

River Valley Charter Public School ~ Montessori Audit



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T o s h i b a

Montessori Audit Report

School: River Valley Charter School				Date: April 2014	
Head of School: Andy Willemsen		Enrollment: 288			
Classrooms	K: 1	EI: 4	EII: 4	MS: 5	Total: 14

Introduction:

The River Valley Charter School is a public Montessori school offering a full day Kindergarten program in 2 Kinderhaus classes, 4 Elementary I classes, 4 Elementary II classes and a Middle School with four core areas of instruction. Their maximum enrollment is 288 students and they hold an annual lottery to fill any openings. The school has a current wait list of 776. This robust waiting list is a sign of the school's good health and outreach into the community. RVC is connected to the community through partnerships with ongoing community service in the Middle School and has active parent involvement.

Data Collection Tools:

Several tools were used to review the River Valley Charter School's current practices. These were used for the 2012 audit as well.

1. ***Essential Elements of Successful Montessori Schools in the Public School Sector.*** This is widely used to assess the fidelity of Public Montessori programs to their roots. This document was also used in previous audits and is a well-known document collaboratively drafted and endorsed in the late 1990s by The American Montessori Society, the Association Montessori Internationale, the North American Montessori Teachers' Association, Montessori Educational Programs International, and the Southwestern Montessori Training Center.
 - a. In order to complete the Essential Elements analysis, the following were reviewed:
 - i. River Valley School website
 - ii. River Valley Charter School Annual Report 2012-2013
 - iii. River Valley Charter School Parent Handbook 2013-2014
 - iv. River Valley Charter School Faculty Handbook
 - v. River Valley Budget 2013-2014
 - vi. River Valley Staff list and credentials
 - vii. Montessori Membership Information
 - viii. River Valley Charter School Professional Development Report 2013-2014
 - ix. River Valley Charter School Professional Development Plan for 2013-2014
 - x. River Valley Charter School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan
 - xi. River Valley Charter School Progress Reports
 - xii. River Valley Charter School Teachers' lesson plans and record keeping
 - xiii. River Valley Charter School Classroom Inventories
 - xiv. River Valley Charter School Teacher Schedules
 - xv. River Valley Charter School Exit Goals
 - xvi. River Valley Charter School Admission Process
 - xvii. River Valley Charter School Montessori Audits 2012 with recommendations
 - xviii. River Valley Charter School Montessori Training Budget
 - xix. River Valley Charter School Parent Education Information

- xx. NCLB Report Card 2012-2013 and 2013 MCAS data for the River Valley Charter School
 - xxi. Common Assessment Schedule 2013-2014
 - xxii. Internal Assessment data 2013-2014-
 - DRA
 - Six Traits of Writing
 - Finish Line Math
 - MS Common Assessments – by subject
2. The second tool was a list of Montessori guidelines developed by Public Montessori specialists in Springfield during the crafting of two Public Montessori programs. **Montessori Classroom Guidelines** is intended as an internal evaluation tool. This form was not used to evaluate Middle School.
 3. For the middle school, a document created by Public Montessori specialists for evaluation of Public Montessori Middle School program, was used, **Evaluation of a Montessori Middle School Program**.
 4. Another Montessori evaluation tool used is the **Work Engagement Observation**. Its purpose is to do a quick evaluation of student engagement and to review Montessori materials in use. Section One is a snapshot count of what students are doing. It is tallied twice in each classroom visit- at the start of the observation and at the close. The numbers reported below are an average of both within all classes at that level. Section Two indicates materials in use during the 30 minute observation and gives a picture of what Montessori materials were being used at each level on a particular day. This form was not used to evaluate Middle School.
 5. The final tool used was open discussions with various groups: Kinderhaus, Elementary One, Elementary Two, Middle School teachers, Administrators and Parents. The questions asked to promote conversation were “What do you see as the greatest strengths of the school and what are its challenges? What would you like to see happen to improve the school for all members of the community?” People had the opportunity to think and talk about the schools strengths and challenges and thus appreciate where it is now. They could then see what they would like to see happen to move the school to an even higher level of excellence.

