

The Time is Now

Impact on the Montessori Community



Federal and State Legislation and Initiatives

- Universal Pre K- Preschool for All
 - Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grants
 - Child Care Development Block Grants
 - Preschool Development Grants
- K- 12 Education- Elementary and Secondary Education Act
 - Common Core Curriculum
 - Student Assessments
 - Charter Schools



The Current Public Policy Landscape

Accountability

Federal and State
Promotion of
Early Childhood
Education

Mandated
Requirements
and Expectations
for K-12
Education

Defining and Assessing “Quality”

- QRIS and School Report Cards
- Teacher Education and Experience
- Curriculum Guidelines/Requirements
- Student Assessments/Evaluations
- Rules and Regulations and Reporting
- Consumer Education

Public Policy and Montessori

- External Issues Facing the Montessori Community-



- The Montessori Teacher Credential is not appropriately recognized in Professional Registries or as an Alternative Pathway for a state Teaching License.
- The Montessori Curriculum must demonstrate alignment with state Learning Standards at the early childhood and K-12 levels to be approved.
- Student Assessments in the form of Standardized Testing and School Readiness measures, and Screening tools are mandated by policy.
- Day Care Licensing Rules and Regulations impact full implementation of the pedagogy.

Quality Rating and Improvement Systems

- Environment and Teacher-Student Interaction
Assessment Tools which are not consistent with high quality Montessori classrooms.
- Consumer Education



Professional Development Systems

- New qualifications for program directors and lead and assistant teachers
- Tiers, or levels, of mandated professional development topics and hours required
- Incentives such as \$ for benefits, scholarships, student loan forgiveness, wage supplements
- Required “tracking” of education, experience, professional development, movement on Career Ladder

Alternative Pedagogies are typically not recognized-

- Teacher credential and professional development systems
- Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS)
- Curriculum- Learning Guidelines
- Environmental Rating Tools
- Licensing rules and regulations
- K-12 rules and regulations



Impact on Montessori Community

- \$75 Billion in federal funding
- Benefits for Montessori Credentialed Teachers
- Montessori education is not being included in Federal, State or Local Initiatives or Public Policy

Risk for Montessori Community

- The Montessori philosophy is a distinct model of education with essential tenants that are crucial to its authenticity.



Internal Issues Facing the Montessori Community

- Apathy- There is nothing we can do to change things.
- Narrow Thinking- Policy doesn't hurt my school.
- Arrogance- Montessori education doesn't have to be worried about this policy stuff.
- Naiveté- If I ignore it, it will go away.

Divisions and Disagreements in the Montessori Community

- Private, independent schools
- Population whose families can afford “private school”
- “High quality” goals
- Fear, competition, self concern and preservation
- Public, charter school
- At risk, low income populations
- Expansion goals
- Collective concern- one agenda, one voice

Questions for the Montessori Community

- Can we agree on certain basic tenants or “absolutes” to define high quality Montessori education?
- Can we honor and respect our differences while embracing our similarities?
- Can we put aside our differences to create and collaborate on a collective agenda?
- Can we agree on goals and action plans for their accomplishment?
- Can we Compromise with Integrity?

Your Role in the Montessori Community

- In your school-
 - Discuss your mission and your core values- on a large and small scale
 - Provide meaningful opportunities for your families to learn more about Montessori education
 - Agree as a school staff what your goals are- define “integrity” and think about how you might work to support it.



Your Role in the Montessori Community

- As a Montessori parent-
 - Read about Montessori education and what is most needed for your child to benefit
 - Participate in school events- join the board, attend meetings, read the newsletter, ask when you don't understand
 - Discuss what you learn with others



Your Role in the Montessori Community

- In your state Montessori group-
 - JOIN !
 - Learn what issues your group is working on and join a committee
 - Inclusive membership- teachers, directors, parents, Teacher Education Programs, all affiliates
 - Determine the primary goals of the group and develop an action plan for each
 - Be willing to interact with people at state agencies, with implementers and makers of policy

Your Role in the Montessori Community

- In the Greater Network-
 - Communicate with other State Montessori Groups in your region and across the country
 - Participate in discussions about essential standards, policy in each state, advocacy work
 - Support one another's efforts, challenges and successes



Your Role in the Montessori Community

Our Collection Impact Can Make a Difference

JOIN IN

To support, protect, defend and preserve Montessori
education



- Christine Lowry, M.Ed.
Montessori NOW
www.montessori-now.org