

# Service learning proposal for school



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## Service Learning Proposal

Montessori Foundation of Chicago's mission statement is, " When it comes to your children, nothing less than the highest standards will do. Our institution provides a safe environment for your child to explore his or her full potential. If you're looking for a Montessori School that meets these stringent demands, look no further!" A description of a Montessori program is to create an environment that respects the child's unique learning path as a guide to developing him/her into an adult. The primary purpose of Montessori schools is to provide a well-planned, stimulating environment that helps children lay a good foundation for creative learning. The specific goals of children attended Montessori schools are as follows. Montessori Foundation of Chicago provides an environment where children ages 6 weeks to 6 years are cared for, nurtured and educated by certified Montessori teachers and early childhood specialists.

They are one of the few Montessori schools to offer a baby/toddler program. In addition to the infant/toddler program, they offer two-year programs, primary programs, and kindergarten programs. The Montessori foundation received permission from the Illinois Department of children and family services. Montessori philosophy is used in conjunction with developmental practices defined by the national association for early childhood education (NAEYC). This ensures that the curriculum is matched to each child's level of ability. The Montessori curriculum is an innovative learning framework that includes specific learning outcomes and knowledge skills tailored to children's developmental needs and interests. The demographics of children as a whole school is the majority of Caucasian students. There are also

Hispanic, black, and small few of Asian students. Overall, Montessori center wants to promote their children's personal development so that they are as prepared as possible for life's challenges.

The results of my interview make me understand how the teacher was, student, and parent's relationship looks like. Also, it's really important to have parent involvement in the school/center because this is how the school runs successfully. The main goal of Montessori center is to teach students how to be respectful and responsible. Not only the teacher teaches them how to be respectful and responsible, and parents also need to teach them at home because is the key goals for their child/children. Since Montessori education is different from Head Start or any education program. Therefore, this is one of the reasons why parents choose Montessori as their child/children's school. At Montessori school, children could learn and access to practical life activities such as wash dishes, baking, and more hands-on activities. These practical life activities not only can do it at home, and it could also practice at the center. Therefore, children will become more independent and readier to do so well in the future.

Moreover, as Ms. Holly mentioned that they have parent workshops and observation in the classroom, and teachers will send out emails, classroom newsletter, and meeting to get to let parents more involved with the school activities. Also, it makes me feel that having so many involvements with parents, so parents are easier and more reliable on the teacher and more likely to recommend friends and family to come to this school. Parent involvement can help expand teaching beyond the classroom, create a more positive experience for children, and help children perform better in school.

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Parents must support learning in a homeschool environment. Parents who are in tune with what is happening in their child's classroom is better able to connect what they learn in school with what is happening at home. Family or parental involvement not only helps to expand teaching beyond the classroom; It creates a more positive experience for children and helps them perform better in school. To keep up the parent involvement, they have the workshops every three months, parent conference, and yearly school camping trip.

Base on the interview results my learning goal is working in the classroom and the parents. It needs to be open communication and do the best as we can as a teacher with unbiased and cannot judge any opinion. Also, to make the school or my own future classroom successful, communication is the key components because getting to talk to the parents in a daily basis, having meeting or conference every three months to talk about their child to see what can they improve or even do better of their learning. To get parents to involve in the school, it's great to ask parents to volunteer in the classroom, ask if they are interested to come to my classroom listening to the lesson. For instance, do more hands-on activities with the parents and children. Parent involvement is really important because it gets to know more about their cultural, background, and families.

The three learning objectives and three learning activities I want to design are learning from their background and cultural, so first learning objective is food. Food represents cultural, and different cultures have different and special dishes. For instance, most of the children in the center are Caucasian, but not all of them eat burgers and pasta. As a future educator I

cannot assume what kind of food they eat, so we came up with an idea that by bringing food to exchange culture's different point of view. It's a great way to try something new and from the food, we could learn about the ingredient, and somehow one food might just make from a certain country. There was a case of dumpling is where Russia's idea, but some people said it's the Chinese idea to make the dumpling. We get to learn the history and more fun facts according to different country's cuisine. Therefore, the activity could be how to make dumpling (Chinese food) in two hours, how to make burgers (American food) in two hours. So, there's an activity of how to make different country's food on a different daily schedule.

