



# The California Montessori Project

**A California Public  
Charter School**

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**California Montessori Project**

Charter

## **Introduction**

The Montessori philosophy states that a child has an innate desire to learn and produce purposeful, meaningful work. Dr. Montessori believed that the role of an adult in a child's education is to provide an appropriate environment, complete with tools and methods, to facilitate the child's own discovery of knowledge and skills at the time when it has the most impact for him/her as an individual. This system has a foundation in trust and respect of the individual and the result is children who soar beyond traditional expectations. Remedial children, or those developing at a different rate, get a solid foundation at their own pace, and all work on a time-line that is right for them. Conclusively, children who are delayed in development or advanced learners are continually challenged through the didactic kinesthetic environment.

Montessori techniques and teaching concepts were initially developed in the early 1900's for disadvantaged students who were at that time considered mentally retarded. Dr. Maria Montessori's students, using the child centered approach she had created through scientific observation, soon scored at grade level with other "normal" students. Her program was quickly moved into the general population with amazing success.

The spread of Dr. Montessori's methodologies in the United States have been focused, predominately, at younger children. However, private elementary Montessori schools are frequently unavailable to the economically disadvantaged due to high tuition costs, or have extensive waiting lists for enrollment. Students from Montessori Children's Houses (age 2-6) typically enter the public school system academically ahead of their non-Montessori peers (especially in core subjects such as mathematics and language) and are working in a more independent, self-directed, organized fashion. They have a positive feeling toward "their work" and take ownership in their daily tasks and accomplishments.

This approach results in yearly assessments that may appear uneven, but at the conclusion of the 3-year term, achievement matches, and often exceeds, expected outcomes. Most importantly, the child has developed self-discipline, shows initiative, and accepts responsibility for his/her own progress: He/she loves learning and considers it "his/her work". He/she knows how to "facilitate" him/herself, and so has become a life-long learner with the utmost confidence in his/her abilities.

Recent trends in educational reform have targeted certain population groups—socio-economically disadvantaged students, special needs students, minority students who speak English as a second language, to name a few. While these students, as well as those identified as "gifted or special needs", receive special programs and help, the average student must fit into a teacher-directed system that may or may not match his/her developmental stages and learning style, capitalize on his/her strengths, or promote his/her natural interest and joy in discovery.

While recognizing that the traditional system has met the educational needs of many, the option of a school where students work in multi-age classrooms with individual learning plans using proven styles of instruction and materials which are progressive, and frequently self-correcting, can be a great benefit to students in any community.

## **I Mission Statement and Core Values**

### **A. Mission Statement**

The mission of the California Montessori Project (CMP) is to provide a Montessori based educational program to every child in the state of California. We will offer an environment which has the tools, programs, resources and support to enable students to become educated to high international academic standards and to develop themselves to their fullest capacity as competent, happy, productive individuals, family members, workers, and contributors to a better society and a peaceful world.

This is achieved through a heavy commitment from the community: parents, teachers, community groups, the legislature and, most importantly, the individual child, and is grounded in a philosophy of trust in individuals to seek their own highest levels.

## B. Core Values

- Internationally high academic standards and expectations of achievement with emphasis on CORE subjects
- Small total school population and mixed age classrooms
- Creative, passionate, progressive teachers who are committed to Montessori philosophy
- Responsibility, accountability, and freedom for individual progress within the academic framework
- Challenges to develop critical reasoning, openness to encourage creativity, and opportunities to facilitate service
- High, unwavering Standards of Conduct:
  - Respect Seeking ones share of the workload
  - Honesty Balancing individual and group needs
  - Courtesy Exceptional manners
- Emphasis on collaboration, peer governance, problem solving, and goal-setting according to developmental readiness
- High parental involvement and collaboration in education and governance

## II Description of Educational Program

### A. Whom CMP Seeks to Educate

CMP will be a public charter school (K-12) with sites throughout the state of California. As such, it will offer an open enrollment policy. However, CMP will be particularly interested in attracting students who hold the following characteristics:

1. The interest and motivation to be educated in the Montessori approach.
2. The ability and capability to work independently.
3. The propensity to be self-motivated in learning and achievement.