Results:

Essential Elements of Successful Montessori Schools in the Public School Sector

Area	Component	✓	Notes
Montessori Teachers	Employ Montessori teachers who have Montessori credentials for the levels they teach.	✓	All teachers are certified with the exception of the teachers covering the E2 sabbatical
	Maintain an active and open recruitment for Montessori credentialed teachers.	✓	The River Valley Charter School website is used to keep an active recruitment going. Openings are also widely advertised as needed.
	Budget for future Montessori teacher education for non-Montessori credentialed teachers.	✓	There continues to be funds allocated for Montessori training. An important focus for the coming year will be to fund training for non-Montessori credentialed teachers.
	Provide professional Montessori in-service by experienced credentialed Montessori educators.		River Valley has previously engaged in Montessori PD, however no whole school Montessori professional development was done in the last year.
	Contract for on-going internal and periodic external Montessori consultation and/or professional support as a follow up to Montessori teacher education.	✓	This Audit was performed by an external Montessori consultant. Additional professional support as follow up to Montessori training is done in-house by Laura Hunt.
	Employ one paraprofessional per classroom, each having received Montessori orientation for that role.	✓	All classrooms have either two lead teachers or a lead teacher and a paraprofessional
Administration	Employ an experienced Montessori teacher to serve as curriculum coordinator.	✓	RVC's Director, Andy Willemsen, the Academic Program Coordinator, Laura Hunt and the Middle School Coordinator, Colin Vandenburg are all experienced Montessori teachers.
	Employ a building principal/educational leader who has knowledge of Montessori principles and curriculum through Montessori coursework, Montessori Administrator Credential and/or annual conference exposure.	✓	The new Head of school, Andy Willemsen is a seasoned Montessori teacher.
	Maintain commitment to the core Montessori curriculum and instruction even with changes in administrative staff.	✓	The Administration at River Valley changed last year without change to their commitment to the Montessori curriculum.
	Sustain the support of the central administration through high profile communications about program development.	✓	The Accountability Plan for the school, as well as the most recent Application for Charter Renewal both inform central administration about program development.
	Recognize that the best implementation process is to begin with the 2.5-6 age group and add one age at a time for a gradual progression.		While the recognition of the importance of the multi-age program is there, there are limitations and restrictions on town and state funding for Early childhood programs and therefore RVC currently has only 5 year olds in Kinderhaus.

Recruitment/ Parent Education	Provide Montessori parent education programs that promote understanding of Montessori principles and curriculum.	✓	There is a new parent orientation as well as parent nights in each classroom. In addition the new Director has offered monthly morning meetings with parents as well as sending home 'Director's Notes' regularly which outline some aspect of Montessori education.
	Develop an admission process that informs parents about the nature of Montessori and seeks the necessary commitment to the program	✓	This process is well established from the first contact at the Open House through to enrollment.
Curriculum/ Environment	Offer a full complement of Montessori materials purchased from Montessori dealers.		Montessori materials were available to students in the Kinder and E1 classrooms with amounts varying from room to room, however there were many non-Montessori manipulatives (games, puzzles etc.) as well as worksheets and workbooks. Across all 6 classrooms the majority of students were engaged with non-Montessori materials. All but one of the E2 classrooms had a less than adequate amount of materials and notably there was only one student at that level who was using materials through direction from a teacher. This is an important area of growth for the school at all levels.
	Develop a classroom design that is compatible with Montessori "prepared environment" principles	✓	All classrooms had ample space with many prepared environments including plants and animals. There is a tendency towards clutter that can be addressed by giving staff seasonal release time to focus on their environments.
	Create uninterrupted daily work periods of 90 minutes to 3-hours, considering the 3-hour work cycle as ideal.	✓	Every classroom a 90 minute work cycle, with most extending longer depending on the day. It's important to create a schedule for science that doesn't break up the morning work period.
	Integrate specialty programs (music, art, physical education, etc.) around the uninterrupted work periods.	✓	Through creative scheduling this goal was mostly achieved with the exception of science in elementary.
	Apply the appropriate multi-age groupings: 2.5-6, 6-9, 9-12, 12-15, 15-18 necessary for the diversity, flexibility, and reduced competition integral to Montessori.		RVC currently has only 5 year olds in its Kinderhaus program as a result of limitations and restrictions on town and state funding for Early childhood programs
Assessment	Use a process of reporting student progress that is compatible with Montessori and includes parent conferences and authentic assessment tools such as observation, portfolio, performance assessment with rubric, etc.	✓	The student progress reports are on the brink of revision and when this occurs alignment with the Montessori curriculum is vital. Portfolios are used unevenly through the levels despite the school-wide professional development focused on Individual Learning Plans. This is consistently done at the MS level along with COLs.

