

Montessori Training  
of  
Southern Nevada

STUDENT HANDBOOK

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## **Who We Are**

As a result of our community embracing the principles of Montessori education, *Foothills Montessori School* (FMS) and *Montessori Visions Academy* (MVA) have joined efforts to create **Montessori Training of Southern Nevada (MTSN)**. We are excited to offer our first Montessori Primary (2 ½ - 6) certification course this year.

## **Mission Statement**

MTSN's mission is to provide our educators with a thorough understanding of and competency in the Montessori Method of education: its curriculum, principles, practices, ideals, and foundation beliefs, in order to maximize the learning and development of the individuals they teach.

## **Program Description**

The program includes two phases: the academic phase, consisting of over 300 instructional and seminar hours, and the practicum phase, consisting of a minimum of 540 classroom hours. The academic phase takes place over one summer academic session, weekend seminars, and a nine month practicum phase (student teaching). If enrollment warrants, a fall/winter course will be given. The academic phase provides a solid foundation in the Montessori Method. The practicum phase fosters professional development by integrating Montessori curriculum and philosophy. The purpose of both phases is to help students develop the knowledge, understanding, philosophical base and practical skills necessary to become competent Montessori teachers.

## **Program Objectives (Publish date, May, 2005)**

MTSN offers a comprehensive in-depth study of the Montessori Method of education to dedicated individuals who wish to share their love of learning with young learners. It encompasses methodology, pedagogy, curriculum and philosophy. Graduates are expected to demonstrate competencies (see MACTE Competencies, pg. 15) and, upon completion of the program, will have the experience necessary to implement the Montessori Method in an early childhood setting.

## **Educational Level**

While students are expected to have a college degree, we also accept students who have less than a bachelors degree, therefore our program is an undergraduate program.

## **The Early Childhood Credential: Two and a Half through Six Year Old Level**

The MTSN Early Childhood course is a rigorous study of Montessori philosophy and curriculum, and of the developmental and cultural factors that impact a classroom composed of two and a half through six year old children. The academic phase offers the teacher the knowledge, understanding and practical skills needed to prepare an environment that nurtures the physical, spiritual, emotional and cognitive development of the young child.

Respect for the individual, support of family, and differences in learning style and pace are emphasized. Other aspects of the teacher's role, including parent education and auxiliary staff training, are examined in depth. The nine month practicum provides the student teacher with an opportunity to practice and refine the learning experienced in the academic phase. Practicum requirements are described in that section.

Once a student has completed the MTSN Early Childhood course, the student will receive a certificate from MTSN demonstrating completion of the two and a half through six year old level of Montessori education training course. The student may choose to send a copy of the certificate from MTSN to Nevada Registry, in order to request placement on the Nevada Registry Career Ladder, which recognizes professionals in the field of Early Childhood Education in the state of Nevada. The Nevada Registry currently places those with certificates from accrediting agencies

such as MACTE, AMI, and AMS, at the 3.2 level on the career ladder. MTSN is accredited through MACTE and graduated students may apply for AMS Certification.

The MTSN Early Childhood training program meets or exceeds the annual training requirements for those supervising preschool children in Nevada stated licensed facilities and demonstrates qualified educators in the field of early childhood education.

### **General Admission Requirements / Application Process**

1. A sincere desire to work with children and the necessary interest, maturity, responsibility, and academic competence to master the Montessori Method.
2. A typewritten personal statement of no more than 360 words demonstrating:
  - \* why you wish to enroll in the MTSN program
  - \* a strong interest in the Montessori method of education
  - \* a desire to join the Montessori professional community
3. Proficiency and fluency in reading and writing in the English language
4. Three letters of recommendation from persons, (two professional and one personal)
5. Completed application
6. Interview with Director Lori Bossy
7. Two copies of high school diploma or GED, and / or college transcript
8. Non-refundable application fee of \$300.00

### **Certification:**

- Upon completion of all course requirements, demonstration of competencies, and payment of fees, students will be recommended for the appropriate credential.
  1. Students holding a Bachelor's Degree must submit an official transcript from an accredited college or university, and upon completion of the program will be recommended to receive the full Early Childhood credential.
  2. Students with less than a Bachelor's Degree will be admitted by submitting a copy of their high school transcript and diploma. Upon completion of the course, they will be recommended for an Associate Early Childhood credential. Students are encouraged to complete a Bachelor's Degree and, at that time, may obtain a full credential by submitting an official transcript and appropriate fees.