### B. Model of the Educated Person

CMP holds that an educated person is well rounded and balanced. This individual is able to use the intellect as well as the body to it's fullest. The student shall become an empathetic, collaborative member of a community, yet motivated to set and achieve self set goals . There will be a demonstration of a proactive empathy towards others through respectful and

productive interactions with all interactions. The student will be guided to view him/herself as a global citizen who is empowered, and responsible, for making positive changes in the world and within the immediate environment. The student seeks spiritual understanding and peace, and appreciates and protects the right of others to do likewise. The student develops personal habits leading to a healthy lifestyle which includes balancing leisure, work, family, and community.

As a **SCHOLAR**, the student is proficient in math, science, social studies, languages and the arts. As a member of the global community, The student is proficient in at least one language in addition to English.

As a **HEALTHY PHYSICAL BEING**, the student is knowledgeable of and practices good nutrition, safety, and a healthy lifestyle. The student develops habits of physical challenge in ways that provide pleasure, stress release, and fitness.

As a **COMMUNITY MEMBER**, the student is able to collaborate with others, cooperate on projects, and manage and resolve conflicts. The student is motivated and ready to provide meaningful service to others and makes significant contributions with developed talents.

As a **CITIZEN OF THE WORLD**, the student understands the basis of our constitutional democracy, the rights and responsibilities of all, and stays informed on important political, social, and environmental issues. The student is informed regarding other political, social and cultural systems and seeks to understand and co-exist peacefully.

As a **SPIRITUAL BEING**, the student feels a connection with all of life and desires to live in harmony with nature. This means that every act of carelessness, selfishness, indifference, hatred and violence toward nature or toward other human beings is actually an act against him/herself, the family, and the culture. The student seeks the highest of human virtues, such as love, caring, generosity, responsibility for actions, forgiveness, compassion and openness to one another. This leads to sharing rather than accumulating, to cooperation rather than competition, and to peace rather than violence.

As a **MEMBER OF AN INCREASINGLY TECHNICAL AND INFORMATION BASED WORLD**, the student is competent and comfortable using a wide variety of technology as an integral part of life and is open to embracing new alternatives as they become available.

### C. Development of Self-Motivated, Competent, and Life-long Learners

CMP is committed to the development of self-motivated, competent, life-long learners. The Montessori curriculum is designed to promote individual initiative, critical thinking, self-reliance, intra- and interpersonal awareness and community involvement.

Dr. Montessori's methods are based on her scientific studies of how learning best occurs. Specific methods for encouraging self-motivated learning include:

- Multi-age, skill/readiness-based class groupings
- Interdisciplinary, project based learning
- Individualized lessons and learning in small group settings

- Use of a prepared environment and hands-on materials which are progressive in complexity and often self-correcting
- A flexible time-line which allows introduction of new material when it is most impactful to the individual
- Individual Learning Plans
- Low student-to-teacher ratios

#### D. Learning Occurs Best When:

- Students are actively engaged in meaningful tasks
- A connection is made between what students learn and the real world in which they live
- Individual plans and support is an intrinsic part of the educational program
- Students have some choice in the structure of their own projects and plans
- Work is accomplished individually and as members of a group
- Activities are integrated and meaningful
- Work is developmentally appropriate, leads to success, and is progressively complex
- Meaning is constructed from experiences
- Students are encouraged and expected to learn
- Coaches, mentors, family, and advocates support the learners
- Students are encouraged to help others learn and to learn from others

#### E. Academic Habits

Clear expectations of how learning is approached in the classroom as well as the cultivation of useful habits serve the child in his lifelong quest for knowledge, long after graduation from CMP. The following are some of the habits encouraged in the pursuit of learning.

