



MODERN MONTESSORI

charter school

Modern Montessori Charter School Annual Report

School Year 2021-2022

Board Approved 11/16/2022



Who We Are

Rooted in Montessori principles, we offer an authentic Montessori experience with a modern twist, interweaving aspects of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). Modern Montessori Charter School has approval from the Minnesota Department of Education to operate a preschool, elementary and middle school program, authorized to encompass Pre-K through eighth grade.

Mission

We are a collaborative learning community rooted in Montessori principles integrated with current technology through an innovative, child-centered approach.

Vision

To develop leaders of tomorrow with an intrinsic desire for life-long learning and independent thinking to become citizens who better our world.



Year Opened

Our first operational year was the 2019/2020 school year

Grades Served

Pre-K through 6th Grade were served in the 2021/2022 School Year

Contact Information

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2021-2022 Executive Leadership Team

Board Chair:

Valerie Blanco - valerie.blanco@mm-cs.org

Director of Education:

Kristy Fehr - kristy.fehr@mm-cs.org

Director of Operations:

Shawna Heller

Authorizer

Innovative Quality Schools (IQS)
P.O. Box 40219 | St. Paul, MN 55104
Phone: 651.234.0900
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Purpose of the Report

This report is set forth to meet the requirements in Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivisions 4, 11 and 14 regarding Minnesota charter schools publishing a yearly annual report for authorizers and stakeholders. This report must be approved by the district Board of Directors and is a public document under Minnesota Chapter 13.



School enrollment

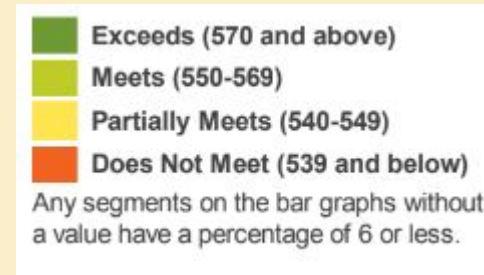
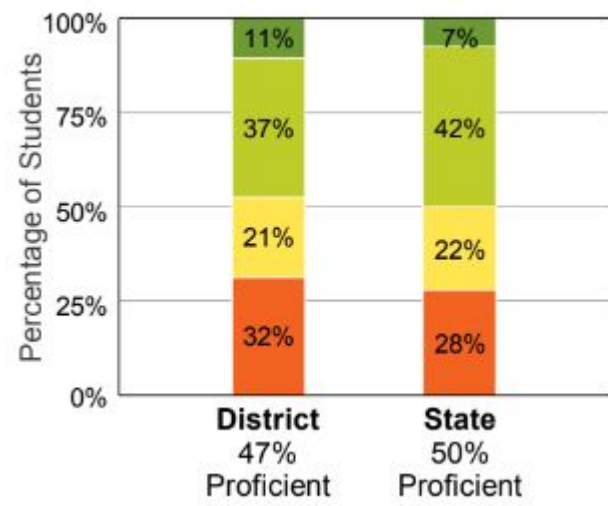
At the close of the school year, June 9, 2022, there were 196 students enrolled at MMCS.

Student attrition

MMCS began their third school year with 186 students starting school in September of 2021. This was a large increase over the 152 students we ended the previous 20/21 school year with. The school continued to add students throughout the school year growing to a total of 196.

It should be noted that Modern Montessori reached capacity in both Children's House and Lower Elementary classes, with three sections of Children's House and four sections of Lower Elementary. Modern Montessori had three sections of Upper Elementary classrooms.

