

APPENDIX A: 2014-15 CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT

PART 1: SCHOOL INFORMATION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
Name of Charter School:	Year School Opened:
Elm City Montessori School	2014
Street Address:	City/Zip Code:
375 Quinnipiac Avenue	New Haven, CT 06513
School Director:	School Director Contact Information:
Alissa Levy	alissa.levy@elmcitymontessori.org /203-903-4031
Grades Authorized to Serve in 2014-15:	Charter Term:
PK-K	2014-2019
<p>1. Executive Summary: Provide a cover letter or executive summary highlighting school progress, performance, accomplishments, and major changes during the 2014-15 school year. Include a brief narrative on the school’s unique model and student population.</p>	
<p>Maria Montessori’s integrated vision of social reform, fueled by service to the child, animates all aspects of the Elm City Montessori School program. From our intensive approach to engaging families, to the beautiful, developmentally appropriate learning environment we will create and maintain for all members of the community, we view education as an “aid to life” for learners of every age. We believe that the purpose of education is to realize human potential, which enables transformative outcomes for individuals, families, and communities. This vision will be realized through graduates who demonstrate superior capacities for creativity, adaptability, leadership, and compassion. As a local charter school, ECMS works in close partnership with New Haven Public Schools to realize a shared vision of meaningful school improvement.</p> <p>The Montessori approach consists of hands-on, student directed learning in a specially prepared environment that allows students to master lessons, which gradually increase in difficulty, in every area of the curriculum at their own pace. The classroom is a physical representation of a curriculum map with special areas for math, language, geography and culture, art, music, movement, practical life, and sensorial exploration. As children enter the elementary curriculum, there are also areas for the exploration of science, history and foreign languages. At Elm City Montessori School, we have a special emphasis on STEM that goes above and beyond the core Montessori curriculum. We have a hands-on STEM room, where students can explore concepts in weather, biology, geology, physical sciences, chemistry, and engineering. This room also houses the Engineering is Elementary curriculum designed by the Boston Science Center. Teachers can take small groups of students or an entire class to the STEM room at any time throughout the day. In addition, we have partnered with Common Ground High School and plan to partner with the Eli Whitney museum to provide after-school programming in Environmental Science and Engineering. An outdoor learning laboratory has been constructed for this purpose.</p> <p>One significant accomplishment in the 2014-15 year was our students’ reading growth over the course of the year. We assessed children on their abilities: orally blends syllable (100% at goal), orally blends phenomes (93% at goal), sound/symbol recognition (80% at goal). We also had success in the areas of student recruitment (690 applications for fewer than 50 seats), family engagement (nearly 100% of families engaged in at least one school event) and developing community partnerships. One of the school’s major challenges was operating with a lean staff in a start-up year. The ECMS Board of Trustees determined that the school needed to add leadership capacity to support the growth of the development of the school and appointed an Interim Executive Director in February 2015 and a permanent Executive Director beginning July 1, 2015.</p>	

PART 2: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

2. **School Goals:** State the school’s mission statement. Provide the school’s mission-specific, measurable goals. Analyze school progress toward these goals, providing data as appropriate. Add/Remove rows, as necessary.

Mission Statement:

The mission of Elm City Montessori School is to offer New Haven families a high-quality, public Montessori program for children between the ages of three and thirteen. ECMS is a racially, ethnically, and economically diverse school community deeply committed to realizing the inherent potential of all children. Students at ECMS will develop within themselves the power to shape their lives and the world around them.

Goal Statement:	Evidence of Progress toward Goal:
Provide access to a high quality, research-based, Montessori curriculum that is aligned with the common core state standards, such that 90% of students score proficient or higher on literacy (PK3 and above) and math (K and above) benchmarks by June of their third year at ECMS.	We assessed children in the following areas: orally blends syllable (100% at goal), orally blends phenomes (93% at goal), sound/symbol recognition (80% at goal).
Reduce minority group isolation by offering a fully implemented Montessori program designed to attract a diverse group of students.	Our 2014-15 student demographics demonstrate progress towards this goal: 41% African American, 27% Hispanic, 27% Caucasian.
Implement a cohesive Response to Intervention (RTI) process whereby children who struggle emotionally, socially, or academically are identified early and a team-based approach is utilized to implement and track the use of SRBI strategies both at school and at home, to modify as appropriate and to provide timely an accurate, data-supported referrals to Special Education where appropriate.	In 2014-15 we supported 21 students through our Focused Support Process and have established a partnership with Integrated Wellness Group to support our work in this area for the 2015-16 school year.
Recruit, train, and develop a diverse, highly qualified teaching staff who are fully certified in Montessori and licensed by the state of CT.	In 2014-15, all ECMS classroom teachers were certified by the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) and licensed by the State of Connecticut through the Unique Endorsement 110.