### **Ability to Benefit Policy**

Student ability to benefit from this training is evaluated by reviewing references, letters of recommendation, academic transcript, written statement of purpose and finally by interview. It may be required that a prospective student enroll in a remedial course at a junior college in order to gain necessary reading or writing skills. We attempt to fully inform students about the intense nature of the course, the significant work load of the course, and the high demands of the teaching profession. Students are encouraged to talk to other teachers and school directors before entering the training. Students unable to purchase course text books may check them out of the libraries for reference.

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

MTSN is committed to the principles of diversity. It does not discriminate in violation of the law on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical challenge, or national origin.

## **Location**

The summer academic phase of the Early Childhood program is held at Foothills Montessori School, at 1401 Amador Lane, Henderson, Nevada, 89012, and Montessori Visions Academy, at 3551 E. Sunset Rd, Las Vegas, Nevada, 89120. FMS is a purpose built facility hosting four primary classrooms, four lower elementary classrooms and two upper elementary classrooms. MVA hosts three primary classrooms, two lower elementary classrooms and one upper elementary classroom. The Early Childhood program will offer opportunities to observe Montessori classrooms and methodology in practice, as well as the opportunity to practice the skills of environment preparation, observation, order and organization that interns are expected to develop. Each classroom is well-equipped with the full range of Montessori materials.

## **Housing**

Housing is not provided by MTSN and is the responsibility of the student.

## **Student Services**

Advising services are available from the course directors. Resources for referrals for housing, medical care, counseling, recreation, and job opportunities are maintained in the course office. Facility is handicapped accessible, emergency services are within minutes of the training site at St. Rose Medical Hospital (102 E. Lake Mead Pkwy, Henderson, NV, 616-5000) and a multitude of restaurants, shops, banks, movie theaters, bookstores, school and office supply stores, grocery stores, and motels are available within a short distance of the training site. Material making equipment, laminator, copier, computers available on site, student is responsible for all costs accrued for supplies. There is a resource library on each site where books may be checked out.

## **Time Limits**

Students must complete all course requirements--academic, practicum, and financial- within three years following the official end of the academic phase for which they enrolled, or certification will be denied. The practicum must begin within two years of the end of the academic phase. If students elect to petition to pursue completion at a later date they will need to submit the request in writing, and will need to re-enroll in courses that were not completed and pay a \$200.00 reinstatement fee.

## **Records**

All records are kept confidential. Faculty members keep the records for each student for their course until the student has completed their requirements. Active and graduate files are maintained at the MTSN office. The credentialing agency maintains records of students who have been granted credentials. Students may have access to their records by submitting a written request to the director. Copies of credentials must be obtained from the credentialing agency. Student information and/or records will not be released without prior written consent of the student in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

## **University Credit**

University credit is unavailable at this time.

## **Auditors**

Individuals may audit components of the program providing space is available and advance arrangements are made with a director and according to the following requirements:

- Attend the philosophy and child development portions prior to any other subject matter.
- Attend all sessions of the subject audited.
- Be passive observers rather than active participants in the class.
- Pay a fee of \$80 per day. (Purchase of albums or books optional).

## **Continuing Professional Development**

To facilitate the continued professional development of our graduates, we invite them to attend any of our refresher courses at their level of certification at no charge. Contact a director to make arrangements.

## **Attendance Policy**

- Attendance and absences are recorded and the number of clock hours missed indicated through student sign-in sheets and then maintained in each student's records.
- All students must sign in for all classes, both am and pm.
- Attendance at all sessions is required. Students must attend mandatory practice dates once per month. In case of emergencies, a minimum of 90% of academic clock hours is required.
- Students missing more than 10% required academic clock hours are required either to make up these hours at an additional cost of \$60/per hour, or attend same course work at the next session offered.
- Students are required to prepare additional appropriate work (to be determined by instructor) for any class hours missed.
- Arrive at least five minutes before the scheduled class time.