	Implement state mandated assessments in such a way that the character of the Montessori program is not compromised.		RVC uses the MCAS as their mandated assessment tool. In addition they administer the Terra Nova. They also use internal assessments three times a year. There is interest in creating formative assessments as well. This focus on assessment is compromising the character of the Montessori program. Serious consideration needs to be given to scaling back the amount of assessments given in one school year.
Professional Development	Budget for continuing education through Montessori workshops and conferences.	✓	The budget continues to reflect an investment in Montessori workshops and conferences.
	Maintain membership with one or more of the professional Montessori organizations and seek Montessori accreditation to assure consistent quality.	✓	RVC is a member of the American Montessori Society and the Montessori Schools of Massachusetts.

Montessori Classroom Guidelines

NC=Not Consistently, G=Generally, C=Consistently

	Beauty & Order	Procedures & Routines	Grace & Courtesy	Work Habits	Instructional Environment	Instructional Approach
K	C	C	C	C	C	C
E1	NC	G	NC	G	C	NC
E2	NC	C	G	C	C	NC

These represent a snap shot of a day in April. They are also averaged across the classrooms, so represent four classrooms (two for Kinderhaus). Individual classrooms may have had more consistency in certain areas, but this is a reflection of the overall level. Checklist used to collect data is found in the appendix.

Work Engagement Observation

1. Work Engagement of Students:

	Engaging in work	Using work as a prop	Choosing work	Receiving help or in a lesson	Wandering	Behaving disruptively
K	47%	13%	23%	13 %	3%	0%
E1	35%	16%	14%	21%	1 4%	0%
E2	61%	11%	7%	14%	7%	0%

2. Work on Montessori Materials observed:

	Math	Language	Other: Cultural, Prac Life, Sensorial
K	Golden Beads, Wooden Number Cards, Hundreds Board, Hundreds Board Control	Moveable Alphabet, Object Box	Flag work, Baster work, Sorting
E1	Golden Beads, Bead Bar Box, Cut Tables with Finger Board, Bead Frames, Hundreds Board, Stamp Game, Checkerboard, Golden Mat, Area material	Preposition Grammar Box	Puzzle Map
E2	Golden Bead material		

These numbers represent an average across the levels, looking at student engagement and use of Montessori materials in classroom snapshots. It is notable that the work engagement has dropped at all levels since the last audit with the most dramatic decline in E1. Related are the materials observed in use in E1 – 50% of those materials were being used by children in one classroom where the work engagement there was distinctly higher than the average.

This data can be used as point of discussion, for teams to talk about how to diversify lessons and expand the use of Montessori materials in all classrooms, which will result increase student engagement in learning. Checklist used to collect data is found in the appendix.

Meetings:

Kinderhaus & Elementary I

Strengths:

- Restructuring of Admin is working. Team leader- leading meetings to get to things, addressing behavior successfully, doing a great job
- Sponsoring things for the community
- Many of the teachers have been here for a long time

Challenges:

- Assessment is eating away at the Montessori practice- concerns about third year students reaching abstraction, need for parent education, connection to E2 in preparation
- How to create a more Montessori school-wide environment- physically & socially (ie: fewer bulletin boards, stronger Grace & Courtesy)
- Dismissal- parent convenience vs. child-friendly. Chaotic, children rushed or need to wait, different doors being used, bus driver complaints about parents, rush hour! Lost instructional time due to the new system is a concern
- One whole community- How to have everyone know everyone in the school, how to get/stay connected.
- Community building- How do we educate the parent community around our Montessori values? Observation: parents of KH=respectful vs. parents of older students= less respectful
- Need a teachers' room to eat lunch, make a phone call etc. espresso maker would be nice
- Need a garden coordinator

Ideas:

- Select a curricular focus as a team for the year- take it one step at a time in terms of readiness for assessments
- Montessori environment day where everyone can work on cleaning and preparing their Montessori environments including non-classroom teachers
- Community building: Assemblies, welcome ceremony, getting to know everyone's name in the school, integrating the new students, field days, stronger parent education with more outreach, induction of older students, students to build/fix/paint something for the school every year, creating things of beauty
- Use Before/After school space for teacher lunch room
- Have an Earth Day as a whole school- going out
- Bring back traditions lost over the years

Elementary 2

Strengths:

- Partnerships in the community
- Vertical discussions
- Freedom to teach passions
- PD this year has been valuable
- Longevity of faculty
- Openness to talk about things, brainstorm,
- Jonnie Lynne- open door, supportive, involved