- Curiosity
- Clear oral and written communication
- Creative thinking
- Logic thinking toward well informed conclusions
- Use of technology
- Adapting readily and responsively to new situations and information
- Using effective problem solving
- Finding, selecting, evaluating, organizing and using information from various sources
- Seeking alternative, and contrary, perspectives
- Making connections among various disciplines of thought
- Evaluating the reliability of information from video, audio, and printed sources, including advertising, the media, and the Internet.
- Making well-reasoned, supportable decisions

#### F. Personal Habits and Attitudes

- Courtesy, good manners and respect
- Honesty and fairness
- Accepting responsibility for personal decisions and actions
- A healthy lifestyle
- Empathy for others and respect for differences among people and cultures

- Concentration and perseverance
- Making and keeping commitments
- Self confidence and a willingness to make mistakes in order to learn
- Seeking a fair share of the workload
- Working cooperatively with others including: listening, sharing opinions, negotiating, compromising, helping the group reach consensus and taking a stand.
- Seeking and utilizing various personal adaptive techniques for handling frustration, set-backs or other barriers to reaching goals

#### **IV Measurable Pupil Outcomes**

All students will experience a common core of learning that fulfills CMP's mission. The purpose of CMP is to facilitate the student's achievement of the following outcomes.

##### **A. Core Academic Skills - Appropriate age or grade level mastery of:**

###### **1. Language Development**

Students will be strong comprehensive readers. They will develop strong speaking and debating skills. Grammar, writing, and vocabulary enrichment will be demonstrated in many forms of expression.

###### **2. Mathematics/Geometry**

Students will develop abilities to reason logically and to understand and apply mathematical processes and concepts including those within arithmetic, algebra and geometry. They will practice critical thinking, problem solving and knowledge application skills.

##### **B. Secondary Academic Skills - Appropriate age or grade level mastery of:**

###### **1. World History & Geography**

Students will demonstrate and apply society's historical, geographical, and cultural knowledge in order to serve as global citizens in today's world.

###### **2. Science**

Students will successfully utilize scientific research and inquiry methods to understand and apply the major concepts underlining various branches of science which may include physical and earth, botany, zoology, physics, chemistry, and ecology.

###### **3. Second Language**

Students will gain proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, and listening comprehension in at least one language offered by CMP in addition to English. Students will understand certain aspects of the origin and culture, both past and present, of the second language.

###### **4. Artistic Expression**

Students will apply and appreciate the many forms of artistic expression. Utilizing paints, sculpting materials, music, dance and drama, students will demonstrate historical aspects of the arts while discovering personal talents.

#### 5. Health & Family Life Education

Students will demonstrate development of the whole person; physically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually. By applying physical activities, nutrition awareness, safety, and self-exploration practices to their daily routines, students will learn to balance and manage work, leisure, family and community.

Montessori curriculum is integrated. Core academic subjects are presented to students throughout all daily activities, embracing many perspectives to result in thorough comprehension.

#### C. Life-Long Learning Skills

Students will develop skills that will enable and empower them to pursue their own path of learning throughout their adult lives. These include:

##### 1. Self Confidence and a Positive Attitude Towards Learning

Tasks are designed so that each step of learning is based upon what the child has already mastered, thus removing the negative experience of frequent failure. Repeated work with tasks, which are developmentally appropriate, and a carefully planned series of success, builds inner confidence in the child emulating a positive attitude towards future learning.

##### 2. Abiding Curiosity

By providing the student with opportunities to discover qualities, dimensions, and relationships among a rich variety of learning situations, curiosity is stimulated and an essential element in creative learning is established. A deep, persistent, and abiding curiosity is a prerequisite for future learning and education.

##### 3. Initiative and Persistence

By surrounding the student with developmentally appropriate materials and activities, he becomes accustomed to engaging in activities on his own. Gradually, this results in a habit of initiative – an essential quality in leadership. "Ground Rules" in the classroom call for completing a task once begun. This "completion expectation" gradually results in a habit of persistence.