## **Absence Policy**

Any absences or noticeable late arrivals will require notification to the instructor along with a written proposal for making up missed time (see Class Absence Form in addendum C). Full attendance is required during the practicum phase as well, where excessive absences will jeopardize both the student teacher's progress and the children in the practicum class (see Practicum Attendance Form in addendum C.)

## **Dismissals**

Students are expected to maintain a mature and professional attitude, as shown by their behavior during both the academic phase and the practicum phase. Faculty members have been instructed to give clear feedback to a student whose behavior is unlikely to result in his/her mastery of the material, or is interfering with other students' learning. In the event that a student seems unable to meet the standards of progress and participation common to post-secondary professional instruction, the student will be asked to meet with a Director to discuss withdrawal or dismissal. Dismissal will usually occur only after the student has failed to meet criteria listed in a performance improvement plan that includes issues to be addressed and a time frame for addressing them. Some examples of cause for dismissal include: lack of commitment to the training demonstrated by any of the following: inattention, late arrivals or absences, inability to interact with faculty or fellow students in a respectful manner, inability to grasp the concepts presented, failure to complete satisfactory work on time, or failure to maintain professional conduct and attendance during the practicum phase, failure to follow policies and procedures of the site, directors and/or instructors, or non-payment of tuition or fees.

A student who violates safety regulations, interferes with other students' work, is disruptive, obscene, under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or does not make timely tuition payments is subject to immediate termination.

## **Grievance Policy**

The student who feels that he or she has a legitimate concern should first bring it to the attention of the individual or individuals directly involved, looking for proactive solution. If discussion at this level does not resolve this concern, the next avenue is to schedule a meeting with Director, Lori Bossy. If the concern is still not resolved it may then be brought to a grievance committee consisting of the director, a faculty representative, a student representative elected by the group,

and the person(s) involved. If conflict cannot be resolved, then the chain of command is to contact MACTE, 524 Main Street, Suite 202, Racine, WI 43403, (262)898-1846, or AMS at 281 Park Ave So, New York, NY 10010 (212) 358-1250.

#### **Job Placement Disclaimer**

MTSN does not guarantee employment, salary, or occupational advancement. The employment prospects for Montessori teachers vary by locale, as do salaries and benefits. For more detailed information on salaries, obtain a copy of the American Montessori Society's report of their national salary survey at 281 Park Ave So, New York, NY 10010. Other sources of job information are through the AMS Job Opportunities mailing, and Montessori periodicals.

#### **STANDARDS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENTS**

1. **KNOWLEDGE OF INSTITUTION/PROGRAM POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS:**  
The student is responsible for awareness of all policies and requirements of the teacher education institution/program.
2. **PAYMENT:**  
Students must satisfy their financial obligations to the institution/program.
3. **PRACTICUM SITE AGREEMENT:**  
The student must fulfill all duties and obligations listed in the agreement with the practicum site.
4. **COMMUNICATION:**  
It is the responsibility of the student to notify the course director if opportunities for learning in the specified areas are not being provided at the practicum site.
5. **RIGHTS:**  
It is the responsibility of the student to initiate grievance/problem-solving procedures to the institution/program and AMS TEC Problem-Solving Committee in situations which warrant it.
6. **COMPLETION OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**  
The student must fulfill all course requirements, including but not limited to:
  - Academic assignments and requirements, such as attendance, projects, and teacher resource books. Albums must be completed and passed prior to testing.
  - Practicum assignments and requirements, such as seminars, observations, and student teaching.
7. **FINAL EVALUATIONS:**  
The student must satisfactorily complete written and practical evaluations for both academic and practicum phases.
8. **TIME LIMIT:**  
Students are expected to complete all course requirements, academic, practicum, and financial, within a three year limit.

**THE PRACTICUM MUST BEGIN WITHIN TWO YEARS OF THE END OF THE ACADEMIC PHASE**

#### **STANDARDS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION / PROGRAM**

1. **GUIDELINES:**  
The teacher education institute/program and their directors must abide by and enforce all guidelines of AMS and MACTE.
2. **SITE APPROVAL:**  
The director of each teacher education course is responsible for:
  - A. Determining suitable practicum assignments;
  - B. Providing a listing of students, their sites, and their supervising /consulting teachers to the AMS National Office by 30 days after the practicum begins; and
3. **MINIMUM PRACTICUM PERIOD:**

Each course must define the minimum practicum period(s) as described by the AMS guidelines for each age level of certification for which it prepares.