3. **Student Achievement:** Provide data summarizing school performance and academic achievement. Using the blank space provided, include data evidencing student growth and progress toward closing achievement gaps, including an analysis of normed benchmark assessment data.

Performance Metric:	2011-12:	2012-13:	2013-14:	2014-15:
Average daily attendance rate: See June 2015 PSIS Report for data				91%
Chronic absenteeism rate: See June 2015 PSIS Report data				34%
Number of in-school suspensions:				0
Number of out-of-school suspensions:				0

Number of expulsions:				0
Percent of students with 1+ suspension/expulsion:				0
Cohort graduation rate (if applicable):				N/A
Holding power rate (if applicable):				N/A
Overall School Performance Index (SPI):				N/A
Overall host District Performance Index (DPI):				N/A

4. **Best Practice:** In 250 words or less, summarize an emerging best practice at your school in the areas of academics, instruction, or school climate (e.g. extended instructional time, supports for English learners, positive behavior management, college access). Describe the concrete strategy and its impact on student learning and/or the school climate referencing quantitative data. Provide evidence of collaboration with local school districts in this area, as appropriate.

According to a recent report by the National Education Association, Response to Intervention is a research-based best practice. At Elm City Montessori School, we designed and implemented a comprehensive RTI process for the implementation and tracking of Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions, along with a referral process for Tier 3. We began the year by having our instructional coaches work with teachers to identify challenges within their classroom that were impacting all students, such as the timing of teacher prep periods, limited access to indoor gross motor space, and lengthy transitions. The instructional coaches worked with teachers to remedy these situations. We moved teacher prep periods to align with preschool nap time, created two indoor gross motor spaces, and worked to tighten transitions. Once these Tier 1 strategies were in place, we worked to develop a Tier 2 intervention approach with the help of consultants from the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector. We collected academic and behavioral data for all students using our online system for student progress monitoring. Children with challenges that were not addressed by the Tier 1 strategies already in place were referred to our Focused Support Team. This team, which consisted of classroom teachers, coaches, administrators, and a social worker, met weekly to develop action plans and monitor student progress during the 2014-2015 academic year. A parent conference was held for each child in the Focused Support Process. Students who demonstrated progress were monitored through the end of the year, those who did not show progress had their action plans revised and were monitored through the end of the year. Two students were referred for testing through the Special Education department. These strategies benefitted teachers, students, and parents by providing targeted support to struggling learners using the RTI process.

PART 3: STEWARDSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND MANAGEMENT

5. **Financial Documents:** (1) As required by C.G.S. § 10-66cc(b)(2), submit FY 2014 certified audit statements, including the statement of activities (showing all revenues from public and private sources, expenditures, and net operating gain/loss), balance sheet, and statement of cash flows. (2) Provide the FY 2015 budget comparing submitted budget versus actual figures, with summary explanations of all major variances. (3) Provide a FY 2016 board-approved budget, summarizing all assumptions and major variances from FY 2015.

6. **Financial Condition:** Provide the following financial data for FY 2015.

Total margin (net income / total revenue):	0.22
Debt to asset ratio (total liabilities / total assets):	0.08
Debt service coverage ratio (net income + depreciation + interest expense) / (principal + interest payments):	No debt service at this time; school does not pay for facilities use

Current asset ratio (current assets / current liabilities):	7.95
Days of unrestricted cash ((total expenditures - depreciation) / 365):	3,331
Cash flow (change in cash balance):	\$244,036

7. **Governing Board:** Consistent with C.G.S. § 10-66bb(d)(3)(A), provide the following information for all governing board members.

Name:	Occupation:	Board Role/Term:	Mailing/Email:	Background Check:
Kia Levey	Director, MOMS Partnership	President	kialevey@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Erik Clemons	President & CEO, ConnCAT	Vice President	eclemons@conncat.org	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Mira Debs	Montessori Researcher	Secretary	miradebs@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
David Low	NHPS Teacher	Member	david.low@new-haven.k12.ct.us	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Keith Krolak	Architect	Parent member	kkrolak@pickardchilton.com	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>In progress</i>
Alicia Caraballo	Retired NHPS Administrator	NHPS BOE member	alicara91@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Stefanie Boles	CFO, United Way of Greater New Haven	Member	sboles@uwgnh.org	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>In progress</i>
				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

8. **Renewal Terms and Corrective Items:** Provide an update on terms and conditions established in the charter school's most recent renewal; summarize actions taken and progress data to substantiate efforts to address such terms and conditions of renewal. Please note the chart below is pre-populated to include terms and conditions identified in the school's last renewal resolution.

