

**South Carolina Department of Education  
CHARTER SCHOOL  
2020 ANNUAL REPORT  
TEMPLATE**

**Charter School Submission Deadline to  
Sponsor: December 31, 2020**

**Sponsor Submission Deadline to SCDE:  
January 31, 2021**

**School Name: East Cooper Montessori Charter School**

**Sponsor: Charleston County School District**

**Date of Submission to Sponsor: December 19, 2020**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

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Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-140(H), the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) has developed this annual report template for charter schools to use in reporting to their sponsors. A charter school is required to submit, at least annually to its sponsor, a report that shall include the following, at a minimum:

- (1) the number of students enrolled in the charter school from year to year;
- (2) the success of students in achieving the specific educational goals for which the charter school was established;
- (3) an analysis of achievement gaps among major groupings of students in both proficiency and growth;
- (4) the identity and certification status of the teaching staff;
- (5) the financial performance and sustainability of the sponsor's charter schools; and
- (6) board performance and stewardship including compliance with applicable laws.

The report shall provide all other information as required by the charter school sponsor and the SCDE.

In turn, sponsors are required by law to annually evaluate the following conditions that warrant the nonrenewal or revocation of a school's charter:

- the commission of a material violation of the conditions, standards, or procedures provided for in the charter application;
- failure to make or meet reasonable progress, as defined in the charter application, toward pupil achievement standards as identified in the charter application;
- failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; and
- violation of any law from which the school was not specifically exempted.

This annual report template is designed to elicit a comprehensive picture of a charter school's recently completed academic year as it relates to the school's performance in those areas impacting charter school accountability: academic achievement, compliance, operations/governance, and financial viability.

## **II. ANNUAL REPORT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

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**Annual Report Submission:** The annual report shall be due on **December 31** following each full school year in which the charter school is in operation. The board of trustees of a charter school should make the annual report available to the parents or guardians of the students enrolled in the charter school. In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 59-40-140 (H), the charter school shall submit an annual report to its sponsor, and the sponsor shall compile the annual reports of all of its charter schools into a single document that must be submitted to the SCDE by January 31. Insofar as the sponsor of a charter school is the charter school's local education agency (LEA), the charter school is advised to submit its annual report to the sponsor's superintendent.

**Submission Requirements:**

**Charter School:** Please confirm with the sponsor of the charter school the desired format for submission (paper or electronic); the annual report is due to the charter school sponsor no later than **5:00 p.m. on December 31.**

**Charter Sponsor:** An electronic copy of the annual report is due to the SCDE no later than **5:00 p.m. on January 31.** The electronic copy should be submitted to: [charterschools@ed.sc.gov](mailto:charterschools@ed.sc.gov). In the subject line include the **sponsor’s name/school’s name/2020 Annual Report.**

**Format:** All schools must use the provided Annual Report template and appendices templates. Each question in the application template that requires a written response includes a page limit. Answers should stay within those guidelines. Contact the SCDE Charter Schools Program at 803-734-2781 or at [charterschools@ed.sc.gov](mailto:charterschools@ed.sc.gov) if you have any questions regarding the provided templates.

**Annual Report Review:** All reports must be clear and fully complete in order to be evaluated by both the sponsor and the SCDE. The SCDE will review annual reports upon their submission.

**III. ANNUAL REPORT QUESTIONS**

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**1. GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION**

In the table below, provide the following general school information:

<b>1. General School Information</b>	
Name of School	East Cooper Montessori Charter School
Year School Opened	2003
Charter Renewal Date	2025
Grade Level(s)	PreK-8
School Address(es)	1120 Rifle Range Road
School Website Address	montessoricharterschool.com
Name of School Leader	Jody Swanigan
School Leader’s Phone Number	843-452-9296
School Leader’s E-mail	jody@montessoricharterschool.com
Name of Board President	Abby Kazley
Board President’s Phone Number	804-615-4246
Board President’s E-mail	swansoaj@musc.edu
Name of Sponsor/Local Education Agency	Charleston County School District