##### 4. Reflection and Evaluation

Multi-age classrooms are designed to facilitate peer learning and self-reflection in an environment where observation happens naturally. The security created allows for evaluation of self and peers' learning.

#### D. Social / Interpersonal Skills

The multi-age groupings create a sense of community within the classroom. This community develops avenues for students to build the following skills:

##### 1. Citizenship

This community setting forms a sense of 'belonging'. From this belonging students can identify personal placement in the functioning of this group.

##### 2. Collaboration

The ability to work effectively with others in intellectual endeavors, and to work cooperatively in groups encountering diverse perspectives, is addressed in the Montessori classroom on a daily basis.

##### 3. Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution techniques are learned and practiced effectively in the classroom by engaging in the process of responsible, compassionate peer relations, guided by respect.

The strong community member skills mastered in the classroom will be expanded into a sense of belonging within the school as a whole through inter-classroom collaborative projects. Other projects will be community-outreach based and teach awareness and understanding of the school's place in the community. Applying this awareness and these skills will develop productive citizens of today's world.

Student exit outcomes will be further subdivided into a list of specific skills required in each of the above areas at different age and skill-levels. The specific age and skill-levels will meet or exceed those included in the California State content and performance standards. In addition to attaining specific content area and age/skill-level standards, students will demonstrate overall progress toward graduation readiness through a series of "benchmark" achievements at various points throughout their experience at CMP.

#### E. Methods to Assess Pupil Progress toward Meeting Outcomes

The student will be assessed using a variety of methods that include the following:

1. State mandated tests and other Standardized assessment tools
2. Personal interactive journals
3. Portfolios and handmade books
4. Informal oral and written exams
5. Demonstration of mastery using manipulative materials
6. Demonstration of mastery by peer teaching and/or cross age tutoring

7. Formal presentation to the class of projects and reports
8. Written evaluations by staff of level regarding academic mastery and behavior (personal development)
9. Self-Assessments - Reflection on both long and short term planning for Individual Learning Plans

## **V Governance Structure of CMP**

The organizational design of the governance structure of CMP reflects the vision of an educational community and the core values of strong parental involvement and participation. The governance structure includes administrative guidance from the sponsoring school district, governance by an elected Governing Board and participation by corresponding standing and special committees.

### **A. District Relationship**

The sponsoring District shall provide legally mandated oversight for the Charter. CMP shall be deemed to be an independent public charter school, incorporated as a 501 c 3 non-profit agency for all purposes, unless specifically stated herein.

### **B. By-Laws**

CMP shall be governed by adherence to it's by-laws. The Founding Board will develop the by-laws and define the Governing Board selection process. At a minimum, these by-laws shall contain the following:

1. The means by which Governing Board Members are to be nominated, selected, and removed from office;
2. The duration of each Governing Board's term of office;
3. The method by which Governing Board meetings will be held
4. The means by which parents, teachers, students, and other members of the community may communicate with the Governing Board; and
5. The procedure by which by-laws may be amended.

### **C. Governing Board**

The Governing Board is the governing entity. It consists of the following:

One teacher, one parent, the District Superintendent or designee, one Montessori community member, one business community member, one charter community member, and one public member from the community at large.

In addition, the currently employed Director(s) will sit on the Governing Board as non-voting members.

During the first three years of operation, the Governing Board will be a transitional board made up of members of the Founding Board and newly elected parents and community members as outlined in the by-laws.

All Governing Board meetings shall be conducted according to the terms of the Brown Act (Gov. Code Section 54950). At a minimum, the duties and responsibilities of the Governing Board shall include the following:

1. Financial and Operational oversight of CMP;
2. Adoption of CMP's annual financial budget;
3. Receipt of operating funds in accordance with the terms and procedures of the Act;
4. Solicitation and receipt of grants and donations to CMP;
5. Personnel policies and procedures and employee disciplinary matters;
6. Recruiting, hiring, and evaluating the Directors;
7. Approval of hiring recommendations made by the Directors
8. Approval of contracts with outside entities or persons over ten thousand dollars;
9. Financial audit oversight;
10. All matters related to Charter approval, amendment, or revocation.

