



Spotlight On: **Montrose Early Childhood Center**



Here at the Montrose Early Childhood Center (MECC), we want every child to discover incredible things every day. When you join the MECC, you become part of a wonderful family where each child is respected for their unique qualities and the contributions they can make to their learning and the learning of others. We pride ourselves on being an inclusive community of learners.

The Montrose Early Childhood Center opened its doors in November of 2015 after an extensive remodel of a former elementary school in the district. The nearly fourteen month long renovation brought a very old building, built in 1928, back to its former glory with many new features to accommodate the preschool age child. While the district has provided pre-school services to the community for nearly 30 years, the classes were scattered throughout the two towns and focused mainly on the needs of children with special issues. The opening of The MECC gave the district the opportunity to broaden the scope of services and include children from across the community in a setting with a strong play based curriculum which can meet the needs of a wide variety of learners.



We embrace family participation in our classrooms and through our remarkable Parent Teacher Association. You are your child's first teacher and will always be the most important support in your child's future educational endeavors. We hope to partner with you on that road and together watch them bloom!

Registration

Students must be three years of age by October 1st of the start of a school year to be eligible for the program.

Registration for the program starts in early February and continues until all seats are filled. Registration materials can be obtained on the district's website at www.somds.k12.nj.us. General Education students pay tuition and there is a sliding scale of fees that are determined on the income of the family. For more details, please call the school at 973-378-2086 or email the Director at rjoyce@somds.k12.nj.us.

Montrose Early Childhood Center Educational Vision

Montrose Early Childhood Center offers a unique program of early childhood education for every student. As an individualized program, our focus is on each child's developmental needs. We promote a positive, secure, and inclusive environment, enabling each child to grow with a sense of joy and wonderment.

In designing this school, much thought was given to meeting the needs of the preschool learner. A nationally recognized, state approved curriculum was adopted called "Tools of the Mind". The central focus of this curriculum is the development of both cognitive and social-emotional self-regulation at the same time that academic skills are taught. For more detailed information we suggest you access the website at www.toolsofthemind.org.

Individuality, self-regulation and communication are the keys to our educational endeavor. Children are encouraged to grow at their own pace in a stress-free, stimulating environment. Classrooms are designed using the model from our curriculum "Tools of the Mind." This approach offers a variety of learning centers, each with age appropriate tools for individual creativity. These areas help in the development of fine motor and sensorial skills, language, math, and imaginative play as well as a quiet corner and an art area.

The MECC promotes in our children a positive self-image and helps to build self-confidence. Children learn to be responsible for their actions and for themselves as well as learning the social skills that foster care, consideration and compassion for their peers. The program is designed to provide a solid foundation of skills and help all of our students become lifelong learners.

The MECC is an extension of the family experience that is unique for a public school program. There is an active Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) which works tirelessly to augment the mission of the school and to bring families together in support of their child's educational experience.

Logistics

The school features a state certified teacher in every classroom and two classroom aides. We also have a full-time certified school nurse to meet the medical needs of any child who attends.

The maximum number of students in a room is 15 giving us a 1:5 ratio of staff to children. There are options for half-day (9:00am to 11:30am) or full-day (9:00am to 2:00pm). There is a hot lunch program that families can use that is flexible and affordable while nutritionally balanced meeting all the federal guidelines. Each classroom has its own bathroom and is fully air-conditioned, with ample space to play and learn with wonderful natural lighting. The building meets all federal standards for accessibility.