

# FIRST STATE MONTESSORI ACADEMY

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2019-2020**



**1000 North French Street,  
Wilmington, DE 19801  
Phone:(302) 576-1500**

## I. OVERVIEW

### 1.1 School Overview:

Review the following chart with the school’s basic information. (Note: This table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy. **Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.**)

BASIC INFORMATION	
Name of School	First State Montessori Academy
Year School Opened	2014
Enrollment 2019-2020 <sup>1</sup>	599
Approved Enrollment	609
School Address	1000 North French Street, Wilmington, DE 19801
District(s) of Residence	Christina School District
Website Address	<a href="http://firststatemontessori.org/">http://firststatemontessori.org/</a>
Name of School Leader	Courtney Fox
School Leader Email and Phone Number	courtney.fox@fsma.k12.de.us (302) 576-1500
Name of Board President	Meghan Newberry
<p><b>Mission Statement:</b> The mission of the First State Montessori Academy is to create successful, contributing, life-long learners in a Montessori public educational program for students in Kindergarten through 8th grade.</p> <p>First State Montessori Academy will provide parents and students with an authentic, time-tested, Montessori education in a public school. We believe that the creation of a Montessori public school in New Castle County, DE will improve student learning, allow for greater choice for parents, and serve as a model for alternative approaches to education by providing a proven and innovative teaching and learning environment.</p>	

## 1.2 School Demographic Data:

Please review the following table for accuracy and complete the second row (“# of Students on Waiting List”) for 2019-2020. (Note: The remaining sections of the table will be completed by the Charter School Office. **Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.**)

ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION	
	2019-2020 <sup>1</sup>
Total Enrollment	599
# of Students on Waiting List	643
Gender	
% Male	45.91%
% Female	54.09%
Ethnicity/Race	
% African American	17.03%
% American Indian	0.33%
% Asian	3.84%
% Hispanic/Latino	2.67%
% White	69.45%
% Multiracial	6.51%
Special Populations	
% Special Education <sup>2</sup>	10.85%
% English Language Learners	1.17%
% Low-Income	9.52%

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Schools are invited but not required to comment on any aspect of the demographic data above in table 1.2

FSMA’s Low-Income Population is closer to 15 – 20%. The percentage reported only counts Direct Certification students and not income based forms.

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### 1.3 Approved Minor and Major Modifications:

The table lists any approved minor and/or major modifications over the course of the school's current charter term.

(Note: This table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review the following table for accuracy. ***Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.***)

Date	Modification Requested	Outcome

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Schools are invited but not required to comment on any aspect of the modification data above in table 1.3

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#### 1.4 School Enrollment:

Please review the following chart with the school’s enrollment trends during the current term of the charter. (This table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy. **Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.**)

School Enrollment Trends		
<i>Cells highlighted in grey were grade levels not serviced by this school</i>		
	2019-2020	
	Approved Enrollment	30-Sep Enrollment Count
K	78	80
Grade 1	78	73
Grade 2	78	82
Grade 3	78	73
Grade 4	78	81
Grade 5	64	61
Grade 6	62	55
Grade 7	48	48
Grade 8	45	46
Grade 9		
Grade 10		
Grade 11		
Grade 12		
<b>Total</b>	609	599

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Schools are invited but not required to comment on any aspect of the enrollment data above in table 1.4.

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### 1.5 Reenrollment:

Reenrollment Rate<sup>2</sup> is the % of students continuously enrolled in the school from one year to the next.

Review the following chart with the school’s reenrollment trends during the current charter term. (This table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy. **Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.**)

School Reenrollment Trends		
<i>Cells highlighted in grey were grade levels not serviced by this school</i>		
	First State Montessori Academy	
	Number of Students Reenrolled Count	Percentage of Students Reenrolled %
K	4	
Grade 1	60	85.71%
Grade 2	74	86.05%
Grade 3	68	88.31%
Grade 4	74	93.67%
Grade 5	61	92.42%
Grade 6	48	73.85%
Grade 7	47	94.00%
Grade 8	46	93.88%
Grade 9		
Grade 10		
Grade 11		
Grade 12		
<b>Total/Avg</b>	482	88.93%

\*\* School entry grade level. Reenrollment data not collected for this grade level.

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Describe the school’s plans to monitor and minimize attrition rates. Provide information about why students are choosing to enroll in different schools.

FSMA carefully evaluates our enrollment patterns each year. We are seeing strong retention numbers in all grades, except 6<sup>th</sup>. We know that specialized middle schools will still be appropriate for some of our students and will work with families to ensure every child is in the best place for them. Of our students leaving in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, about 1/3 went to a specialized middle school, about 1/3 went back to their district feeder school, and about 1/3 moved out of state.

