



## RUSD Montessori Program

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **What is a Montessori Program?**

Montessori education emphasizes independence and respect for a child's naturally developing cognitive, physical and social skills. Classes are multi-aged with 3, 4 and 5-year olds in the same classroom. To learn more about the RUSD Montessori Program, visit [www.rusd.org/montessori](http://www.rusd.org/montessori).

#### **Why Montessori?**

Children want to learn. At different stages of development, children are drawn to different things. The young child from birth through age six wants to learn the facts: the names of objects, how to do a task and the care of self and their environment. Providing these learning opportunities is the idea behind the Montessori Method of Education.

#### **What is the difference between Montessori and traditional education?**

Montessori is a method of education based on self-directed learning activities and learning through all five senses. Children in Montessori classes learn at their own, individual pace and according to their own choice of activities from hundreds of possibilities. Learning is an exciting process of discovery, leading to concentration, motivation, self-discipline and a love of learning.

#### **Is my child eligible for the RUSD Montessori Program?**

Children who are three or four years old before Sept. 1 can sign up for the RUSD Montessori Program. Children who are five years old before Sept. 1 **and** have one or more years of Montessori experience are also eligible.

#### **How can I enroll my child?**

Enrollment in the RUSD Montessori Program will be based on a lottery. The enrollment window begins Feb. 27 and ends March 25. Families can apply for the RUSD Montessori Program in three easy steps:

1. If you are new to Racine Unified, please enroll your child in the District online at [www.rusd.org/district/enrollment](http://www.rusd.org/district/enrollment) or in person at the Welcome Center, 3109 Mt. Pleasant St. The Welcome Center is open M-F, 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Enrollment is open now.
2. Bring the following documents to the RUSD Welcome Center:
  - your child's birth certificate or baptismal record
  - proof of address
  - your child's immunization record

At that time you will receive your Infinite Campus access code. **IMPORTANT: You will need that code in order to select the RUSD Montessori Program.**

3. The enrollment window for the 2017-2018 school year is open from December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 through January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017. After January 2017, families will be notified if selected through the lottery process.

**What is the schedule for the RUSD Montessori Program?**

RUSD Montessori Program students will attend Monday- Friday. 3 and 4-year old students will participate for a half day in the morning. Five-year-old students will participate for a full day.

**Where will the program be located?**

The RUSD Montessori Program will be located in the early learning wing at Goodland Elementary School, 4800 Graceland Blvd.

**Will transportation be provided for my child?**

Four or five year old students living greater than two miles from Goodland Elementary School will qualify for transportation. Transportation for 3-year-old students will not be provided. Please contact our Transportation Department for specific questions by phone at 262-631-7194 or email at [transportation.department@rusd.org](mailto:transportation.department@rusd.org).

**Will after school care be provided for my child?**

After school care will be provided for all RUSD Montessori Program students for a fee. More information regarding after school care will be coming soon.

**Is there a cost for my child to participate in the RUSD Montessori Program?**

No. The RUSD Montessori Program is offered at no cost to families.

**What does a typical Montessori classroom look like?**

Montessori classrooms for children 3-5 are self-contained and multi-age leveled. The older children in each level are able to help the younger ones while reinforcing their own learning and developing leadership skills. Class size is capped at 30 students.

Each Montessori classroom includes specially designed materials and equipment that enable children to work independently. Children learn responsibility by the real life practice of properly using and returning the materials to the shelves ready for the next person.

For young children, ages 3-5, the main areas of work include: practical life, sensorial, language and math as well as work in the areas of geography, biology, art and music.

**Can Montessori accommodate gifted children? What about children with other special learning needs?**

An advantage of the Montessori Program is that it allows each child to work at their own pace. Students whose strengths and interests propel them to higher levels of learning can find intellectual challenge without being separated from their peers. The same is true for students who may need extra guidance and support. Each student can progress through the curriculum at his own comfortable pace, without feeling pressure to "catch up."

**What training do Montessori teachers have?**

In Racine Unified, teachers in Montessori classrooms must be certified by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Teachers must also hold or be in training to earn their

American Montessori Society (AMS) or Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) certification.

Montessori teachers are taught to observe carefully and how to give just the right amount of help. They give new lessons when the children are ready for them. They encourage children to repeat and practice each step as often as necessary for the individual to truly understand the concept of the material. They watch to see that the child is working and learning.

**What Montessori philosophy will the RUSD Montessori Program use, AMS or AMI?**

The RUSD Montessori Program will be using the AMS philosophy.