

Montessori School at Spears Creek and Pontiac



Purpose:

The Montessori School at Spears Creek Road Child Development Center and Pontiac Elementary School uses the Montessori Method of observing and supporting the natural development of children. Montessori educational practice seeks to help children develop creativity, problem solving, social, and time-management skills. Furthermore, the Montessori practice develops students who contribute to society and the environment, and become fulfilled persons in their particular time and place on Earth. The basis of Montessori practice in the classroom is respected individual choice of research and work, and uninterrupted concentration.

Key Components:

- Children are grouped in three or six-year spans and have the same teacher for this period.
- A minimum of one 3-hour work period per day, uninterrupted by required attendance at group activities of any kind is required for the Montessori Method of education.
- The practical application of the Montessori Method is based on human tendencies— to explore, move, share with a group, to be independent and make decisions, create order, develop self-control, abstract ideas from experience, use the creative imagination, work hard, repeat, concentrate, and perfect one's efforts.
- There are three stages of learning:
 - Stage One is introduction to a concept by means of a lecture, lesson, something read in a book, etc.
 - Stage Two is processing the information, developing an understanding of the concept through work, experimentation, and creation.
 - Stage Three is "knowing" (to possessing an understanding of) demonstrated by the ability to pass a test with confidence, to teach another, or to express with ease.
- The environment is arranged according to subject areas, and children are always free to move around the room, and to continue to work on a piece of material with no time limit.
- Scientific observations of the child's development are constantly carried out and recorded by the teacher. These observations are made on the child's level of concentration, introduction to and mastery of each piece of material, and social development and physical health.
- There are no grades, or other forms of reward or punishment, subtle or overt. Assessment is by portfolio and the teacher's observation and record keeping.
- Parental involvement is an important component of the Montessori Method. Parents promote the learning process by serving as the dynamic link between the environment and the child. Teaching is a joint responsibility of the school and the family.

Number of Students Served:

- Multi-age groupings, 3-5 year olds and 6-8 year olds
- All classes at Spears Creek Road Child Development (60-80 students ages 3,4,5 beginning 2008-2009)
- One to two classes at Pontiac Elementary (20 to 35 students ages 5, 6 beginning 2009-2010 with other ages phased in over the next two years)
- Phase 1, 2008-2009 programs for 3-5 year olds – Phase 2, 2009-2010 for 5-6 year olds

Eligibility for 2008-2009:

Open to any Richland School District Two student turning 3, 4 or 5 years of age by September 1, 2008. Selection will be by random lottery.

Outcomes:

The Montessori program of RSD2 will help children develop creativity, problem solving, social, and time-management skills and promote a willingness to contribute to society and the environment.