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In order to help educate our families on our unique middle school program, we now have a transition plan for our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders, host Information Sessions, and provide lots of opportunities for families to see the Middle School Program in action.

We also identified that the lower grades had more attrition. As families are determining the right path for their child, we sometimes have families try out different models. That said, we find that once our families are here for a few years, they are very likely to stay.

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## Performance Agreement

### Academic Performance Expectations

First State Montessori Academy's 2017-18 overall academic ratings are: Meets Standard

- Academic Achievement: Meets Standard
- Growth: Exceeds Standard
- On Track to Graduation: Exceeds Standard
- College and Career: Meets Standard

By September 2022, our expectation is to achieve overall ratings of "Meets" or "Exceeds" standard measured by the Delaware School Success Framework. Each year, we will show growth within our rating putting us on track to achieve our academic performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

#### *Mission Specific Goal(s):*

Specific goals are:

FSMA will show continued growth year after year with a clear upward trajectory at the end of the next five years in all content areas for all grade levels.

At the five year mark, our percentage of children meeting or exceeding the standards on the state assessment in all grades and all content areas will be greater than the state average.

a) Discuss the school's academic performance based on its approved Performance Agreement (see above).

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#### School Comments:

FSMA is meeting our academic performance expectations. We will work to maintain the ratings of exceeds and grow in the areas that are meets to increase all of the areas to exceeds. FSMA has high expectations for our students and staff and will continue to build upon the solid foundation we have created.

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### III. ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The Organizational Performance Framework reflects expectations the charter school is required to meet through state and federal law and the charter performance agreement, and seeks to provide information regarding these key questions:

- Is the school organizationally sound and well operated?
- Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations and sound public stewardship?
- Is the school meeting its obligations and expectations for appropriate access, education, support services, and outcomes for students with disabilities?

#### 3.1 Mission Specific Goal(s)

Is the school faithful to its mission as defined in its current charter, including approved mission-specific academic goals if applicable?

#### FIRST STATE MONTESSORI ACADEMY

##### MISSION SPECIFIC GOAL

The staffing document shows that we have 2 teachers in our classrooms and the highlight notes who is Montessori certified or in the process of being certified (adhering to our mission by putting Montessori certified teachers in our classrooms.

The schedule document shows that we are able to created work blocks for each classroom in adherence with Montessori guidelines.

- a) Rate the school's performance according to the criteria established by the school for its 2019-2020 mission specific goal(s).

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School Comments:

FSMA has met all of the above criteria and submitted evidence to the Delaware Department of Education.

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- b) Provide as **Appendix 1** the results (data source) of the school's mission specific goal(s). Remember not to include any personally identifiable information (PII).

### 3.2 Organizational Performance

Note: Please utilize the hyperlink in this sentence for more information about the [Organizational Performance Framework](#).

The following tables will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy.

#### SUMMARY AND OVERALL RATING

##### First State Montessori Academy

Year	Education Program				Governance & Reporting			Students & Staff		Facilities, Transportation, Health & Safety	OVERALL RATING
	Mission Fidelity	Applicable State & Federal Requirements	Students with Disabilities	English learners	Governance & Public Stewardship	Oversight of School Management	Reporting Requirements	Students Rights	Req. on Teacher Certification & Hiring Staff		
Year	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b	4a	OVERALL RATING
2019-2020	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard

a) Describe the school’s organizational performance over the current school year (This section is for the school to address any overall rating where the school has not met standards. The school will be able to address individual metrics in the sections below.)

School Comments:

FSMA continues to have strong operational processes and procedures in place to ensure compliance with all requirements.

b) Identify changes to organizational practices that the school has implemented to improve the school’s organizational outcomes.

School Comments:

N/A

c) Address any measure where school did not meet standard or is approaching standard.

## Performance Agreement

### Organizational Performance Expectations

Discuss the school's organizational performance based on its approved Performance Agreement.

*First State Montessori Academy's overall organizational rating is "Meets.". By September 2022, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets," as measured by the Organizational Performance Framework. Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate performance aligned with those organizational performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.*

- a) Discuss the school's organizational performance based on its approved Performance Agreement (see above).

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School Comments:

FSMA has met our goal and continues to have strong operational performance in all areas.

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### 3.3 Board Financial and Governance Members and Training

a) Please complete the chart below with the necessary information. In accordance with Del. 14 §512 (15), the school shall have a satisfactory plan to ensure the effectiveness of its board of trustees, including governance trainings conducted for any new board members and at a minimum of once every 3 years.