Standard/Indicator:	Term or Condition:	Progress Update:
N/A		

9. **Best Practice:** In 250 words or less, summarize an emerging best practice at your school in the areas of stewardship, governance, and management (e.g., financial management, technology, school operations). Describe the concrete strategy and its impact on the school referencing quantitative data. Provide evidence of collaboration with local school districts in this area, as appropriate.

In our first year of operation, ECMS focused on building relationships with key stakeholders and involving them in meaningful ways to help build a strong school as this is core to our mission and vision. The Board of Trustees held a parent forum and a second parent meeting to directly engage ECMS parents. In addition, parents were invited to attend regular monthly Board of Trustees meetings. Through these efforts, the Board directly engaged approximately 30% of parents at the school. This has enabled the school to build trust with families and has given parents input into school planning and policy development. In the spring, ECMS parents identified a parent to serve of the ECMS Board of Trustees. The Board and School Leadership also worked closely with colleagues at New Haven Public Schools; a New Haven Public Schools Board of Education member currently sits on the ECMS Board of Trustees.

PART 4: STUDENT POPULATION

10. Enrollment and Demographic Data: Provide 2014-15 student demographic and enrollment information.

Grades Served:	PK-K	Student Enrollment:	70
% Free/Reduced-Price Lunch:	35.3%	% Black:	41%
% Special Education:	3%	% Hispanic:	27%
% Limited English Proficiency:	3%	% Caucasian:	27%

2014-15 Enrollment by Grade Level:

PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
52	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	70

11. Enrollment Efforts: Summarize the school’s efforts to attract, enroll, and retain a diverse and representative student population, including minority students, low-income students, English learners, and students with disabilities.

Since its inception, ECMS has worked hard to engage community members and organizational partners to ensure that the school attracts, enrolls and retains a diverse and representative student population. Founded by New Haven parents and local educators, the ECMS team has been focused on building relationships with families since the beginning of its efforts to launch the school in January 2013. Many families and community supporters attended the public hearing in support of the school’s charter application in April 2013 and then joined our community outreach team to connect with other families across the City. As part of the principal search, we held community breakfasts at local libraries to get community input on our principal candidates. The community outreach team hosted open houses, knocked on doors in Fair Haven and attended community events to share the mission and vision of the school with a diverse group of families. Staff worked closely with colleagues at New Haven Public Schools and attended magnet fairs with current ECMS parents. After children were selected through the NHPS and Open Choice lotteries, ECMS hosted multiple family orientations to accommodate families’ schedules, families met one-on-one with the principal and all teachers conducted family home visits over the summer. In addition, ECMS hosted a number of well-attended family events beginning in the summer and continuing through the fall (a picnic, a potluck dinner, a “fall fiesta,” visits to the CT Science Center, the Dinosaur State Park, the Peabody Museum and others). All of these efforts contributed to the successful recruitment and enrollment of a diverse student body as evidenced by the student demographics reported above and the recruitment numbers reported below.

12. Waitlist Data: Provide waitlist totals below, illustrating demand and community support for the school.

2011-12 Waitlist:	2012-13 Waitlist:	2013-14 Waitlist:	2014-15 Waitlist:
		598	643

13. Best Practice: In 250 words or less, summarize an emerging best practice at your school in the areas of student populations (e.g., family and community engagement, recruitment processes, retention strategies). Describe the concrete strategy and its impact on the school referencing quantitative data. Provide evidence of collaboration with local school districts in this area, as appropriate.

Building meaningful partnerships with families and community organizations is a core part of the vision of ECMS. In our first year, our key strategies for engaging families included: 1) guides (teachers) conducting home visits to every child before the start of the school year, 2) establishing an active PTO and supporting parent leadership teams, 3) hosting parent education nights for families to learn more about the Montessori approach and 4) organizing a range of family-focused social events both at the school and in the community (Peabody museum, Eli Whitney museum, CT Science Center, Dinosaur State Park, Fair Haven Family Stroll, Mary Wade Parade, etc). In addition, we coordinated several family work days at the school and hosted two parent meetings with the ECMS Board of Trustees. The PTO held monthly meetings and organized a parent workshop with Dr. Brett

Rayford focused on raising girls and boys in an urban environment.

