

The S.C. Public Montessori Study

Classroom Observation Data

In order to further evaluate programmatic fidelity, randomly selected Montessori classrooms are assessed yearly during uninterrupted work time. The observation process consists of an unannounced 60-minute classroom observation followed by an informal interview with the teacher. The purpose of the interview is for the observer to examine how the teacher conducts lesson planning, record keeping, and assessment of student progress. All Montessori programs will be observed at least once by the end of the study.

Observations are conducted by Montessori teachers (some retired) and teacher trainers who meet stringent credential requirements and have prior experience in public Montessori. They underwent extensive training conducted by the project Montessori consultant and the principal investigator.

The instrument used by observers was developed by the study team and the Montessori consultant, and was piloted in South Carolina and reviewed by leaders in a variety of national and statewide Montessori professional organizations. The instrument contains several focus areas that are widely accepted as essential in Montessori classrooms of high quality. Each observer is asked to assess whether indicators in each area are met, somewhat met, or not met. Each indicator's rating is assigned a point value (met=2 points; somewhat met=1 point; not met=0 points). In order to derive a percentage score, the total number of points awarded for all indicators is divided by the total maximum points that can be earned.

In the winter of 2013, 26 Montessori classrooms were observed. For the primary level, 7 classrooms were observed with total scores ranging from 71% to 95%. For the lower elementary level, 12 schools were observed with scores ranging from 68% to 93%. For the upper elementary level, 7 schools were observed with scores ranging from 59% to 88%. See **Table 1** for more information on classroom observation results and **Table 2** for more information on post-observation interview results.

In the winter of 2014, 28 Montessori classrooms were observed. For the primary level, 10 classrooms were observed with scores ranging from 40% to 97%. For the lower elementary level, 12 classrooms were observed with scores ranging from 51% to 91%. For the upper elementary level, 6 classrooms were observed with scores ranging from 75% to 91%. See **Table 3** for more information on classroom observation results and **Table 4** and **Table 5** for more information on post-observation interview results.

In the winter of 2015, 26 Montessori classrooms were observed. For the primary level, 14 classrooms were observed with scores ranging from 41% to 100%. For the lower elementary level, 9 classrooms were observed with scores ranging from 72% to 99%. For the upper elementary level, 3 classrooms were observed with scores ranging from 41% to 91%. See **Table 6** for more information on classroom observation results and **Table 7** and **Table 8** for more information on post-observation interview results.

In the winter of 2016, 19 Montessori classrooms were observed. For the primary level, 3 classrooms were observed with scores ranging from 60% to 99%. For the lower elementary level, 7 classrooms were observed with scores ranging from 86% to 99%. For the upper elementary level, 9 classrooms were observed with scores ranging from 86% to 100%. See **Table 9** for more information on classroom observation results and **Table 10** and **Table 11** for more information on post-observation interview results.

Table 1: Year One Classroom Observation Results

	Prepared Environment	Classroom Climate	Student Learning	Instruction		Total Score
				Teacher	Assistant	
Primary	80%	94%	91%	88%	85%	88%
Lower Elementary	72%	93%	94%	86%	88%	87%
Upper Elementary	72%	89%	85%	82%	86%	83%
Average Score	75%	92%	90%	85%	86%	

Table 2: Year One Post-Observation Interview Results

	Lesson Planning	Record Keeping	Student Assessment	Total Score
Primary	86%	57%	92%	78%
Lower Elementary	71%	63%	88%	74%
Upper Elementary	79%	50%	57%	62%
Average Score	79%	57%	79%	

Table 3: Year Two Classroom Observation Results

	Prepared Environment	Classroom Climate	Student Learning	Instruction		Total Score
				Teacher	Assistant	
Primary	81%	94%	87%	81%	78%	84%
Lower Elementary	60%	93%	90%	81%	80%	81%
Upper Elementary	63%	97%	79%	88%	85%	82%
Average Score	67%	95%	85%	83%	81%	

