



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
300 DON GASPAR
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87501-2786
Telephone (505) 827-5800
www.ped.state.nm.us

MARIANA D. PADILLA
SECRETARY DESIGNATE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR

**Charter Schools Division
Revised Final Renewal Recommendation
December 3, 2024**

School Name: The Montessori Elementary and Middle School

School Address: 1730 Montañño Blvd. NW Albuquerque, NM 87107

Head Administrator: Piper Curry

Governing Board Chair: Alan Li

Contract Term: 2020–2025

Statutory Renewal Requirements

According to New Mexico Statutes Annotated (NMSA) 1979, Section 22-8B-12 K., a charter may be suspended, revoked, or not renewed by the chartering authority if the chartering authority determines that the charter school:

- (1) committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards or procedures set forth in the charter contract;
- (2) failed to meet or make substantial progress toward achievement of the department's standards of excellence or student performance standards identified in the charter contract;
- (3) failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management;
- (4) for a charter school located on tribal land, failed to comply with ongoing consultations pursuant to the Indian Education Act; or
- (5) violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not specifically exempted.

Renewal Recommendation

The Charter Schools Division (CSD) recommends The Montessori Elementary and Middle School be renewed with a charter contract term of five years, without conditions.

Part B: Progress Report

The school's narratives in Part B are rated **Meets the Standards, Demonstrates Substantial Progress**, or **Failing to Demonstrate Progress** according to the rubric on pages 6-7 of the 2024 Charter School Renewal Application.

Part B: Progress Report	
Academic Performance	Rating
1.a. Student Outcomes	Meets the Standards*
1.b. Mission-Specific Goals	Meets the Standards
Organizational Performance	Rating
2.a. Educational Program	Meets the Standards
2.b. Financial Compliance	Demonstrates Substantial Progress
2.c. Governance Responsibilities	Meets the Standards
2.d. Equity and Identity	Meets the Standards
2.e. Tribal Consultation	N/A
2.f. Other Performance Framework Indicators	Meets the Standards

**Results from 2023-24 Vistas data were released on 11.12.24. The Montessori Elementary and Middle School received a designation of Spotlight in school years 2022-23 and 2023-24.*

1.a. Student Outcomes

The Montessori Elementary & Middle School (TMEMS) is a Spotlight School with a designation of excellence in English Language Arts and Science per NMVISTAS; they are also one of three montessori schools in New Mexico. TMEMS uses iStation and Renaissance STAR for interim assessments. The school also uses other Montessori-compatible summative and formative assessments in the classroom such as end-of-unit tests, portfolio assessments, performance-based assessments, coursework, assignments, individual and group presentations. TMEMS uses data to inform/drive their instruction, comprehensive use, conferences and Multi-Layered Systems of Supports (MLSS), enhanced Special Education services (SPED director and additional teachers), ancillary staff; they push-in/all inclusive learning.

School leadership and teachers look at data, and trends from year to year as a group and in teams to see where students need the most support. Students test three times a year. Every year of contract term, they have seen gains in their proficiencies. But like everywhere in the

state and nation, their math proficiencies are not up to their standards so the school has invested in a new math curriculum, called Illustrative Math. The main interim assessment that the school uses is Renaissance Star. They are able to see progress and design professional development based on what the test results are showing. The next step plan for eighth grade is that they complete a portfolio and present it publicly. During their presentations, students will also speak about the social and academic piece that is taught in school.

The data tables that were included in the application were taken from the January professional development in which the school conducted a deep dive. They look at the gains that were made from beginning of year to middle of year and where they need to focus and for all adults in the school it has been math. All data drives professional development and different layers of MLSS; it gets teachers talking, so they take it back to their PLCs. Renaissance is great as it breaks things down by standards. Reading proficiency focuses in 3rd grade (Stand alone) along with Kinder and mid-school; everything that school leadership and teachers focus on still adhere to Montessori learning/teaching.

1.b. Mission-specific Goals

Throughout the contract term the school has exceeded or met their mission goals. School leadership spoke about the importance of their mission-specific goals:

Goal #1: 80% of 8th Grade students, enrolled on the 40th and 120th day, will complete their Independent Study/Internship course with a final grade of C or better. The tools to be used are a school-developed rubric and Next Step Plan portfolio. This was kept up during the pandemic and students were engaged and excited to be able to continue on with their independent study.