## 2. SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

In the table below, provide the following information regarding school enrollment for grade levels applicable to the school:

Grade Level	Maximum Enrollment at Charter School	135-Day Count 2019-20	45-Day Count 2020-21
Pre-K	32	29	20
K	16	18	15
Grade 1	59	63	54
Grade 2	58	58	66
Grade 3	58	54	57
Grade 4	50	54	47
Grade 5	50	59	52
Grade 6	50	33	42
Grade 7	26	27	26
Grade 8	27	22	27
Grade 9			
Grade 10			
Grade 11			
Grade 12			
<b>Total</b>	426	417	406

**\*Note: Due to COVID, there are 13 spaces being held in 3K& 4K.**

## 3. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND ACCOUNTABILITY

In the following sections, please reflect on the educational program, student performance data, academic goals, and progress towards the academic goals.

### 3.1. Academic Performance

#### **Academic Performance Narrative (LIMIT YOUR RESPONSE TO THREE PAGES)**

Using applicable data from the past school year's SC READY, SCPASS, ACT WorkKeys®, ACT®, and End of Course test scores, provide a narrative, beginning on the next page, in which you:

- describe the school's statewide assessment results
- provide an analysis of achievement gaps among major groupings of students in both proficiency and growth
- provide an explanation of how the school will close gaps and maintain or improve results.

## Narrative

There are many structural and environmental factors that influence the success of individual students in a Montessori environment and are outlined in this document. It is important to include those factors while considering the depth and breadth of a Montessori program. The points outlined describe some of the key factors but it is not an exhaustive list of the Montessori practices that separate it from traditional practices and the supporting research validating its rich pedagogical method of connecting children to their space and place in society.

ECMCS began the 2019-2020 school year with a robust population of students in grades preK - 8th. The school began with 44 students in two portable classrooms in 2003 and now serves almost 450 students in a now fully-renovated building on a 9-acre campus. Our model supports a highly qualified teacher and assistant at every level and multiple certified teachers within each classroom at the upper levels. The sound fiscal management and goal-driven leadership have solidified the strong team of professionals that support the school at every level including the talented and highly qualified teaching teams in every classroom, a wide array of related arts specialists infusing innovation and creativity, educators and an evaluation team to support struggling learners and on-site campus security and management.

The start of the 2019-2020 school was one of the most exciting of all of the 17 years of operation. The start of this year marked the turning of a new page in our history with a newly and fully renovated building with an infusion of all new furniture ensuring students have flexible seating, spacious classrooms, teaching walls with digital board displays, two playgrounds plus a ball-field, state of the art sound audio and visual equipment, two full service technology labs and 1:1 touch devices for all students in fourth-eighth grades all surrounded by an outdoor courtyard outfitted with benches, lighting and sidewalks connecting classrooms to the media center and the Grand Hall. The school's physical spaces finally matched the level of awesome academic rigor that had been present for years.

The first three quarters of the 2019-2020 school year were filled with the evolving and intentional work of supporting incoming teachers, orienting new members of the ECMCS student families and fulfilling our short and long term goals set by our thoughtful leaders. We continued with our initiative to support our student's mathematical potential through On-going Mathematics Assessment Project (OGAP), a full time instructional math coach, conclusion of the second year of a three phase-in of bridging our Montessori math curriculum with the philosophy of OGAP. The concentrated planning and implementation helped us end the 2020 school year with only 99% of our students expected to meet or exceed the spring SCReady Math test.

ECMCS' investments in the specialized needs of students, included having Orton Gillingham training available for all teachers serving our youngest and most fragile readers in primary and those receiving special education services. Approximately 9% of students receive special education services. With 50% of our students qualified as Gifted and Talented, they are supported within their diversified classroom by a GT endorsed teacher with specialized curriculum materials available to every student.