Challenges:

- Assessment driven academic program- pressure on teachers- passing the MCAS takes up all the room in the classroom and isn't even mentioned in the mission
- Public and Montessori clash- pressure from the Board
- New initiatives every year to address test scores and nothing is changing the data
- Need Montessori curriculum director. Feels like there is a Public school push with all the assessments
- Grace & Courtesy- in each classroom and school wide
- Honoring of the Montessori piece
- Exit goals exist yet students don't meet them and nothing happens
- Director over-involved with parents- too accommodating- wants to please everyone

Ideas:

- Tweaking Exit Goals to make sense
- De-prioritize assessments
- Bring back Integrated curriculum
- Use portfolio as evidence/ data rather than constant assessments

Middle School

Strengths:

- Strong public speakers
- Students know how to advocate for themselves
- Options to choose to lead students who know themselves well- strengths and challenges
- Students are self-driven in their learning, intrinsic drive developed over time here, inquisitive
- Deep exploration of curriculum
- Amazing team- interesting collaborations happening
- Engaged students
- Flexible schedule
- Project based learning
- COL process- preparation of the student and also evidence of student growth
- Mission & Vision work- How will this influence our approach to things?
- Beginnings of ErdKinder type activities: Plastic bag work, eco bags- Business 101 started with a small group at lunch, Greenleaf, Free the children

Challenges:

- Grace and courtesy—students know what respect looks like but don't necessarily act from that place- both student to adult and student to student
- Common Core/Academic expectations not being met:
 - Deep exploration of topics and the schedule itself prohibit getting to all the science concepts expected by the end of MS
 - Moving too quickly through the curriculum to get through all topics and missing opportunities to have hands on and experiential learning-
- How to make time for integrated studies to do more project based learning
- Isolated as MS teachers
- Flexible schedule is difficult for students with learning challenges- esp. executive functioning
- Integrated arts (specials) – How to get students to take them seriously and not as play time
- MCAS pressure that takes the space away from integration and collaboration on project based learning

Ideas:

- Integrating the specialists into academics- invite art/music teachers to curriculum meetings
- Rearrange groupings that go to specials
- Restructure specials to different blocks of time
- Collaborating about curriculum across the team and the school- need endorsement from Admin to take that direction
- Project room to do more hands on practical life activities with Kinderhaus, life skills
- More gardening, Farmer's Market connection, composting

Board Chair, Parent Board member & Community Board member

Strengths:

- Charter school community has grown around the school, the family community, sense of community within the school
- Commitment of the parents
- Adhering to Montessori philosophy
- Director's notes- well written and easy to understand with a Montessori slant
- Parents seem satisfied
- Solid hiring process for choosing a new leader
- Coffee with the Director- no agenda, open conversation
- There has been a bit more communication from teachers

Challenges:

- Tension between traditional and Montessori- parents think of it as a good school but aren't necessarily prepared for it to be a Montessori school. Need parent education explained in a way they can understand
- Translation and communication of expectations
- Spotty parent education offerings and attendance- better outreach to bring people into the school for programs
- Unifying everyone
- Calibrated classrooms with same curriculum direction, materials, consistency across classrooms
- Parental anxiety affecting teachers and administrators

Commendations:

- ✓ River Valley Charter school has had many of the same faculty members over time. This longevity is a sign of the school's success in creating a positive work environment. It is also a valuable asset in building and holding history and traditions that will serve the community.
- ✓ The school climate is generally relaxed and welcoming. Both adults and students appear at home and happy to be at school.
- ✓ Graduates of the school have completed the program with high academic (shown by their MCAS results), metacognitive, self-reflective, (shown in their goal setting, Celebration of Learning) and social skills (apparent in their community interactions and collaborative work) which prepare them for any high school setting.
- ✓ The schedule has been arranged to allow every class to have an extended Montessori work cycle every morning. It also provides weekly collaborative time for all teams.
- ✓ Classrooms are staffed by two adults, often both have some degree of Montessori training.
- ✓ A financial commitment has been made to continue to grow the number of staff members with Montessori training and to advance those already trained by investing in conferences and course work.
- ✓ In the Work Engagement data collection there were 0% of students behaving disruptively. Though this is a snapshot of moments in each classroom and there will be disruptions this low number is notable and commendable.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PAST AUDITS