#### D. Director(s)

Day to day administration of CMP is managed by the Director(s), and to the extent practical, in collaboration with teams of students, parents, teachers and administrators. The Director(s) may create committees as needed. Examples include:

1. Facilities (includes site and equipment)
2. Finance (includes budget and funding)
3. Fundraising (includes grants and donations)
4. Program (includes curriculum, assessment, and materials)
5. Personnel/Teacher Staffing
6. Marketing/Public Relations
7. Policy Development/Governance
8. Parent Association/Student Enrichment
9. Before and After Child Care

10. Legal (includes legislation)

11. Preschool operations

#### E. Parental Involvement

CMP will encourage families to give of their time to promote the success of CMP and its programs. CMP will work with parents to develop parent involvement policies and strategies. Parent involvement includes the following:

1. Participation in the development of the Individual Learning Plans
2. Participation with homework and support weekly learning assignments
3. Attendance at Parent Association meetings/educational meetings four (4) times per year
4. Attendance for progress report meetings with the teacher with a minimum of two times per year
5. Service to CMP. This can include serving on the Governing Board or Standing Committees, providing physical labor, providing professional or para-professional services, and staffing field trips, or any other ways as outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook

### **V Employee Qualifications**

#### A. Administrators

The Administrators of CMP shall possess leadership and organizational abilities and a comprehensive educational vision that is consistent with CMP's commitment to the Montessori educational philosophy.

#### B. Teachers

Teachers are pivotal to student success at CMP. The teacher's ability to closely observe the child enables her to create the proper environment and to support the child's inner developmental timeline and will preserve his sense of wonder and excitement toward learning.

CMP will retain or employ teaching staff who hold appropriate Montessori recognized certificates, and/or hold permits, or other documents as required by Charter School law. CMP will create opportunities for professional development for teachers and other staff.

#### C. Other Instructors

CMP may also employ or retain non-certified instructional staff when a prospective staff member has an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience, and ability to demonstrate capacity in working successfully with student instruction.

#### D. Support Staff

CMP will retain and employ non-instructional staff who possess the experience and expertise appropriate for the position as outlined in the school's staffing plan and personnel policies.

#### E. Volunteers

Volunteers play an important role in the operation of CMP and as such, commitments are to be taken seriously by all. Therefore, volunteer roles and expectations will be clearly defined and mutually agreed upon as outlined in CMP's policy manual.

CMP may hire outside agencies and/or independent contractors for additional certificated and non-certificated personnel to assist in providing instruction, management and support services.

### **VII Health and Safety Procedures**

CMP will adopt and implement a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies. These policies will be developed in consultation with CMP's insurance carriers, and the District, and at a minimum will address the following:

1. Each employee of CMP will submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary,.
2. Students and staff will provide documentation of immunization against appropriate diseases and CMP will maintain records.
3. Policies and procedures for response to natural disaster and emergencies, including earthquake and fire will be developed.
4. Policies relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens will be developed.
5. A policy will require that instructional and administrative staff receives training in emergency response, CPR, and first aid.
6. Policies will be developed relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines.
7. A policy will state that CMP will be housed in facilities that have received Fire Marshall approval.

These policies will be incorporated as appropriate into CMP's student and staff handbooks and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in CMP's staff development efforts and governing board policies.

### **VIII Means to Achieve Racial/Ethnic Balance Reflective of District**

CMP shall be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices and all other operations. CMP will not charge tuition and shall not discriminate on the basis of race,

ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual preference, disability or religion. Attempts will be made, however, to balance classrooms age groups and male/female ratio.