No part of the practicum may precede the beginning of the academic phase of the course.

4. PRACTICUM SUPERVISOR:

Each course must have a paid practicum supervisor-coordinator.

5. COMMUNICATION WITH PRACTICUM SITES:

The teacher education institution/program must regularly inform Supervising Teachers, Field Consultants, and Practicum Sites of course content and all pertinent expectations concerning the student's successful completion of the teacher education institution/program. Furthermore, each institution/program will determine that each site and supervisor's goals and expectations are compatible with those of the institution/program.

6. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES:

There must be a demonstrated problem-solving procedure available to students, staff, and supervisors within each teacher education institution/program which includes the establishment of a problem-solving committee with some member-representatives from the Montessori population of that course.

If any problem brought to that committee is not resolved, the complainant may initiate problem-solving procedures with the AMS TEC.

A copy of the institution/program's problem-solving procedure for each institution/program must be on file at the AMS office.

7. EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS:

Each teacher education institution/program must require the following from all students:

A. SEMINAR INSTRUCTION: A minimum of forty (40) hours during the practicum phase, if the academic phase is primarily in the summer.

B. REGULAR CONTACT AND ASSESSMENT: Individualized contact between institution/program and student must occur at least once a month. Three of these contacts must be on-site evaluations by a Field Consultant or other representative of the institution/program (e.g., someone other than the student's Supervising Teacher). A Self-directed practicum requires six visits.

C. AN ORIGINAL OR RESEARCH-ORIENTED PROJECT, to be approved by the director.

D. COMPLETED TEACHER ALBUMS (reviewed by staff):  
Practical Life, Sensorial, Math, Language Arts, Cultural, Philosophy/Child Development

E. FINAL WRITTEN AND PRACTICAL EXAMINATION(S).

F. ASSESSMENT OF CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE.

8. FINAL EVALUATION AND TRANSCRIPT:

Final written evaluation of the student must be made by the teacher education director, the on-site evaluator, and the Supervising Teacher and/or Field Consultant as a team.

Ultimately the director has the responsibility to recommend each student for certification.

An individual student transcript which verifies the student's completion of all minimum requirements, including examinations and three on-site evaluations during the practicum, must be maintained by the course. A copy of this individual transcript, authorization for award of the credential, and verification of on-site evaluations shall be sent to and maintained by the AMS.

9. FINANCIAL VIABILITY:

In its annual report to MACTE, each institution/program must demonstrate financial viability to assure completion of the full educational cycle, including all academic and practicum requirements.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Tuition and Fees	\$	Additional Expenses	\$
Application (non-refundable)	300.00	Course Text Books, Binders, Material Making	~500.00
Albums	300.00	Make-Up Hours (Per Hour)	60.00
Academic Phase/Independent Study	2,400.00	Audit Fee (Per Day)	80.00
Practicum Phase/Local Consultation/Observation Visits	1000.00	Reinstatement Fee	200.00
Review and Testing	250.00	Long Distance Field Consultant (>50 miles)*	TBD
Certification Fee	250.00	Additional fee for Self-Directed Practicum	300.00
		Incomplete assignments (Per Day)	20.00
<b>Total Fees</b>	<b>4,500.00</b>		

Tuition covers the academic phase, field supervisor visits, certification fees, albums and handouts.

\* **Note:** Students who select a practicum site more than 50 miles from the nearest MTSN field consultant will be charged additional fees: \$0.45/mile, airfare, overnight lodging, etc., as needed for supervision.

**Tuition does not cover:** the additional supervision visits needed in a self-directed practicum, make-up hours of instruction, make-up exams, supplies for material making, and binders for albums.

**Payment Options:** Students must pay a **non-refundable application fee of \$ 300.00** at time of registration. Fees due prior to the commencement of the academic phase are as follows: \$2400 tuition, \$300 album fees and \$250.00 certification fee. \$ 1000.00 fee is due prior to the commencement of the student practicum phase; the remaining \$ 250.00 is due prior to review and testing. Alternate payment option dates must be arranged at time of registration.