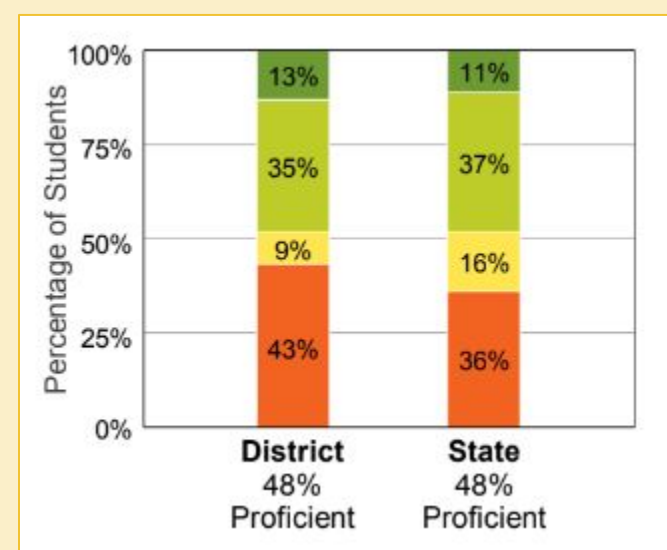
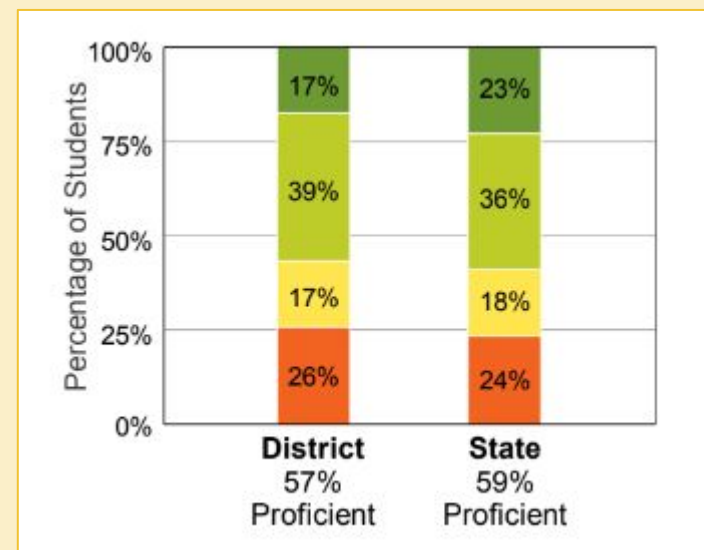
After our lottery, Modern Montessori had a waitlist for Preschool, Kindergarten, First Grade, and Second Grade.



MCA Score Key

MMCS & State Fifth Grade Science MCA Scores

MMCS & State Third Grade Student MCA Scores



Math

Reading

Academic Performance

MMCS participated in the Minnesota Department of Education's MCA testing for grades 3 and above. Overall, MMCS fell slightly below state averages. MMCS Science proficiency scores were at 47%, Math at 34.8% and Reading at 46.5%

When broken down by grade level, the MMCS third grade class compared nearly identical to state averages. MMCS believes these scores to be more accurate than the cumulative scores, since we saw the greatest student retention with our third grade class. Many of our 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students received instruction in earlier grades at previous schools.

The school did our own internal FastBridge assessments in English Language Arts and Math in the fall, winter and spring of the 2021-2022 school year. Throughout the school year 75 - 82% of students were in the "some risk" and above category, indicating that they at least partially met grade level standards.

It's important to note that a decrease in test scores were seen nationally due to learning loss associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Students by risks levels (%): ?



Fall

Students by risks levels (%): ?



Winter

Students by risks levels (%): ?

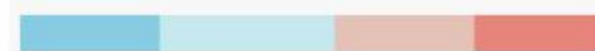


Spring

Modern Montessori



Modern Montessori



Modern Montessori



MMCS K-6 Summary of Student Fastbridge Scores



Governance and Management

MMCS was governed by a seven-member Board of Directors for the 2021-2022 school year. This was MMCS' third year of active operations. The school conducted its first board election to transition from a foundational to an operational board in the spring of 2022. The school's authorizer is Innovative Quality Schools. The school was managed by Kristy Fehr, the school's Director of Education and Shawna Heller, the school's Director of Operations. Board meetings were held monthly on the third Wednesday of each month.

Staffing

The school had 14 full-time teachers and 3 part-time teachers including ten grade level teachers, two special education teachers, an EL teacher/interventionist, a STEM teacher, art teacher and a physical education teacher. The school had a full-time administrative assistant, 13 classroom assistants or paraprofessionals in general education and special education ranging from part-time to full-time. The school's technology needs were supported by volunteers.



Finances

MMCS finished its third full year of operations with 196 students enrolled and a weighted ADM of 175 students in grades K-6. The majority of the school's funding was based on enrollment, which grew throughout the year, and the Federal CSP Grant.

The increased enrollment as well as conservative spending allowed the school to end the FY21-22 school year with an unaudited fund balance of 4.8%.

One of the top measures of financial stability in charter schools is fund balance. As the state withholds 10% of state generated revenues every year, a fund balance of 15-30% is generally recommended by financial service providers, auditors and authorizers.