#### Board Financial and Governance Training

First Name	Last Name	Term Begin Date	Term End Date	Role/Title	Financial Training Date	Board Governance Training Date*
DeWayne	Sims	6/1/2016	10/30/2020	Chair	8/20/2015	6/1/2019
Angela	Angeny	3/1/2015	10/30/2020	Vice Chair	3/30/2017	6/1/2019
Jed	Donahue	3/1/2015	10/30/2020		3/30/2017	6/1/2019
Zeke	Allinson	3/1/2015	10/30/2020	Treasurer	8/20/2015	6/1/2019
Rebecca	Phillips	5/30/2019	2022 Annual Meeting		5/7/2020	6/1/2019
Janine	Salomone	7/1/2017	2023 Annual Meeting		10/24/2017	6/1/2019
Michael	Reilly	5/23/2018	2021 Annual Meeting		4/26/2020	6/1/2019
Sarah	Nagle	5/23/2018	2021 Annual Meeting		5/6/2020	6/1/2019
Sara	Stabb	5/23/2018	2021 Annual Meeting	Teacher Rep	5/8/2020	6/1/2019
Meghan	Newberry	5/23/2018	2021 Annual Meeting	Secretary	5/4/2020	6/1/2019
Natalie	Marchiani	1/25/2018	2023 Annual Meeting	Teacher Rep	4/13/2020	6/1/2019
Courtney	Loughney	5/23/2018	2021 Annual Meeting	Parent Rep	5/22/2020	6/1/2019
Loren	Holland	5/30/2019	2022 Annual Meeting		5/14/2020	6/1/2019

\*Please list only the most recent training date.

**Please attach all certificates or evidence of Board Governance Training for active board members.**

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School Comments:

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b) Please complete the chart below with the necessary information. Pursuant to [14 Del. Admin. Code 736](#) 6.1 Each member of a Citizen Budget Oversight Committee shall attend and receive a Certificate of Completion for the Citizen Budget Oversight Committee training within the allotted timeframe of his/her appointment to a Citizen Budget Oversight Committee. Provided further, additional training may be required from time to time as determined by the Department.

### Citizen Budget Oversight Committee Membership & Trainings

First Name	Last Name	Role/Title	Financial Training Date
Robbie	Smith	Community Member	10/24/2017
Courtney	Fox	Head of School	11/21/2013
Liz	Madden	Teacher Representative	9/29/2014
Jill	Pyle	Teacher Representative	9/29/2014
Richard	Riggs	DOE Representative	11/30/2015
Zeke	Allinson		8/20/2015
Matt	Petrin		10/11/2019
Rob	Tice		3/30/2017
Kerry	Stewart		10/5/2020
Laura	Schwait		10/12/2020
Michelle	Treisner		10/18/2020

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School Comments:

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### 3.4 Teacher Retention: Is the school monitoring and minimizing teacher attrition rates and maintaining a stable teaching staff?

2019-2020		
% of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers ELIGIBLE
86.7	39	45

Review the table above with the school's teacher retention trends and answer the following questions.

- a) Describe the school's plans to monitor and minimize teacher attrition rates. Provide information about why teachers leave the school.

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**School Comments:**

FSMA teacher retention rates are typically between 85 – 95%. As a school with different teaching positions, (full time and part time) and a school that requires additional training (Montessori) within 2 years, there is a uniqueness to our teaching positions that impacts our retention rates.

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- b) Describe how the school's professional development plans support teachers and leadership.

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**School Comments:**

FSMA's Professional Development plan contains 2 constant comprehensive programs – Montessori and Responsive Classroom. All full-time teachers are required to be Montessori certified and part-time teachers are provided the option of completing certification. In addition, ALL staff participate in Responsive Classroom training and are certified at Level 1, with many having additional certifications.

**FSMA Professional Development Plan Summary:**

High-quality and ongoing professional development is essential in a school to address the ever-changing needs of all learners. Research shows a strong correlation between teachers' instructional strategies and student success and that a teacher's repertoire of classroom strategies depends upon the quality of professional development that the teacher receives.

**Goals:**

- Ensure all classrooms have a Montessori trained teacher who is also state certified thus having a combination of skills to integrate Montessori and CCSS curriculum
- Ensure all classroom teachers are trained in Responsive Classroom
- Create opportunities for teachers to learn new differentiation techniques and utilize the expertise of the special education teacher

**Activities:**

- Ensure that professional development be extended to anyone who works with teachers to support student achievement. This will require us to identify possible staff and invite them to professional development activities.
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- Inform staff of professional development plan and goals for the upcoming school year.
  - Seek opportunities for training both locally and nationally in Montessori, CCSS, Responsive Classroom and other programs that support the individual needs of FSMA students.
  - Identify substitute teachers who have an alignment of philosophy and hire them so that teachers may attend meetings and professional development during the school day.
  - Create a school calendar that allows teachers to attend the local MTAD conference and the national AMS conference each year.
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## IV. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

### 4.1 Financial Performance

Note: Please utilize the hyperlink in this sentence for more information about the [Financial Performance Framework](#).