Table 4: Year Two Post-Observation Interview Results

	Lesson Planning	Record Keeping	Student Assessment	Total Score
Primary	80%	70%	70%	73%
Lower Elementary	79%	75%	83%	79%
Upper Elementary	100%	100%	83%	94%
Average Score	86%	82%	79%	

Table 5: Year Two Post-Observation Interview Opinion Questions Results

	Ability to meet the academic needs of students.	Ability to meet behavioral needs of students	Ability to implement authentic Montessori curriculum while incorporating Common Core standards.	Feel supported, not isolated by administrators and other teachers.
Primary	8.5	7.9	7.9	7.6
Lower Elementary	7	8.5	7	8.8
Upper Elementary	7.8	8.8	7.5	9.5
Average Score	7.8	8.4	7.5	8.6

*For this portion of the interview, teachers were asked to rate on a scale from 1 to 10 how much they identified with each statement (with 10 being the highest). The average rating for each question is shown above.

Table 6: Year Three Classroom Observation Results

	Prepared Environment	Classroom Climate	Student Learning	Instruction		Total Score
				Teacher	Assistant	
Primary	75.0%	84.6%	82.9%	78.1%	85.5%	81.3%
Lower Elementary	75.3%	98.3%	90.3%	89.2%	89.3%	88.4%
Upper Elementary	50.0%	75.9%	55.2%	73.3%	73.3%	66.3%
Average Score	66.8%	60.1%	76.1%	80.2%	82.7%	

Table 7: Year Three Post-Observation Interview Results

	Lesson Planning	Record Keeping	Student Assessment	Total Score
Primary	96.4%	100.0%	92.9%	96.4%
Lower Elementary	83.3%	88.9%	94.4%	88.9%
Upper Elementary	66.7%	83.3%	83.3%	77.8%
Average Score	82.1%	90.7%	90.2%	

Table 8: Year Three Post-Observation Interview Opinion Questions Results

	Ability to meet the academic needs of students.	Ability to meet behavioral needs of students	Ability to implement authentic Montessori curriculum while incorporating Common Core standards.	Feel supported, not isolated by administrators and other teachers.
Primary	8.1	7.2	8.3	8.1
Lower Elementary	7.7	7.8	7.1	7.2
Upper Elementary	7.3	8.0	5.0	5.7
Average Score	7.8	7.5	7.5	7.5

**For this portion of the interview, teachers were asked to rate on a scale from 1 to 10 how much they identified with each statement (with 10 being the highest). The average rating for each question is shown above.*

Table 9: Year Four Classroom Observation Results

	Prepared Environment	Classroom Climate	Student Learning	Instruction		Total Score
				Teacher	Assistant	
Primary	75.0%	80.0%	78.3%	64.4%	80.0%	74.6%
Lower Elementary	83.6%	97.1%	97.1%	86.2%	96.3%	91.7%
Upper Elementary	87.2%	99.4%	90.6%	93.7%	91.0%	93.3%
Average Score	81.9%	92.2%	90.5%	81.4%	89.1%	

Table 10: Year Four Post-Observation Interview Results

	Lesson Planning	Record Keeping	Student Assessment	Total Score
Primary	83.3%	83.3%	83.3%	83.3%
Lower Elementary	92.9%	92.9%	78.6%	88.1%
Upper Elementary	77.8%	83.3%	83.3%	81.5%
Average Score	84.7%	86.5%	81.7%	

Table 11: Year Four Post-Observation Interview Opinion Questions Results

	Ability to meet the academic needs of students.	Ability to meet behavioral needs of students	Ability to implement authentic Montessori curriculum while incorporating Common Core standards.	Feel supported, not isolated by administrators and other teachers.
Primary	8.3	9	9.7	9.3
Lower Elementary	7.1	8	6.7	6.1
Upper Elementary	7.3	8.6	7.6	8.6
Average Score	7.4	8.5	7.6	7.8

**For this portion of the interview, teachers were asked to rate on a scale from 1 to 10 how much they identified with each statement (with 10 being the highest). The average rating for each question*