CMP will attempt to recruit a diverse population for enrollment, which resembles that of the geographic community from which CMP could reasonably draw students.

The recruitment strategy includes the following:

- An enrollment time line and process that allows a broad-based recruiting and application process.
- Distribution of promotional and informational materials to community groups and agencies that serve various racial, ethnic, and interest groups in the community.
- Submission of press releases to a variety of local media.

CMP will maintain information concerning the ethnicity of all the Charter School students, and if the balance is not reflective of that of the sponsoring district, a committee of school parents, teachers and a District representative will meet to discuss the imbalance and explore available legal options to remedy the situation.

## **IX Admissions Requirements**

As a California Charter school, CMP is open to students throughout the state of California. CMP will actively recruit a diverse student population from the local area surrounding each school site. Enrollment will be available to those who understand and value CMP's mission and are committed to CMP's instructional and operational philosophy. Admissions to qualified applicants is on a first-come, first-served basis during the open enrollment period, except that preference will be given to the following, in order:

1. Children with previous successful Montessori experience
2. Siblings of CMP students or of CMP alumni
3. Children of CMP employees
4. Children living within reasonable walking distance of the school site.
5. Children whose parents are employed in the area or are within walking distance of the school site.

In the event of full enrollment, eligible students will be chosen by lottery, according to the written policies of CMP.

Admissions will be carried out using the following guidelines:

1. Parents and students will tour CMP (once site is prepared) and participate in an orientation program that details the purpose, goals, and objectives of CMP. The orientation will include

an explanation of Montessori philosophy and methodology and how parents can best support their child in the learning process.

2. Students seeking admissions will be given an Admissions Interview, which will be used to assess their abilities to be independent, self-motivated learners. This assessment provides valuable information for all and is used in the development of appropriate learning plans. Students must agree to take responsibility for their own education and continue to be independent, self-motivated learners while at CMP.

In the interview, the appropriateness of placement will be discussed as well as:

- Curriculum
- Academic Expectations
- Behavioral Expectations
- Attendance Guidelines
- Parent Participation Expectations

3. Individual Learning Plans (ILP's) will be created with the cooperation of the child, parent and teacher. ILP's will be evaluated and updated throughout the year to facilitate educational progress.

## **X Finance**

### **A. Funding**

CMP elects to receive direct funding under the state's funding model.

### **B. Financial Audits**

CMP will cause an annual financial audit to be conducted by an independent auditor, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles. The auditors will, at a minimum, verify the accuracy of CMP's financial statements, revenue related data collection and reporting practices, and examine CMP's internal controls.

Should the annual independent audit indicate any audit exceptions or deficiencies in CMP's financial management or operations, the Governing Board of CMP shall address these audit exceptions or deficiencies at its next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Governing Board of CMP will then report to the District on how these audit exceptions or deficiencies have been or will be resolved.

As outlined in Education Code section 47604.3, The Charter School shall promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries, including, but not limited to, inquiries regarding its financial records, from its chartering authority or from the Superintendent of Public Instruction and shall consult with the chartering authority or the Superintendent of Public Instruction regarding any inquiries.

## **XI Student Suspensions and Expulsions**

CMP will develop and maintain a comprehensive set of student discipline policies. These policies will be printed and distributed as part of CMP's Parent/Student handbook and will

clearly describe CMP's expectation's regarding attendance, mutual respect, substance abuse, violence, safety, and work habits. The policies will be developed to conform to applicable federal law regarding students with exceptional needs.

CMP director may, pursuant to CMP-adopted policies, suspend students who fail to comply with these policies at any time. Students who habitually fail to comply with these policies and/or who present an immediate threat to health and/or safety may be suspended and later expelled by the Governing Board upon recommendation of the Director.

Prior to expulsion, students will be accorded due process unless the student's conduct presents an immediate threat to the health or safety of others. CMP will notify the district of any expulsions and will include suspensions and expulsions data in its annual performance report.