The following tables will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy.

Financial Performance Framework Ratings	Near Term Indicators				Sustainability Indicators				Financial Management and Oversight	Overall Rating
	Current Ratio	Days Cash	Enrollment Variance	Default, Loan Covenants, & Debt Service Payments	Total Margin	Debt Asset Ratio	Cash Flow	Debt Service Coverage Ratio		
Year	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	2d	3	
2019-2020	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard

a) Describe the school’s Financial performance over the current school year (This section is for the school to address any overall rating where the school has not met standards. The school will be able to address individual metrics in the sections below.)

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School Comments:

N/A

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b) Identify changes to Financial practices that the school has implemented to improve the school’s financial outcomes.

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School Comments:

N/A

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c) Address any measure where school did not meet standard or is approaching standard

## Performance Agreement

### Financial Performance Expectations

*First State Montessori Academy's overall financial rating is "Meets.". By September 2022, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets" standard as measured by the Financial Performance Framework. Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate economic viability and achieve our financial performance expectation. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.*

- a) Discuss the school's financial performance based on its approved Performance Agreement.

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School Comments:

FSMA has met this standard each year and will continue with the same financial oversight to ensure this viability and stability remains over time.

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- b) Describe how the school developed and implemented a corrective action plan in response to audit findings (if applicable).

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School Comments:

N/A

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## V. INNOVATION

Describe the school's innovative practice(s) that could be replicated at other schools in Delaware. Please include the data that supports the success of these practice(s).

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School Comments:

- FSMA has fully implemented a Montessori Elementary (ages 6-9) and (ages 9-12) as well as Montessori Middle School (ages 12-14) / These programs utilized multi-age classrooms and individualized instruction because we know that each child learns at his/her own pace and will be ready for any given lesson in his/her own time, not on the teacher's schedule of lessons. In a mixed-age class, children can always find peers who are working at their current level. Children normally stay in the same class for two years. With half of the class returning each year, the classroom culture tends to remain quite stable. Also, working in one class for two years allows students to develop a strong sense of community with their classmates and teachers.
- FSMA has created a unique 6<sup>th</sup> grade program that transitions students from elementary to middle school by giving them experiences with some of the social and academic components they will encounter in Middle School.
- FSMA's staffing model is unique. FSMA has 2 certified teachers in every classroom and within that, at least one (and in many cases, both) are Montessori trained and certified staff members. FSMA ensures that every educator is delivering an authentic Montessori education and provides support, guidance, and professional development throughout the year.
- FSMA classrooms are designed with purpose, in alignment with Montessori core values. The prepared environment of the Montessori class is a learning laboratory in which children are allowed to explore, discover, and select their own work. The independence that the children gain is not only empowering on a social and emotional basis, but it is also intrinsically involved with helping them become comfortable and confident in their ability to master the environment, ask questions, puzzle out the answer, and learn without needing to be "spoon-fed" by an adult.
- FSMA teachers are trained in the Responsive Classroom Approach. Aligned with Montessori, this training helps teachers respond appropriately to individual student needs both academically and socially. FSMA utilizes this approach in our proactive and reactive approach to discipline to ensure consistency, fairness and equity for everyone.
- FSMA's Anti-Bias, Anti-Racism Team has not only responded to national current events but has created a curriculum for our staff to use. Each classroom is exploring identity, racism, and other age-appropriate topics.

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- FSMA's response to the pandemic was a full distance learning plan that incorporated many Montessori components and continued to be aligned with our mission and core values.
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## VII. ANNUAL REPORT CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

<b>Name of School:</b>	
<b>Location:</b>	

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this annual of a charter school is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; that this application has been approved by the school's Board of Directors.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: Chairperson of Board of Directors (or designated signatory authority)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

<b>Print/Type Name:</b>	
<b>Title (if designated):</b>	
<b>Date of approval by board of directors:</b>	

## References:

<sup>1</sup> Based on September 30<sup>th</sup> Unit Count

<sup>2</sup> Pursuant to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (34 CFR §99), the DDOE applies the following statistical methods to avoid disclosure of personally identifiable information in aggregate reporting.

1. For all data, counts for groups or subgroups with 15 or fewer students are suppressed and represented by “-” in data reports. Complementary suppression of one or more non-sensitive cells in a table may be required so that the values of the suppressed cells may not be calculated by subtracting the reported values from the row and column totals.

2. Only report percentages for grade level reporting within a school and district.

3. Percentages are suppressed when the underlying student counts can be derived for groups or subgroups with 15 or fewer students (i.e., if the number tested and proficient are reported, then the percentage may need to be suppressed).

4. Any percentage above 95 or below 5 will be reported as >95% and <5%, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> Graduation rate data is lag data by one school year to include all students that have completed their high school diplomas during that year including summer graduates.