WITH OBSERVATIONS AND FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2010 AUDIT	OBSERVATIONS AND FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2012 AUDIT	OBSERVATIONS AND FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS 2014
<p>Observation chair in every classroom with “Present, Circulate, Observe” model</p>	<p>Every classroom has an observation chair for teachers to use.</p> <p>Teachers were following the model of “present, circulate and observe” and teachers talked about recording their observations and how it has helped with planning. Lesson planning should include many small and one large group Montessori presentation daily, with representations to certain students based on data collected through observations.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION:</p> <p>~Have the observation chair clearly identified with a sign. This also facilitates the entrance and observation by an outside observer without disturbing the class.</p> <p>~Place an observation notebook on the chair for external observers to enter comments and questions. In this book, place a sheet outlining the guidelines for observers.</p>	<p>All but two classrooms had observation chairs. They were not all easy to identify and none of them had the recommended sign or accompanying notebook. The “Present, Circulate, Observe” model was observed in only two classrooms with most rooms focused on circulate.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION:</p> <p>~Without the presentation of Montessori materials there is little use for the Observation portion of the cycle as there will be nothing to observe.</p> <p>~If the Observation chairs are for visitors only then signs and notebooks are essential.</p>
<p>Evidence of “great lessons”, Cosmic Education curriculum with the suggestion of Professional Development in this area for teachers and the assembly of a kit with relevant science materials for the first great lesson.</p>	<p>Evidence of Cosmic Education was seen with the cultural work in classrooms. This was particularly apparent in the middle school where students are more able to be self-reflective. The spirit of Cosmic Education was evident in the school assembly I observed (presentation by two students on their Model United Nations experience). One of the teachers gave professional development to other teachers on the Great Lessons. Two of the E1 teachers have kits for the first Great Lesson, to be shared.</p>	<p>There was little evidence of Cosmic Education in the classrooms</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION:</p> <p>Use the “History Plan” offered for Elementary 1 & 2 at the 2012 Audit</p>
<p>Boldly use Montessori Materials</p>	<p>The use of Montessori Materials was apparent, particularly in E1. My observation of KH was shortened due to scheduling constrictions One E1 observation and two E2 observations took place during transitions. See above list of the overview of Montessori Materials observed being used.</p>	<p>This is an area of great need that seems to have had an upswing and has since had a downturn.</p> <p>See recommendations below.</p>
<p>Consistency at each level and between levels</p>	<p>Much work has been done on this and templates have been created for the ILPs and portfolios.</p>	<p>Though work was done on the ILPs and portfolios in order to create</p>

<p>i.e. portfolios, ILP systems and “exit goals”.</p>	<p>Teachers are working in teams on benchmarks and exit goals for the levels. <i>Therefore this work is still continuing, and full implementation should be in sight.</i></p> <p>RECOMMENDATION:</p> <p>Consistency in record keeping. MRX could do this but it would need a staff member being the main support for implementation, setting it up, coaching teachers on entering data and running reports, etc. so that it would be user friendly and consistent for the whole school. If not using MRX some other consistent system should be created which indicates where the students are on the continuum of learning, i.e. what skills are mastered and can be applied, (not just what teachers have presented) and the assessments used (formal and informal) as evidence of these proficiencies. This would be more in depth than the progress reports sent to parents, as it can be used internally for lesson planning and for when students move from level to level. Progress reports for parents could also then be more consistent in format through the levels.</p>	<p>consistency, Teachers display inconsistent use of the established framework across classrooms. It is at the discretion of each teacher whether or not, and how to use both portfolios and ILPs.</p> <p>The Exit Goals are in the formative state and need review to be aligned with both the Montessori curriculum and the Progress Report.</p> <p>Record keeping and lesson planning also appear to be done inconsistently.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION:</p> <p>~Use of the Collaborative Team Meetings to develop lesson plans and calibrate record keeping. ~Further work on Exit Goals with a clear understanding of how they will be used, along with a system to monitor their use.</p>
<p>Montessori Professional Development – refresher course.</p>	<p>Teacher feedback on the 7 sessions held with Ms. Slade over the past two years and in particular the June and August 2012 professional development days, was very positive.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION:</p> <p>Continue providing ongoing activities to keep teachers connected to Montessori Philosophy as a whole school, with annual whole school community building Montessori events for teachers. Ideas would be:</p> <p>(a) All day on site seminars by level with a Montessori expert during the year, on pedagogy. (b) Ongoing plans for whole school August Montessori Philosophy and Theory professional development each year before school starts, for inspiration and as a refresher.</p>	<p>Since the 2012 Audit there hasn't been any whole school Montessori professional development.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION:</p> <p>Enhancement of 2012 recommendation:</p> <p>(a) All day on site seminars by level with a Montessori expert during the year, on Montessori curriculum and materials. (b) Ongoing plans for whole school Montessori Philosophy and Method professional development at beginning or end of school.</p>

