

# NATIONAL CENTER for MONTESSORI in the PUBLIC SECTOR

## An Essential Elements Rubric (EER) Review: What? Why? How?

**What:** The Essential Elements Rubric (EER) is a tool for assessing a school's progress toward a fully implemented Montessori program that is both integral and sustainable. [The rubric looks at 25 standards across the following five domains:](#)

- Adults
- Environment
- Leadership and Organizational Development
- Family Engagement
- Assessment

For each standard, the rubric articulates set criteria across a four-point scale from Exemplary to Unsatisfactory. The categories of Adults and Environment address the fidelity of the program to Montessori. The categories of Leadership and Organizational Development, Family Engagement, and Assessment address sustainability.

**Why:** The life of a school and the people in a school are busy. An EER Review offers a reflection to the community of the hard work being done. The NCMPS EER Review is a developmental process, designed to assist a school in developing plans for continuous improvement grounded in Montessori fidelity and sustainability. We operate under the assumption that every school would like to be in the Exemplary category across all 25 standards, no school is there yet, and every school is at a different point in their journey. The Review offers a snapshot of where a school is now and recommends highest leverage moves on a path of improvement.

Each school's path toward full implementation is unique, and frequently characterized by factors beyond the control of the school organization. For this reason, we strongly recommend that the EER be used as a tool to focus observation and continuous improvement, rather than as a summative evaluative tool.

**How:** During the visit, NCMPS' reviewers will meet with stakeholder focus groups, observe general school operations (dismissal, arrival, lunch, etc), and visit classrooms. Classroom observations will be about 30 minutes, and observers will use the [Developmental Environment Rating Scale \(DERS\)](#). Summary observations will be offered during the preliminary oral report to the school community at the end of the visit. These focus groups, observations and visits will inform the recommendations in the written report.

Thank you for inviting us into your school and your work. We are honored and humbled to share your journey with you.