**Cancellation of Application Notice:** The applicant may cancel this contract and receive a refund of monies paid to date, if cancellation is made in writing to MTSN, 1401 Amador Lane, Henderson, NV 89012 within (3) business days after the date of signature on application.

**Refund Policy:** If a student withdraws from the program before the program's start date, 100% of paid tuition, less \$ 300.00 non-refundable application fee, will be refunded. Student is required to withdraw officially by writing a letter of intent to MTSN. Students who have begun each phase of the course are liable for the full amount of tuition for that phase.

**Financial Aid:** There is no financial aid available at this time.

**Time Limit:** Students are expected to complete all course requirements within a three-year time period following the official end of the academic phase for which the student is enrolled. The practicum must begin within two years of the end of the academic phase. A \$ 200.00 reinstatement fee is due upon approval from the director. Dates assignments due are mandatory. You may ask for an extension in writing, for no more than 30 days from due date for no additional fee. If you do not complete the assignment by the 30 day extension, an additional fee of \$20 per day will be assessed.

**Make-up Hours:** Students missing more that 10% required instructional hours are required to make-up these hours at an additional cost of \$ 60.00 per hour or attend missed sessions at the next training cycle.

**Auditors:** The audit fee is \$80 per day. (Purchase of albums or books is optional)

### Materials

Below is a partial list of the materials needed for the summer academic phase:

- Note taking materials.
- At least 6 sturdy three ring binders (2½– 4 inch). The number required varies according to personal preference and degree of illustration. It is recommended that you purchase only 3 two inch binders until you see what size you prefer.
- Clear plastic sheet protectors for your album pages for Early Childhood albums.
- A large quantity of section dividers for notebooks (5 to 15 per album)
- One set of quality colored pencils or pens for illustrations, and two fine-line pens for lettering.
- White and colored construction paper or fadeless paper and tag board for mounting pictures.
- Quality scissors and a razor type cutter or Exacto knife for cutting pictures from magazines.
- File folders and boxes for picture collection.
- Markers, glue stick, ruler or straight edge, etc.
- You will be asked to create materials for many classes which will involve expenses for materials, photocopies, and containers.
- The estimated cost of books and materials needed throughout the year is approximately \$300.00 - \$500.00.

Many students use digital photography or traditional cameras for illustrating albums. You may also hand-illustrate your albums.

## **PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

The course descriptions, student-faculty contact hours and type of instruction are as follows:

### **Child Development/Psychology (min 30 hours)**

Provides an overview of theories of development (8 hours), stages of development (8 hours), and areas of development (8 hours) which includes physical, cognitive, emotional, and social. Also includes 6 hours of current research on child development and psychology. (Lecture, discussion, practice.)

### **Montessori Philosophy/Theory (min 30 hours)**

Provides an overview of the basic philosophical ideas of Montessori, including relationships of Montessori's ideas to those of other educational philosophers. Discusses Montessori's views of the development of the physical, social, intellectual, moral and spiritual aspects of the child. Peace education as an integral component of Montessori education is examined. This class also includes historical perspectives on Montessori and the Montessori Method. (Lecture, discussion)

### **Observation and Record Keeping (min 45 hours)**

Offers techniques and guided practice in classroom management, including overview, observation of children, record keeping. Includes 16 hours of field observations. (Lecture, discussion, demonstrations, and field observations.)

### **Practical Life (min 35 hours)**

Offers an exploration of the application of Montessori philosophy to every-day activities in the child's life with emphasis on appropriate materials. Also includes design of the Montessori classroom environment. (Lecture, discussion, demonstrations, material design, practice.)

### **Sensorial Exercises (min 35 hours)**

Shows how the child's senses and pre-academic skills are developed through specific materials developed by Montessori. (Lecture, discussion, demonstrations, material design, practice.)

### **Math Curriculum (min 35 hours)**

Demonstrates the materials and approach for developing the "mathematical mind" as well as pre-math and arithmetic skills, exploration of the decimal system and place value. (Lecture, discussion, demonstrations, material design, practice.)