Goal #2: 80% or more of the elementary (K-5) classrooms will earn an average of 37 points or more on the "Observing in the Prepared Environment" rubric. An upward longitudinal trend line over the course of the 5-year charter term is highly anticipated. Observations are completed quarterly. The scores on the observations will be averaged for each classroom. For this goal, during remote learning, teachers had to be inventive on how to continue on with observations on the environment and their community.

2.a. Educational Program

TMEMS implements its educational program with fidelity. The school is organized by four (4) programs: Early Childhood Program (K): Ages 5-6, Lower Elementary Program (1-3 grade): Ages 6-9, Upper Elementary Program (4-5 grade): Ages 9-11 and Middle School Program (6-8 grade): Ages 11-14 this allows for an environment where all students can progress at their own pace. Adult actions have been made to better help students with reading proficiency (for example in the 2022-23 school year leadership separated third graders into their own classroom). But collaboration with lower and upper groups still took place. Middle school integrates Montessori principles with a traditional educational structure such as having a block schedule which allows students to rotate between classes. Middle school has incorporated Universal Design for Learning (UDL), English & Math curriculum built on the foundation that has previously been established. Social Studies is a critical component of their curriculum with a focus on Culturally

& Linguistically responsiveness. For science they use the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

Middle school also conducts field trips throughout the year so students can explore beyond the classroom. TMEMS conducts two field trips out of state/country every year and several mini overnight trips across the state. The field trips that take place outside of state/country are for the seventh and eighth graders. Since the beginning of the school year students fundraise so they can pay for their trips, this year seventh graders will be going to DC and New York City and eighth graders will be going to Japan. All of their trips are tied to what they have learned in their history classes throughout the school year.

2.b. Financial Compliance

The school has had only three financial indicators over the contract term with ratings other than Meets the Standard, making Demonstrates Substantial Progress the highest rating CSD can give the school on this section. The school has sound fiscal processes, and has reported timely to the PED School Budget Bureau for the past three years. The school has not had more than three audit findings in any year of the contract term.

2.c. Governance Responsibilities

The schools governing council has maintained a five or more membership throughout its current contract term. All members have completed all required training well before the June 30 deadline (with the exception of one member in FY22 who resigned without completing all training). The governing council is also a strong supporter and representative of the Montessori school and they support the school to the best of its ability.

2.d. Equity and Identity

TMEMS has an active equity council. They provide CLR training to both staff and students. The school is compliant with the Indian Education Act, Hispanic Education Act and the Black Education Act. The schools Equity Council is used for community building; Parent Community where they talk about the budget; how funding is used to support students. They also ask parents for more input on things like the calendar this year they built in an attempt to support families (eliminated half days) and they also provide the community with a lot of resources which they link in their monthly newsletters. The school's equity council lead has participated in the state's Equity meeting. They are also investing in culturally responsive materials for all classrooms.

2.e. Tribal Consultation

The school does not fall under the Indian Education Act (NMSA 22-23A) or the 6.35.2 NMAC definition of a "historically defined Indian-impacted" school.

2.f. Other Performance Indicators

TMEMS did not have any repeat findings throughout its contract term. Adult actions were proactively taken by school leadership to address issues related to their finances, demonstrating

a commitment to improvement and compliance. This focus on resolving financial concerns has contributed to the school's overall positive performance. On November 27, 2024 the school notified the Charter Schools Division that the Office of Special Education has received a state complaint regarding TMEMS; the investigation is pending.

Unrated Sections of Application	
Part D: Petitions of Support	Submitted as Required
Part E: Facilities	Submitted as Required
Part F: Change in Authorizer	N/A

Site Visit Attendees

October 16, 2024

CSD Team: Lucy Valenzuela(lead), Kristen LaVolpa and Kelli Renken

CSD Remote: Kenneth Norris, Martica Davis and Corina Chavez

School Leadership: Piper Curry (Executive Director), Stan Albrycht (Director of Finance & Business Operations), Amanda Hagerty (Principal), Alissa Sanchez (Assistant Principal) and Tahirih Garcia (Special Education Director)

Governing Board: Alan Li (Chair) and Mary Salazar