that children who are suspected of having disabilities are properly evaluated by a multidisciplinary team, as defined in the Michigan Special Education Rules, and that children who have already been identified are re-evaluated by the multidisciplinary team at least every three years.
3. When a multidisciplinary team determines that a special education student requires Special Education programs and services, the Academy will ensure that the IEP is fully implemented in accordance with IDEIA and reviewed on an annual basis or more frequently as determined by the IEP team.

Assessments

The Academy fully participates in all aspects of state testing and other assessments as required by state statute. The Academy also conducts its own data analysis of student learning by any other proven assessment tools deemed necessary and appropriate. Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth is utilized as a benchmark assessment to determine the use of tiered interventions. Curricular placement assessments, local district common assessments, rubrics for project-based learning portfolios and the Passport program, and structured instructional observations are utilized to measure student growth toward the Michigan Academic Standards and success on the MStep.

In Grades K-3, and as necessary in grades 4-6, the mClass Dibles assessment is used to monitor and support student literacy. The state approved reading assessment can advise on student growth as a reader and can flag students for further screening for reading disorders such as dyslexia.

The Academy seeks to analyze reports from different perspectives to maximize the usefulness of information gained from the accountability process. Such analysis may include viewing student-learning results by age groups, grade levels, previous academic experiences, gender, attendance, and any other aspects of the student population that enhances the Academy's knowledge about student learning needs.

A key goal of the Academy's learning measurement process is to provide results of findings and outcomes by way of communication and feedback to students and overall stakeholders. Students, parents, staff, and board members receive published reports of student achievement on an individual and collective basis with the intention of encouraging community ownership of learning outcomes and increased accountability for the teaching and learning practices the

school espouses. These practices are re-evaluated on an annual basis to allow for adjustment of techniques, strategies, and other relevant programs with the intention of more significantly affecting learning outcomes.

Student assessment and performance data is regularly assessed by teachers and administration to guarantee that all students are receiving the support and instruction necessary to reach academic excellence. The Academy relies heavily upon experienced and well-trained teachers who are constantly aware of individual needs within the classrooms. The Direct Instruction framework and MTSS system allow for precision in differentiation, so teachers are able to readily accelerate or reinforce a student's learning.

Program Evaluation

The Educational Program is formally evaluated on an annual basis. Effective teaching is essential to the implementation of the Academy's Educational Program. Academy leadership evaluates effective instruction by performing informal and formal teacher observations, explicitly monitoring the fidelity of Direct Instruction delivery, the baseline engagement of project blocks, and the delivery metrics of the Passport rotations. The observations provide a platform for quality dialogue for constructive feedback serving to improve instructional practices.

Academy staff also meet with leadership to review school performance. Data is collected and analyzed to determine and monitor school improvement goals. Leadership and staff routinely monitor assessment data (e.g., NWEA, state assessments, and intermediate benchmarks) to implement needed changes, to ensure adequate growth in all classrooms, and to make necessary adjustments to improve the delivery of the Educational Program.

In addition to observations and the examination of data, professional development opportunities and professional learning communities (PLCs) are provided to staff members. Training opportunities—specifically focused on explicit instruction techniques, data-driven grouping, and designing rigorous project-based learning units for the Passport framework—and a professional community of learners enhance instructional practices and provide opportunities of collaboration and cooperation with other teachers to ensure the Academy remains a dynamically reflective educational community.

Curriculum

Curriculum

Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA)

- Overview: CKLA is a comprehensive English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum rooted in the Science of Reading. It is structured around two key strands: Skills (phonics, decoding, and mechanics) and Knowledge (building vocabulary and deep content knowledge across history, science, and literature).
- Standards Alignment: CKLA is 100% aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts and fully meets the expectations of the Michigan K-12 Standards for English Language Arts, including the foundational literacy requirements of Michigan's Read by Grade Three law.
- CKLA is also approved by the State of Michigan as meeting the requirements for the "Science of Reading."

Bridges in Mathematics

- Overview: Bridges is a comprehensive PK–5 mathematics curriculum that focuses on developing students' deep conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and problem-solving skills. It utilizes a blend of direct instruction, structured investigation, and open-ended "Number Corner" daily skills practice, relying heavily on visual models and manipulatives.
- Standards Alignment: Bridges is strictly aligned with the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSS-M) and seamlessly satisfies the Michigan K-12 Standards for Mathematics, directly addressing both the content standards and the essential Standards for Mathematical Practice.

Studies Weekly (Social Studies)

- Overview: Studies Weekly delivers core social studies instruction through a unique, student-friendly periodical/magazine format combined with a robust digital platform. It introduces young learners to history, civics, geography, and economics using primary sources, citizenship-focused narratives, and integrated informational text strategies. Studies Weekly
- Standards Alignment: The curriculum is explicitly tailored to fulfill the Michigan K-12 Social Studies Standards (including state-specific history, geography, and civic mandates) while supporting the informational text reading requirements outlined in the CCSS for Literacy in History/Social Studies.

Studies Weekly (Science)

- Overview: Lessons are structured around the classic 5E framework: *Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate.* Every unit kicks off with a real-world, observable phenomenon designed to trigger student curiosity and drive the guiding questions.

Instead of a heavy textbook, students receive weekly themed newspapers. They are explicitly designed to be written on, highlighted, cut up for interactive notebooks, and taken home. The curriculum also integrates Lexile-measured informational texts, vocabulary crosswords, and data-analysis activities to hit English Language Arts (ELA) and Math benchmarks simultaneously.

- Standards Alignment: Studies Weekly Science was built explicitly around the framework of the Next Generation Science Standards. Independent reviews (including evaluations using the EdReports rubric and the NGSS Lesson Screener Tool via CSA Education) have rated the curriculum exceptionally high for standards compliance. Michigan adopted the Michigan Science Standards (MSS), which are directly adapted from the Next Generation Science Standards. Because of this 1:1 structural mirroring, Studies Weekly's deep integration of NGSS aligns cleanly with Michigan's mandates.