Recommendations

- **Assessments:** Give serious consideration to the use of assessments prior to the third plane of development. The development of the skills assessed in a written test as well as the skills of taking a test occur in the second half of the second plane of development during a student's time in Elementary 2. This trend is evident in the Terra Nova data shared in the Annual Report with 100% of students meeting the national average by 8th grade. Prior to, and during Elementary 2 it is essential that students have concrete experiences with the hands-on Montessori materials. The assessment of student work in a Montessori school happens through the following;
- Control of Error- built into all Montessori materials is a control that assists the child in self-assessing as they are learning
 - Three Period Lesson- each lesson should open with the third period of the learning from the last lesson (review of prior knowledge) and end with the third period from the material just covered in order to assess their learning.
 - Observation- The Montessori trained adult observes students working with materials in order to assess their mastery and plan their next step in learning
 - Looking at student work- A child's work is not corrected, rather reviewed as another data point to assess mastery and plan next steps.

Assessment-driven classrooms will default to short cuts including workbooks, worksheets, scripted programs and other pencil/paper tasks that prepare students to do well on tests.

- **Montessori Materials:** It is critical that Montessori materials are introduced daily in every classroom through E2. If the adult doesn't communicate their value through time spent presenting them, the children will not value them and have an interest in using them. A lesson-driven classroom radiates love of materials and learning, feeds curiosity, favors learning through repetition and error, and inspires Big Work. You will know you have achieved this when your work cycle ends with a lot to clean up and students who are so engaged they can't believe it is lunch time.

RVC is an established Montessori school with seasoned teachers in each classroom. It is not unrealistic to expect the percentage of engaged students at each level to double by the next audit. Nor is it unrealistic to expect the number and variety of materials to increase substantially.

These two recommendations are at the heart of holding the ground of being a public Montessori school rather than slowly becoming a public school without the Montessori part. The materials-based, lesson driven classroom expecting only the state required assessments annually will yield the results you are seeking without compromising the mission.

In order to accomplish this, teachers will need regular PD, functional cohesive systems, and accountability and support in equal measure.

Specific Suggestions:

- ✓ Academic Program Coordinator focuses her time exclusively on observing and guiding practice in the classrooms. A schedule is created for regular observation and meeting with each teacher in Elementary with review of Montessori lesson plans and goals set for the coming week. Kinderhaus and MS consultation as needed. All other responsibilities (assessments, curriculum documents, student behavior) are put on hold until the target increase in student engagement is met.
- ✓ Director does weekly walkthrough using the Work Engagement Observation tool. These results are shared in the weekly meeting with the Academic Program Coordinator in order to further target her work with teachers and classrooms. Results are also shared with teachers – copies of completed tool with optional conversation weekly and monthly updates on whole program statistics of engaged students and numbers of materials in each subject area.
- ✓ Weekly team meetings feature 10 minute teacher presentation on use of a material or student work rotating through teachers and subject areas set by Academic Program Coordinator based on her classroom observations. For example, she may see a material in use in only one class and invite that teacher to present, or may see no work in a certain area and call for teachers to step forward present.
- ✓ Using information gathered in classroom observations, and the Work Engagement Observation tool, targeted professional development is provided in June and August for each level to delve deeper into the Montessori curriculum and enhance use of Montessori materials. Continued Montessori PD is offered throughout the next academic year- fall, winter, spring – with follow up by the Academic Program Coordinator on a weekly basis in order to reinforce and encourage the use of all that is learned.
- ✓ A uniform system for inventory of Montessori materials is adopted and used with fidelity. The results of this annual spring inventory leads to the replacement and upgrading of Montessori materials for each classroom every year. In the first year, the Academic Program Coordinator reviews each classroom inventory in order to arrange for an equitable distribution of materials, ensuring that each classroom is fully outfitted with necessary materials through E2. Montessori materials are brought out of storage and put in classrooms as teachers review their use. The Academic Program Coordinator supervises classroom set up in August to be sure materials are sequenced on shelves and accessible to the students. Having a full array of Montessori materials in each classroom will support an increase in the amount of materials used as well as the variety used.