Education Plan

A.3.1 Mastery and Promotion

Criteria and Process the school will use to determine grade level promotion

Within the Montessori philosophy of education there are no grades, or other forms of reward or punishment, subtle or overt. Even though the classrooms at P.V. Montessori School are multiage environments (students typically remain in such an environment for three years) grade-level expectations have been established for all grades and subjects.

The classrooms at P.V. Montessori School are multiage environments and students usually remain with their teacher for a period of three years. During these three years, students can be retained, placed, or promoted. At the end of an academic year, teachers make decisions for promotion or retention based on how well students are progressing through the Montessori curriculum, Common Core Standards and the Arizona State Standards.

Inherent in the Montessori curriculum is to accommodates diverse learners and respond to the interests and developmental tendencies of children at this level in their development. Accommodation to individual needs is an inherent asset of the authentic Montessori methodology, which P.C. Montessori will apply. Students are expected to show progress each year by successfully completing the Montessori curriculum, and mastering core academic skills as outlined in the Common Core and Arizona State standards—both necessary to support their success at the next level.

Promotion: Students are promoted to the next level only if they have met the grade level content standards. At the end of the year, all students must have mastered the basic concepts and objectives of the grade level curriculum. Students that are meeting the standards and are not in a promotion year (for the next Montessori level) are placed at the next grade level.

When considering promotion, the child's social and emotional growth will be taken into consideration. At the end of the school year, the teacher will determine if this is the best course of action for the student by using criteria such as the results from the formative and summative assessments, standardized testing, intellectual maturity, and including physical, social, psychological, and emotional considerations.

P.V. Montessori School's Criteria for Promotion to the Next Grade/Level

- 85% mastery of Common Core Arizona Standards on summative assessments;
- 85% mastery on Montessori-based assessments in core curricular areas as indicated by MRX generated records and data;
- Grade level scores at least a year above expectations on teacher-based student assessments and observations in reading, language arts, and math;
- Exceeding/meeting grade level expectations as defined by the Arizona State Board of Charter Schools and the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) on State mandated assessments (AIMS & Stanford 10).

Retention: It is rare, but students will be held back in their grade level if the administration and teachers feel that it is not in the student's best interest to move up. Retention is an action that may be taken to assist a student to be more successful in their learning. Because Montessori classrooms are multi-level and age, a student held back is not as socially impacted.

If a student is not meeting the P.V. Montessori School's criteria for promotion to the next grade/level, a teacher may consider a decision to retain a student at his current grade level. This decision is made after employing many other interventions to try and help meet the child's individual needs. Parents will be notified early in the school year if their child is at risk of retention.

Early intervention is critical for maximizing the positive outcomes needed for our students' success. Identified "at risk" students and retained students will receive targeted assistance in their identified areas of needs and gaps during the year. Parents will be notified by the end of the year if their child is recommended for retention the following year. A parent-teacher conference will be scheduled to discuss this decision. The School Director will also be involved in those discussions. Not all children learn at the same rate, some children need an extra year to meet the standards.

In addition to the P.V. Montessori School's Criteria for Promotion to the Next Grade/Level, when deciding to retain a student at their current grade level additional factors will taken into consideration, such as:

- Physical, social, psychological, and emotional considerations
- Special needs and IEPs
- English Language learners
- Information provided by parents, guardians, teachers, and other outside resources, when applicable

Level of proficiency that students must obtain to demonstrate mastery of core content

85% on summative assessments is considered mastery of the objectives tested. Montessori teachers focus on the whole child when making judgments on whether a child is at risk of falling below state standards and Montessori goals for age and grade placement.

As a charter school, P.V. Montessori School is required to use the AIMS test in the spring to assess whether children have met state academic grade level standards in the areas of Reading, Writing, Math and Science. The data from these tests will be used to guide daily instruction for the student and to judge where the student is performing. Parents are notified of the child's performance in relation to the Common Core and State Academic Standards. Parents are encouraged to discuss these results with the student's teacher and to take an active part in planning and working for the student's continued academic improvement.