## **XII Retirement System**

Employees of CMP shall participate in STRS, PERS, Social Security or other qualifying plan, depending upon eligibility with the corresponding agency. All employees leaving the District to work at the Charter School shall enjoy the same employee benefits as all other employees of the Charter School with similar job classifications.

## **XIII Public School Enrollment Alternatives**

Enrollment at CMP is voluntary. Enrollment at the public school in the district of residence shall be an option for all students who do not choose to attend this charter school.

## **XIV Employee Rights / Labor Relations**

The provision of any collective bargaining agreement entered into by the District shall not be applicable to employees accepting employment at CMP.

### **A. CMP Employees**

All CMP personnel, including teachers, shall be "at will" employees of CMP and may be subject to termination at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice. Persons employed by the Charter School shall not be deemed to be employees of the District for any purpose whatsoever. The Governing Board shall adopt a handbook, which shall set forth the basis for personnel discipline. Nothing in this handbook shall be construed as providing any employee with a permanent position with CMP.

### **B. Labor Relations**

CMP shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer for purposes of the Education Employment Relations Act.

### **C. Work Year/Leaves**

The Governing Board shall adopt policies and procedures related to employee leave entitlement, which shall become a part of the employee handbook provided each employee.

## **XV Dispute Resolution Process**

### **A. Internal Disputes**

The Governing Board shall adopt an internal dispute resolution procedure that shall be binding on students, parents, volunteers, CMP personnel and Governing Board Members. Parents, students, board members, volunteers, and staff at the charter school will be provided with a copy of the school's policies and dispute resolution process and will agree to work within it. The District and Governing Board agree to refer all complaints regarding the School's operations, policies and procedures to the Charter School's Directors for resolution in accord with the School's adopted policies. In the event that the School's Directors fails to resolve the dispute, it may be referred to the school's Governing Board. The Board of Trustees of the District agrees not to intervene in the dispute without the consent of the Governing Board unless the matter directly relates to one of the reasons specified in law for which a charter may be revoked.

The Governing Board shall have authority to make final determinations regarding all internal disputes. The District shall have no authority or involvement in Academy internal disputes.

#### B. Disputes between CMP and the District

CMP shall work with the District in good faith to informally resolve any disputes that may arise between them. Should informal resolution of such disputes fail, the following Dispute Resolution Process shall prevail.

If the Board of Trustees of the District believes it has cause to revoke this Charter, the board agrees to notify the Directors and the Governing Board in writing and grant the school reasonable time to respond to the notice and take appropriate corrective action prior to revoking the charter. Any dispute between the Charter School and the District (collectively "the Parties") not so remedied shall be resolved in accordance with the following procedure. The term dispute means any alleged violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of a specific provision of this Charter or the Memorandum of Understanding, herein, MOU, between the parties, which does not constitute a severe and imminent threat to the health and safety of pupils. The parties will attempt to resolve disputes between the Charter School and the District by discussion and agreement between the District Superintendent or designee, a representative of the Charter School Advisory Council, and the Charter School Directors. If the parties are unable to reach agreement, the dispute may be referred to non-binding mediation before a single neutral mediator. A request for mediation shall be in writing and must be received by the parties no later than fourteen (14) calendar days from the date the parties last met to discuss the dispute and attempted to reach agreement. A request for mediation shall succinctly state the nature of the dispute and the relevant provisions of the Charter and/or MOU. The mediator shall be selected by mutual agreement from a list of mediators provided by the American Arbitration Association or other mutually acceptable alternative dispute resolution service. The mediation shall commence within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of receipt of the request for mediation, unless extended by mutual agreement for the convenience of the parties and/or mediator. The costs of mediation shall be born equally by all of the parties. No party shall commence any action in connection with a dispute under this Charter or an MOU without exhausting this dispute resolution procedure.