### **Language Curriculum (min 35 hours)**

Explores the approach and materials developed for facilitating young children's development in language skills, including writing and reading. (Lecture, discussion, demonstrations, material design, practice.)

The following courses require a total minimum of 55 hours:

### **Art, Music and Movement**

Gives an introduction to the Montessori music curriculum, as well as suggested activities from other early childhood educators for music and movement. (Lecture, discussion, demonstrations.) Provides exploration of numerous art media and techniques, including classroom set-up and general techniques, as well as the Montessori philosophy of art. (Lecture, discussion, demonstrations, practice.)

### **Physical and Life Science**

Further elaboration on the concept of "Cosmic Education" is offered through presentation of materials and activities for the children in these science areas. (Lecture, discussion, demonstrations, practice.)

### **Social Studies**

Demonstrates Montessori's concept of "Cosmic Education", including philosophy and hands-on use of materials, with material making. This includes discussion and presentation of materials for anti-bias, multicultural, multi-ethnic curriculum and activities for the classroom. (Lecture, discussion, demonstrations, material design, practice.)

### **Classroom Leadership/Administration/ Parent Relations**

Provides a discussion of the many activities required for effective leadership of a classroom and a school, including: conflict resolution, discipline, planning, staffing, health and safety issues, parent relations and parent education programs, record keeping and communication through parent conferences, and relations with government agencies. An overview of the practicum experience is included in this area.

### **FACULTY**

Our superior instructors offer a variety of teaching styles and backgrounds. They are here to share a plethora of experiences and wisdom with our trainees.

**Rosemarie Bushbaum** Certified Montessori teacher 2 ½ -6, with sixteen years experience, BS in Education, Taught workshops for Montessori teachers in Art, Practical Life and Peace curriculum. Primary Head teacher.

**Melissa Eckes** Certified Montessori teacher 2 ½ -6, with eleven years experience, MA in Education, taught early childhood in Japan for one year, taught workshops for Montessori teachers in Language, Math, Art, Science, and Geography. Primary Coordinator at FMS.

**Linda Khalil** - Certified Montessori teacher 2 ½-6, trained 6-9 and 9-12, with 8 years experience. Worked as an art instructor in a private elementary school with students from first through sixth grade. Has held several teacher education courses on topics such as Art curriculum, Language Arts curriculum, and Philosophy. Also taught NCME 2 ½-6 Primary Teacher Education in the areas of Cultural and Art. Primary Coordinator and Director of Montessori schools for 3 years. Currently pursuing Bachelors Degree, with one semester remaining before completion.

**Lori Bossy** - Director/Program Coordinator. Holds a Masters in Education, Montessori Certified 3-12, and has taught in Las Vegas for past 15 years.

**Amy Sandqvist** – Co-Director, Business Manager. Holds a BA in Education, Montessori Certified 3-6 and Trained 6-9, and has taught for several years.

### **PRACTICUM PHASE** (Minimum 540 hours)

The practicum phase is a student teaching position in an approved classroom for a minimum of 3 ¼ hours per day 5 days per week for an entire school year (nine consecutive months). The practicum experience is important because it allows the student to observe a good model of the Montessori Method in action. No part of the practicum may precede the beginning of the academic phase of the course. The practicum offers a constant source of feedback to students from the children as well as the head teacher. During the summer academic phase of the program, you will receive additional information on the practicum.

### **Selecting a Practicum Site**

The responsibility of contacting schools and locating a qualifying practicum site is the student's. MTSN Directors must approve the site prior to the beginning of the practicum phase. It is wise to make arrangements for your practicum site as soon as possible. MTSN does not operate any Montessori schools. If you are having difficulty locating a site, contact the Director Lori Bossy. (See Practicum Site requirements below). Students must complete the "Practicum Site Agreement" form.

NOTE: Students who select a practicum site located more than 50 miles from the nearest qualified field consultant will be charged an additional fee (\$.45 per mile, or airfare, and overnight lodging) to cover reasonable transportation expenses.

