



Policy: Special Education

Purpose	The Montessori Regional Charter School Board of Trustees recognizes that charter schools are bound about Chapter 711 of Pennsylvania’s Regulations, Charter School Services and Programs and Children with Disabilities. The Montessori Regional Charter School Board of Trustees recognizes that Charter Schools must comply with Federal regulations, including the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the American with Disabilities Amendment Act.
Authority	The Board directs school personnel to comply with all federal and state laws, regulations and Board policy concerning all child find activities.
Mission	The mission of Montessori Regional Charter School is to provide a superior Montessori program of study that will develop lifelong learners. Our children will be prepared academically, emotionally and socially by creating a love of learning through meaningful and fulfilling educational experiences. Our guiding principles are: to encourage independence and self-reliance; to honor, respect and value individual differences; a commitment to multiage, multi-ability, and multicultural classroom environments; to provide safe, prepared environments, filled with developmentally appropriate, tactile materials; to maintain a highly qualified staff and administration; recognize parents’ roll in our educational process and to be a resource for our community as a center for Montessori training, observation, and awareness.
Guidelines	<p>Each student with a disability shall be educated pursuant to an IEP which shall provide an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment, in accordance with federal and state regulations.</p> <p>The Charter school prohibits discrimination based on disability. Students with disabilities are entitled to receive services and accommodations which shall permit them to participate in programs, services and activities as required by law.</p>
Child Find/Outreach	MRCS shall utilize the resources of the Northwest Tri County Intermediate Unit for public outreach awareness system to locate and identify all children thought to be eligible for special education within our jurisdiction.
Homeless Children/ Wades of the State and Migrant Children	<p><u>Homeless children and youth</u></p> <p>The No Child Left Behind Act and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act require that homeless children and youth have full and equal access to an appropriate public education and that they experience success in school. Homeless students shall have access to the same educational programs and services provided to other students. Students shall not be discriminated against, segregated, or stigmatized based on their status as homeless. The District administration shall make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children within the District, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education.</p> <p>Students enrolling in the charter school who are, or become, homeless students should notify the District of that fact so the District can better ensure the student’s rights under federal and Pennsylvania law are explained to him/her and to his/her</p>

parents. “Homeless students” are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, which includes the following conditions:

- a. Sharing the house of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship.
- b. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- c. Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- d. Abandoned in hospitals.
- e. Awaiting foster care placement.
- f. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.
- g. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings.
- h. Living as migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

Migrant student education

Pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act and Pennsylvania’s Migrant Education Program, the Charter school cooperates and participates in the Northwest Pennsylvania Tri-County Intermediate Unit’s (“IU”) migrant education program for the benefit of migrant children attending the school. The school works in conjunction with the IU to improve and coordinate the educational continuity for the children of migratory workers who attend the school and encourages the parents/guardians of migrant children to inform the school of that status so the school can better ensure the student’s rights under federal and Pennsylvania law are explained to him/her and to his/her parents.

Child Find Activities to Inform Parents

In compliance with Pennsylvania (22 Pa. Code 14.121) and federal (34 C.F.R 300.111) law, notice is hereby given by Montessori Regional Charter School (MRCS) that it conducts ongoing identification activities as a part of its school program for the purpose of identifying students who may be in need of special education and related services (eligible students) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. If a child is identified by MRCS as possibly being in need of such services, you will be notified of applicable procedures. Special Education services are available, at no cost to parents, for children with disabilities, ages 3-21 years.

MRCS shall:

- 1. Directly or indirectly through the Northwest Tri County Intermediate Unit, publish once annually a written notice posted on the MRCS website to notify parents/guardians throughout the MRCS jurisdiction, of child identification activities and other public education services and programs, and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal law.

	<p>2. Display conspicuously in every public school building of MRCS printed circulars or pamphlets containing the information described in the above Section 1 of this policy.</p>
<p>Request of Services</p>	<p>Screening and Evaluation</p> <p>The Charter school shall establish a system of screening, including hearing and vision screenings. Screenings shall be conducted at reasonable intervals to determine whether all students are performing based on grade-appropriate standards in core academic areas.</p> <p>A parent/guardian may request a screening and evaluation at any time, however each request will be reviewed by the Charter School for appropriateness. Requests for evaluation and screening should be made to the Principal of MRCS. Parents of children ages 3 to school age, with requests for early intervention programs/services may request screening and evaluation by contacting the Early Intervention off of their home school district. Details regarding time and location of screening and evaluation activities conducted by MRCS for school children are available from these sources.</p> <p>MRCS shall utilize the following system for screening:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify students with academic need for referral to Building Level Support Team (BLST). 2. Provide peer support for teachers and other staff members to assist them to work effectively with students in the general education curriculum. 3. Identify students who may need special education services and programs. 4. Contact parents to information them of strategies incorporated in the classroom. 5. For academic concerns, assessment of student’s performance in the curriculum including curriculum based or performance based assessments. 6. For behavioral concerns, observation of student’s behavior in the classroom or other areas in which the student is displaying difficulty. 7. Completion of parent and teacher input forms. 8. Determination if formal evaluation is beneficial. 9. Consent of parents for formal evaluation. 10. Completion of the evaluation process. 11. Conduct a multi-disciplinary team meeting including parents/guardians to review evaluation results. 12. Completion of the IEP process.
<p>Confidentiality</p>	<p>Confidentiality</p> <p>All information gathered in the evaluation, identification, and programming of children who may require special education services is governed by confidentiality requirements under Pennsylvania and federal law, specifically, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.</p> <p>The Charter School shall maintain a system of safeguards to protect the confidentiality of students’ educational records and personally identifiable information when collecting, storing, disclosing and destroying student records.</p>

Charter school staff shall maintain the confidentiality of student records and personally identifiable information, as required by law and regulations and Board Policy.

Records generated by this process as well as records sought from non-school agencies are confidential and protected by both federal and Pennsylvania legislation.

Information to/from outside sources cannot be requested/released without written parental consent and the Charter School does not disclose personally identifiable information about students except as when so authorized under these laws.

The Charter school shall notify parents/guardians prior to destroying personally identifiable information is a student's record that is no longer relevant or necessary for providing educational services to the student.

Information about confidentiality and access to your child's education records is available from Charter School Principal.

TO THE EXTENT THAT ANYTHING IN THIS POLICY COULD BE CONSTRUED TO CONFLICT WITH THE SCHOOL'S CHARTER OR APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS, THE APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS AND/OR CHARTER CONTROL.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 2024

President

Secretary