

Santa Cruz Montessori Mission Statement

As a Montessori learning community, we inspire life-long learning and a peaceful world by nurturing the natural development of the whole child.

MONTESSORI PRINCIPLES: Below are listed core principles which we believe embody the essence of Montessori philosophy and which are meant to serve as a guide in our efforts to achieve the mission.

1. The tendency toward purposeful activity is human. Learning is natural, self-satisfying, and lifelong.
2. True happiness is a product of sustained involvement in challenging purposeful activities that provide a feeling of self-worth and satisfaction.
3. Concentration deepens involvement and offers an intrinsic reward separate from the accomplishment of a particular goal.
4. There are periods in a child's development when the acquisition of particular knowledge and a skill is accomplished with greater ease. These sensitive periods must guide the curriculum. The environments and teaching methods will reflect the changing needs of students as they move through a series of metamorphic stages from birth to maturity.
5. An atmosphere of order, beauty and harmony best supports the work of the individual and invites participation.
6. Children learn best through engagement with materials and activities which are self-correcting and isolate basic concepts.
7. The work of the young child is very unlike the work of the adult. Children use the environment to construct themselves; adults use themselves to improve the environment. The young child works for the sake of process; adults often work to achieve an end result.
8. Activities that promote cooperation rather than competition are encouraged and lead to individual well being and a more cohesive society.
9. Children develop character through direct involvement in and responsibility for conflict resolution.
10. Younger children need experience and materials leading to physical independence, socializations, sensorial awareness, development of concentration, language and mathematical exploration, cultural exposure and opportunities for creative expression.

Older children need the materials and resources to acquire a common body of knowledge, which will enable them to function as adults. In concert with this, the integrated curriculum strives to provide the students with anthropological study, opportunities for independent research, and guidance and tools to become self-directed and life-long learners.

11. The support of the independence of the child is the foundation on which the interdependence of humanity is based.
12. Students need the opportunity to exercise choices in widening circles as they demonstrate the ability to make sound judgment and accept responsibility for their choices.
13. The development of inner discipline is fostered by allowing students to take initiative in choosing their focus of activity, following their own inner timetable, completing cycles of activity and participating in the evaluation process within the limits of time and readiness. The adult provides explicit and reasonable limits of time and readiness. The adult provides explicit and reasonable limits and the structure, which allows the student to feel secure.
14. Mistakes are a natural facet of learning. The environment should enhance the development of self improvement.
15. Multi-age grouping provides the student with a valuable experience that allows confirmation of skills and exposure to a wider range of experiences that include the opportunity to guide others.
16. If an adult performs an activity, which could have been accomplished by the child, the child is robbed of an opportunity for growth.
17. The role of the guide is to help the children in the natural process of learning. The guide creates opportunity for observation of students in order to assess their individual needs. The guides undertake continuing study in order to meet those needs.
18. Children are content and more likely to succeed when supported by a home and school that share common values. The school recognizes the role of the family as the first primary educator and supports this work through parent and community education.
19. Education must be viewed as partnership, where mutual trust and open lines of communication are maintained among all parties.
20. A respect and appreciation of life in all its forms is taught and modeled at all levels of school life. Students will be aided in becoming conscious of the universe as the embodiment of order and harmony; work at all levels of society will be valued as a critical aspect of the whole.