## **XVI District Relationship**

CMP elects to receive direct funding under the state's funding model. The sponsoring District agrees to provide Charter oversight required by law and CMP and the sponsoring District agree

to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding in which the District may provide services such as Risk Management, Administrative Services, Fiscal Services, Legal Services, Policy Guidance, and Special Educational Services. Services not provided by the sponsoring District may be contracted out to a third party. CMP is solely responsible for the fulfillment of outside contracts.

## **XVII Charter Renewal and Revocation**

The charter school will provide an annual progress report to the District. Within a reasonable time, the District will provide a written evaluation of CMP's performance. This annual progress report will include the specific reasons for the District's conclusions regarding CMP's performance. The governing board of the charter school may request from the district governing board a renewal or amendment of the charter at any time prior to expiration. Renewal requests should be presented by the school no later than 120 days prior to the expiration of the charter. The district governing board agrees to hear and render a renewal decision pursuant to the initial charter petition review timelines and processes as specified in the Ed Code Section 47605.

The Board of Trustees may revoke the Charter if it finds that the Charter School did any of the following:

- (1) Committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter or MOU.
- (2) Failed to meet or pursue any of the pupil outcomes identified in the Charter.
- (3) Failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.
- (4) Violated any provision of law.

## **XVIII Written Amendments to the Charter**

All Amendments to this Charter must be in writing and approved by a 2/3's majority of the Governing Board of CMP and by the School District.

In the event that any of the provisions of this charter are determined to be unenforceable or invalid for any reason, the remainder of the Charter shall remain in effect, unless mutually agreed otherwise by the Governing Boards of the District and CMP. In the event that any portion of this Charter is unenforceable and invalid, the Governing Board of CMP shall resolve any such deficiencies, where appropriate, as soon as practical, in consultation with the District.

## **XIX Terms of the Charter**

This Charter shall commence on the first day of operation and expires five years thereafter, subject to amendment and renewal.

## **XX Additional Considerations**

Details of any business or administrative services, special education services, costs and funding between the District and the Charter School shall be detailed in the MOU.

In the event of changes to state law or regulations applicable to charter schools enacted subsequent to granting this Charter which are inconsistent with the terms of this Charter, the parties agree to amend this Charter and any applicable MOU provisions to accord with any such

changes.

### **Special Education**

CMP and the Wheatland Elementary School District pledge to work in cooperation with all local education agencies (LEAs) and special education local plan areas (SELPAs) to ensure that a free and appropriate education is provided to all students with exceptional needs. The Charter School shall serve the needs of disabled pupils by complying with applicable state and federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination against, and requiring a free appropriate public education be provided to, children with disabilities.

During its first year of operations, CMP intends to function as a "public school of the local education agency that granted the charter" for purposes of providing special education and related services pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b). During each school year during which the school operates as an arm of the district for special education purposes, details of funding and services shall be delineated in the MOU.

The charter school and district shall annually and in good faith negotiate and enter into a written agreement to more clearly specify the desired mix of special education funding and services to be provided. The school shall enjoy reasonable flexibility to decide whether to receive services, funding, or some combination of both pursuant to Education Code Section 47646(b). The school and the district shall work in good faith to document the specific terms of this relationship in an annual contract or memorandum of understanding.

In the event the Charter School, at its election, presents verifiable written assurances during the term of this Charter that the Charter School will participate as an LEA in a special education local plan approved by the State Board of Education, the parties agree to amend this Charter and any applicable MOU provisions to enable the Charter School to do so.

### **Partial Invalidity**

The terms of this charter contract are severable. In the event that any of the provisions are determined to be unenforceable or invalid for any reason, the remainder of the charter shall remain in effect, unless mutually agreed otherwise by the School District and governing board of WCA. The district and school agree to meet to discuss and resolve any issues or differences relating to invalidated provisions in a timely, good faith fashion.

### **Provisional Agreement**

The California Montessori Project shall be approved contingent upon a successful memorandum of understanding being completed by the Wheatland School District and the California Montessori Project.