We also developed robust partnerships with several community organizations. Common Ground/New Haven Ecology Project facilitated an outdoor learning program for our children during extended day and designed and built our outdoor learning lab. We collaborated closely with the Friends Center for Children on the Fair Haven Family Stroll and in exploring strategies/approaches for supporting children socially and emotionally. Hillhouse High School staff supported our Thanksgiving Dinner program and connected us with high school students who provided volunteer support for parent events. We also partnered with a local church for our holiday sing and gift drive and participated in the Mary Wade parade in support of senior citizens in the neighborhood.

As a result of all of these efforts, ECMS engaged nearly 100% of families in at least one school event over the course of the year.

APPENDIX B: STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

It is imperative that charter schools – as with all other public schools – adopt and uphold the highest ethical and legal standards while delivering excellent academic opportunities for students and their families.

As the authorized representative of Elm City Montessori School, to the best of my knowledge, I affirm that:

1. All board members and staff have satisfactorily completed background checks, including a state and national criminal records check and a record check of the Department of Children and Families Child Abuse and Neglect Registry.
2. If applicable, all charter school management organization (CMO) staff members have satisfactorily completed background checks, as described in (1).
3. All contractors, if the nature of the contractor's work entails close proximity to students in the judgment of the Governing Board, have satisfactorily completed background checks, as described in (1).
4. Records of any and all background checks are on file at Elm City Montessori School and available for random audit by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE).
5. Elm City Montessori School has adopted written anti-nepotism and conflict of interest policies, and that no member or employee of the Governing Board has a personal or financial interest in any asset, real or personal, of the charter school.
6. No board member of Elm City Montessori School serves on the board of another charter school or CMO.
7. All public funds received by Elm City Montessori School have been, or are being, expended prudently and in a manner required by law.
8. All Governing Board meetings are open and accessible to the public, and that Elm City Montessori School has posted, and continues to post, on any Internet website that the Governing Board operates, the schedule, agenda, and minutes of each Governing Board meeting, including any meeting of a subcommittee of the Governing Board.
9. Elm City Montessori School does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws.

By signing this Statement of Assurances on behalf of the Governing Board of Elm City Montessori School, I acknowledge that I understand the terms contained herein and affirm the validity of each statement to the best of my knowledge. I further understand that Elm City Montessori School may be subject to random audit by the CSDE to verify these statements.

Signature:

Alison Levey, Principal

Name of Board Chairperson:

Kia Levey

Date:

9/30/15

APPENDIX C: 2016-17 PRELIMINARY ENROLLMENT REQUEST

Directions: On an annual basis, charter schools must submit an enrollment request for the following school year. Consistent with C.G.S. § 10-66bb(c), the State Board of Education considers enrollment requests in the context of each school’s charter and record of student achievement.

C.G.S. § 10-66bb(c)(2) places an enrollment cap on the number of students that a state charter school may enroll. However, charter schools with a demonstrated record of achievement may seek a waiver. If the submitted 2016-17 enrollment request requires an enrollment waiver, please specify that below.

1. Complete the table below providing the school’s enrollment and growth history. Submit an enrollment request and growth projections for the upcoming school year.															
School Year:	Actual Enrollment:														
	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2012-13															
2013-14															
2014-15	52	18													70
2015-16	67	24	22												113
School Year:	2016-17 Enrollment Request:														
	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2016-17	60	34	24	22											140
2. Based on the request entered above, is the school seeking a waiver to the enrollment cap described in C.G.S. § 10-66bb(c)(2)?													<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
3. Provide a rationale for the enrollment request, including a synopsis of all relevant assumptions.															
<p>In order to provide an authentic Montessori education, it is critical for ECMS continue to grow to maintain proper ratios of different age groups in each mixed-age classroom. In addition, our application numbers demonstrate that there is a high level of interest in the school. ECMS is currently the only public Montessori school option outside of the Hartford area and we are committed to expanding access to public Montessori for a greater number of low-income students of color.</p>															
4. Summarize the school’s plans to successfully expand and accommodate the needs of the students served (e.g., programming, staffing, facilities, and class size).															
<p>The school’s plan for growth is in line with the projections submitted in the initial charter application. We have worked closely with New Haven Public Schools to plan for this growth. ECMS is currently housed in a New Haven Public Schools facility and has classroom space that can accommodate projected growth through 2019. Public per pupil funding will support necessary additional staffing needed for projected student growth.</p>															

