

NEW YORK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OFFERS A FREE, PUBLIC MONTESSORI EDUCATION

Pending Lawrence Board of Education approval, Lawrence Public Schools will begin a phased approach to offering a free, public Montessori education at New York Elementary School. Beginning with the Children's House (ages 3, 4, and kindergarten) in the fall of 2022, the district plans to add Lower Elementary (grades 1-3) and Upper Elementary (grades 4-6) opportunities in the future.

Introduction to Montessori

Maria Montessori, an Italian physician, observed that children from birth to age six have an “absorbent mind,” a great capacity for creative activity, and a natural desire to learn. She developed a “prepared environment” to offer both structure and freedom.

The structure comes from the order of the classroom and knowing how and why to use different materials. The freedom comes from children's ability to choose their own tasks, work at their own pace, and move ahead as they desire to know something more or different.

The Montessori philosophy recognizes the uniqueness of individuals and their different rates of development and varying patterns of abilities. The approach stresses the importance of allowing children to experiment, learn independently, and progress at their own speed. Multi-age grouping encourages peer teaching and social interaction.

Online Registration

The Montessori Children's House will be open to all children ages 3, 4, and kindergartners with priority placement given New York school families. Register at www.usd497.org/NewStudentRegistration.

Requests for Transfer

Families living outside of the New York school attendance area may apply for a transfer to New York for their kindergartner and elementary siblings. New York school families choosing a traditional classroom environment may apply for a transfer to Cordley Elementary for their kindergartner.

Complete a Request for Transfer at www.usd497.org/Transfers. The district considers transfer requests on a first-come-first-served basis, as space is available, and does not provide transportation.

Montessori Curriculum

Professionally trained Montessori teachers will guide children through five main areas of the curriculum:

- Practical Life – Children develop skills that enable them to function independently through purposeful work that encompasses order, exactness, concentration, control, and sequencing.
- Sensorial – Children explore sensorial materials by using all five senses and begin to see relationships, develop recognition of form, and stimulate interests in geography, natural science, botany, and geometry. Children's interests become the basis for study.
- Mathematics – Math is sequential with concrete quantities, symbols, putting the symbols with concrete quantities, operations, and practice. Children progress independently through the math sequence.
- Language – Language development includes spoken language, written language, reading, and verbal enrichment. Children progress independently through the language sequence.
- Expression – Children learn techniques and tools through exploration, experimentation, and creative expression, working for process, not results.