MMCS will strive to achieve this 15% fund balance goal by our seventh operational year.



Innovative practices and implementation

The Montessori Approach

Modern Montessori Charter School is grounded on the research-based Montessori model of instruction. This method has been in practice since 1907 and has continually shown great success among students. It is designed to lead children to ask questions, think for themselves, explore, investigate, and become eager, self-directed learners. Using a carefully prepared environment, teachers are guides utilizing self-correcting, hands-on learning materials and purposeful activities that allow children to learn at their own pace through discovery. This type of meaningful work in an orderly environment fosters concentration, encourages responsibility, independence and confidence, and results in children who love to learn.

In the classroom, Montessori curriculum includes specific, purposeful materials called “works.” These materials are designed with a control of error, or way for the child to check his/her work and to give the child the opportunity to master each skill at his/her own pace. The child is allowed to discover, explore, and master each lesson before moving onto the next work. This gives each student the ability to progress as needed and to spend extra time with each lesson as needed. The teacher observes the student, assisting when necessary, and in this way is able to understand where each individual student is in his/her learning style and level for each subject.

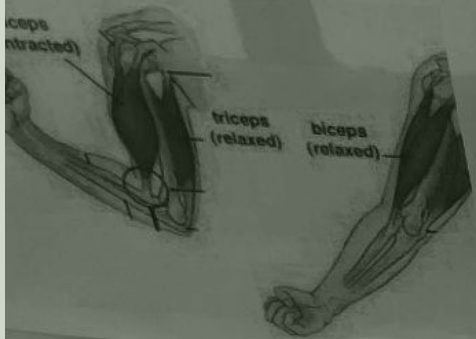
Students will benefit from multiage classrooms where an environment based on respect is at its core. Students will become leaders when given the opportunity to be teachers themselves and assist younger students in the classroom. Younger students will build an intrinsic desire for learning when observing the more challenging work of their older peers.

Montessori education has traditionally been a low- or technology-free environment, but MMCS feels this is an important skill area in which our students need practice and instruction. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) integration will allow students to become proficient with current technology while enriching learning opportunities.

MUSCULAR SYSTEM IN THE ARM

Muscles

How do you move your arms and legs. did you know that the muscles that move your fingers are also in your arms! How does this work? with a little bit of course!

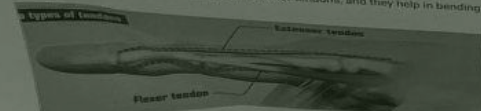


Tendons.
A tendon is like a string that attaches muscle to bone



How do your fingers move sideways?

There are tendons in your hand that are called flexor tendons, and they help in bending the fingers.



Almost every part of your body is covered in muscle.

Innovative practices and implementation

Montessori + STEM

Montessori education is well known for its hands-on, student-directed approach to learning. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) also encourages hands-on, active participation from students. Both Montessori and STEM encourage problem-solving, creative thinking, and learning through discovery, which results in children who love to learn.

Modern Montessori looks like students learning how to use valuable technological devices without becoming dependent on them. MMCS students will leave our school equally comfortable navigating an old print encyclopedia as they are accessing information on the Internet. They will be proficient with basic computer skills, keyboarding and word processing. They will know how to operate a variety of technological devices and software programs. Children will receive lessons that encourage engineering, creative thinking and scientific reasoning. These technologies will be integrated seamlessly throughout the day.

STEM-specific classes have been focusing on the engineering design process which helps build a growth mindset. Students learn that trial and error is a natural part of the process and that mistakes help us learn. Students have also been learning how to code using robots and various software. Students engage in more hands-on, in-depth science lessons and experiments throughout the year.



Future Plans

Modern Montessori will seek out connections within our community for instructional partnerships and innovative opportunities. Such connections may be local nature centers, STEM related facilities, farms etc. Anything that will enhance our learning opportunities.

Modern Montessori has had incredible teacher retention thus far with 100% two years in a row! We will strive to maintain strong working relationships and high levels of job satisfaction amongst our staff. We anticipate the need to hire additional staff again next year as we plan for additional growth in the areas of Upper Elementary and Middle School.

As we reach capacity in our elementary program, our goal is to have students receive the authentic Montessori 3-year looped teacher experience. As our new teachers work towards their Montessori certification, we will continue to align Montessori curriculum to state standards to develop a comprehensive scope and sequence.