### **Practicum Site Requirements**

- The school must be financially stable, hold appropriate state licenses, have a written nondiscrimination policy, and be affiliated with the American Montessori Society (for a list of AMS affiliated schools, contact AMS).
- The Supervising Teacher holds an AMS credential or other MACTE recognized credential for the correct age group, and is in at least the second year of teaching, after his/her own practicum year.
- The practicum site must have the full age range for which the student is seeking certification. Kindergarten age children must be included with 2 ½ to 4 year olds, not separated in their own class or included in Elementary I.
- A minimum of 12 students, although a group of 20-25 is better.
- The classroom should have the full complement of Montessori materials, purchased and teacher-made, appropriate to the age level.
- The school administrator must understand the responsibilities of the school and the supervising teacher.
- School provides regular janitorial services.
- Student teachers are not allowed to take full responsibility for a class to cover absences of the head teacher.
- Schools must be willing to permit students to take time off from their classrooms to complete required program responsibilities, such as seminars and observations.

Any exception to the above requirements, including a self-directed practicum, must be approved by AMS in the form of an exemption waiver requested by the director of the program.

The relationship between the school and the student teacher is an employer-employee relationship, which should be spelled out in full in a written contract. The contract should cover salary and benefits, responsibilities (including supervision times, such as recess or lunch, and participation in after school activities, if expected), illness policy, material making policy, and so on. The internship may be a non-paid volunteer position or a paid position. The salary should be

negotiated between the two parties, based on the amount of time to be worked and the responsibilities assigned to the intern.

### **Requirements during Practicum**

- The student must cooperate with classroom procedures as set forth by the supervising teacher.
- The student should participate in parent conferences to help in further understanding of parent-teacher and specific parent-child relationships.
- The student should attend open house and faculty-staff meetings.
- The field Consultant will visit the student's classroom 3 times and observe and evaluate the student's progress towards the achievement of practical skills involved in Montessori teaching. Three intern checklist questionnaires must be completed by the student. A field consultant observation report will be submitted by the field consultant and reviewed with the students.

### **Model 1: Supervised Practicum**

Many students will work in the classroom as interns under the supervision of a certified teacher with three supervisory visits from a course representative.

### **Model 2: Self-Directed Practicum**

All the requirements for the supervised practicum apply to the self-directed practicum with the exception that the student has full responsibility for the Montessori class without the daily guidance of a qualified supervising teacher in the classroom. The self-directed practicum will require three additional visits (for a total of six visits) from a supervisor at an additional charge of \$300.00 to the student. The course director will determine eligibility for a self-directed internship.

Students may qualify for the Self-Directed Practicum with one of the following prerequisites:

1. Prior experience as an Assistant in a Montessori environment.
2. Two or more years of previous teaching experience.
3. Written approval of the teacher education program director.
4. A Bachelor degree.

### **Distribution of Information**

Information will be transmitted to students throughout the academic phase during actual sessions with instructors. During the practicum phase, information will be transmitted to students through written notes sent to the practicum site or given by instructors at seminars or observations.

### **Standards of Progress, Evaluation and Recommendation for Certification**

Students are expected to demonstrate continuous and steady progress towards completion of their course. Failure to submit more than 90% assignments by due dates or to function satisfactorily in a practicum position will result in filing of notice of academic concern. If students do not fulfill the plan made at such time by agreed upon dates, they may be dismissed from the course.

Evaluation of the student's academic performance is made by the faculty member in charge of that curriculum area, in consultation with a Director. Assignments (in-class tests as well as year-long projects, and written and practical exams) will be evaluated on quality, completeness and the extent to which they demonstrate students' mastery of the MACTE course competencies for their level. A student's understanding of the material will be evaluated also by participation in class activities. Final grade is evaluated as pass/resubmit. Work which does not meet an instructor's standards for quality and completeness will be returned to be re-submitted for final grade.

Additional fees will be imposed for taking exams outside scheduled times. In the practicum phase, student evaluation is based on informal and formal observations by the field consultant, written evaluations by the head teacher and the student teacher's self-evaluations. Each faculty member is responsible for determining satisfactory completion of the work assigned and will recommend the

successful student to the Director for certification. Only upon successful completion of all summer and workshop sessions, all assignments, a fully approved practicum experience, and payment of all fees will a student be recommended for certification.