The second learning activity could be music. Music is a great way to know each other, understand and learn from different culture. Music can bring people together in many ways. Whether it's through the same taste of music, or the willingness to try new things or even perform music with others. Many people like the same type or style of music that now appears in the world. Being part of a choir or a band or any kind of group is another thing that uses music to bring people closer to each other. Music is important because it brings people together. For instance, we could ask each student to collect the old or useless utensils from their house to make music. There are many utensils could make a song like spoons, bowls, plates, fork, and many different kinds of items. It's good to recycle the items that they don't want it from their house to form a fun and interesting activity for student, teacher, and parents to involve in this activity. For example, there might be a child who loves to sing, a group of students is shy could play with the instruments (forks, bowls...) to form a song.

The last learning activity that could be using the eggshell to decorate the classroom. Easter day is coming up soon during April. It's great to have the activity in the classroom and will invite parents to participate with the children in the center. For instance, the kitchen lady always uses eggs, so at this time we will ask her to not to break the eggshell, but letting the children volunteer to use the needle or any tiny thing like a needle to make a small hole to remove the egg whites and egg yolk. The lunch lady could still use the egg whites and egg yolk to make food for the children, so we are wasting the materials and the eggshell that going to use during the activity. When parents come to the activity day, everyone will create, draw, or paint the eggshell, so this activity could help parents and children gathers and have more family time and making a memory. While they are having fun, yet everyone will learn something from this activity. Parent involvement in school-based activities appears to have the greatest impact on children's performance, but family-based parental involvement also plays at least a role. The parents involved improving school performance in a variety of ways, including developing a sense of direction and encouraging self-discipline, a skill critical to school success.

## References

- Montessori Foundations of Chicago – About Us. (n. d.). Retrieved from <http://www.montessorifoundations.com/about-us/>

## Appendix

### Interview Questions – Family involvement Project

1. What does family involvement mean to you and your classroom/school?

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Teachers and parents are the ‘village’ that it takes to raise a child. We want our parents to be involved in helping their children become responsible, respectful individuals. We offer parents workshops and classroom observations to help the parents become more educated about educational research and Montessori education. We ask the parents to give their children access to practical life activities at home (chores, baking, etc.). We try to keep all forms of communication available to our parents so we can work together.

## 2. What are your current family involvement practices?

Parent workshops and observations of the classroom. Monthly classroom newsletter and school newsletter (with separate announcement emails, signs and conversations/meetings about whatever else either party needs). For more family events, we have a yearly school camping trip, family fun nights. Those are more relaxed events. When the events are held at school, we provide childcare. The casual events involve the children and another booked location.

## 3. What are the procedure of family involvement plan?

I’m not sure what the procedures are but all events are listed in a calendar we send out every year.

## 4. Do you have any monthly workshops or parent meetings?

Our school provides workshops at least every quarter per age group (infant/toddler, primary and elementary). Parent/Teacher conferences are twice a year and that involves the parents coming to observe their child

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before hand and them getting a progress report to look through in detail of what the children have been working on.

5. What kind of family involvement activities have you conducted in the past? Were they

effective and successful? If not, what did you do to increase the involvement?

Our 2 most recent events were “ An Overview of the Primary Curriculum” and (forgot the title) another one about how adults should talk to children about race. Most of our parents came and it was pretty successful. We offer food, drinks and childcare in almost every event. The events are usually on the weekends and after the children’s naps and meals.

6. Are you planning on keeping up with these activities in the future?

We have always done these activities which include info sessions for parents that are not already in our school every month.

7. What would you like for my project to assist you with specifically?

Tell me more about this project.

8. What do you believe would work best for your parents and classroom?

Open communication and doing our best to be unbiased and non judgemental. Or workshops are usually based upon what we see going on in our school or in the community.