**MACTE Competencies for Early Childhood (2 ½ through 6 years old) Certification: (Rev. June, 2005)**

The MACTE competencies for the Early Childhood Teacher Candidate are the guidelines by which a student's performance is judged. Failure to complete any component of the course means that a student would lack vital knowledge or skills, and would result in temporary or permanent withholding of certification.

The Candidate for Certification:

**1. Montessori Philosophy and Human Development**

- a. demonstrates an understanding of and implements Montessori philosophy with a focus on the early childhood years;
- b. comprehends and utilizes an understanding of the stages of human growth, development, and educational theories with an emphasis from two and one-half (2 ½) through six (6) years of age;
- c. demonstrates evidence of personal growth through self-evaluation and introspection;
- d. demonstrates knowledge of developmental and behavioral norms and potential recommendations toward early intervention services.

**2. Classroom Leadership**

- a. demonstrates observation, documentation, and analytical skills necessary for planning and recording the progress of children;
- b. utilizes cultural sensitivity in support of the development of individual children;
- c. demonstrates an ability to implement effective classroom strategies;
- d. demonstrates leadership skills and an understanding of professional standards;
- e. incorporates an understanding of administrative functions.

**3. Curriculum implementation**

- a. demonstrates the principles of Montessori environmental and material design;
- b. articulates the rationale and sequence of the Montessori curriculum;
- c. demonstrates proficiency in applying Montessori principles in the context of curriculum, didactic materials, and lesson presentations;
- d. designs and maintains a developmentally appropriate Montessori environment in response to the needs of students;
- e. utilizes a variety of instructional strategies and assessment methods;
- f. demonstrates an awareness and understanding of governmental regulations.

**4. Community Involvement and Partnership with Families**

- a. demonstrates cultural sensitivity in communications and work with families and children;
- b. demonstrates an awareness of community resources for additional support of children and families;
- c. identifies and has an awareness of available professional associations.

## **CODE OF ETHICS (adopted May 2005)**

MTSN supports a commitment to integrity and ethical practices on the part of all participants.

MTSN abides by the AMS Code of Ethics as follows:

### **Article I. CODE OF ETHICS OF THE AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY**

**ADOPTED BY THE AMS BOARD OF DIRECTORS, OCTOBER, 1969. EXPANDED, 1975**

As American Montessori Society Members, we pledge to conduct ourselves professionally and personally in ways that will reflect our respect for each other and for the children we serve. We will do whatever is within our talents and capacity to protect the rights of each child to have the freedom and opportunity to develop his full potential.

#### **PRINCIPLE I – Commitment to the Students**

In fulfillment of the obligation to the children, the educator:

1. Shall encourage independent action in the pursuit of learning
2. Shall protect the opportunity to provide for participation in educational programs without regard to race, sex, color, creed, or national origin
3. Shall protect the health and safety of students
4. Shall honor professional commitments, maintain obligations, and contracts while never soliciting nor involving students or their parents in schemes for commercial gain.
5. Shall keep in confidence information that has been secured in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

#### **PRINCIPLE II – Commitment to the Public**

The Montessori educator shares in the responsibility for the development of policy relating to the extension of educational opportunity for all and for interpreting educational programs and policies to the public. In fulfilling these goals, the educator:

1. Shall support his professional society and not misrepresent its policies in public discussion. Whenever speaking or writing about policies, the educator should take the precaution to distinguish his private views from the official position of the Society.
2. Shall not interfere with nor exploit the rights and responsibilities of colleagues within the teaching profession.

#### **PRINCIPLE III – Commitment to the Profession**

The Montessori educator makes efforts to raise professional standards and conditions to attract persons worthy of trust to careers in Montessori education.

In fulfilling these goals, the educator:

1. Shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the Montessori education profession.
2. Shall represent his own professional qualification with clarity and true intent.
3. Shall apply for, accept, offer, recommend, and assign professional positions and responsibilities on the basis of professional preparations and legal qualifications.
4. Shall use honest and effective methods of administering his duties, use of time, and conducting business.

*All AMS Montessori teachers, members, and AMS Member Schools are expected to uphold and abide by the Code of Ethics.*

**The American Montessori Society is committed to the principles of diversity. AMS does not discriminate in violation of the law on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical challenge, or national origin.**

## Course Contact Information

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