The school was also realizing long term initiatives in global education supporting the SC Profile of the Graduate by having a comprehensive plan authentic global education experiences through Level Up Village for fourth graders, certified instructors to lead the World Peace Game for fifth graders and travel with our sixth graders as one of the largest delegations to the Montessori Model United Nations which culminated in New York City with two thousand other students from fourteen different countries.

In March of 2020, ECMCS along with the rest of the world grappled with the changing academic and social needs for students and teachers as our schools and businesses closed worldwide for a never experienced before pandemic with unbelievable impacts forcing teachers and students into a digital educational platform with no warning and very little preparation. The final quarter of the school year, the students were receiving instruction at every level live and in their homes over zoom at every level prek-8th grades. While there were several thousand children in our state lost and not present for instruction, ECMCS was in touch with 100% of our students. As the year came to a close, ECMCS looked back on our accomplishments and the student resilience and the educator growth with pride.

ECMCS, as well as all South Carolina public schools, does not have spring 2020 SCREADY data available due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The final assessment students took was the NWEA MAP assessment in the Winter of the 2019-2020 school year. Therefore our academic comparison data for these purposes will be using NWEA MAP data from the winter of the 2019-2020 school year to the winter of the 2020-2021 school year.

### **Math**

- In the winter of the 2020-2021 school year **4.2% of students** are projected to not meet proficiency for the SCReady spring 2021 math assessment. This number is lower than the percentage of students at ECMCS being served with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) / special education services.

- Comparatively in the winter of 2019, 1% of students were projected to not meet proficiency for the SCReady spring 2020 math assessment (which was not taken due to COVID).
- 72.2% of the students are projected to meet or exceed expectations on the SCReady Math spring 2021 assessment.
- Additionally, the mean RIT score for students from the Fall of 2020 (return after COVID) to the Winter of 2020-2021 can be see below:

Grade	Fall 2020 Math Mean RIT	Winter 2020-21 Math Mean RIT
2nd	179.3	188.5
3rd	194.8	201.9
4th	207.1	213.1
5th	217.5	222.3
6th	222.7	226
7th	230.9	235.5
8th	234.9	240.4

## Reading

- In the winter of the 2020-2021 school year for reading, only **6.5% of students** are projected to not meet proficiency for the SCReady spring 2021 assessment. This number is lower than the percentage of students at ECMCS being served with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) / special education services.
- Comparatively in the winter of 2019, 4.5% of students were projected to not meet proficiency for the SCReady spring 2020 assessment (which was not taken due to COVID).
- It should be noted that 62.5% of the students are projected to meet or exceed expectations on the SCReady Reading spring 2021 assessment.
- Additionally, the mean RIT score for students from the Fall of 2020 (return after COVID) to the Winter of 2020-2021 can be see below:

Grade	Fall 2020 Reading Mean RIT	Winter 2020-21 Reading Mean RIT
2nd	181.6	191
3rd	197.4	204.2



4th	209.7	214.6
5th	215.2	217.6
6th	223	224.3
7th	228.7	231.6
8th	229.8	230.9

### 3.2. Academic Goals and Performance

Identify the **academic** goals set forth in the school’s current charter. For each academic goal use the tables below to describe the goal, the measure or metric to be used, the target for the goal and describe the success of students in achieving the specific educational goals for which the school was established. For goals not met, explain why and what steps the school is taking to progress towards goal attainment.

Academic Goal 1	
<b>Goal</b>	Students will demonstrate success in the area of English Language Arts.
<b>Measure/Metric</b>	NWEA
<b>Target</b>	Target ECMCS will meet or exceed the district and state averages. The state goal for 2019 is 73.2% of all students will score at level 2 or above in the area of ELA.
<b>Actual Outcome and Explanation</b>	78.9% of ECMCS students met or exceeded in the area of ELA as compared to 50.2% of CCSD students. The school has added great interventions for the area of ELA as well as Orton Gillingham for struggling readers.

Academic Goal 2	
<b>Goal</b>	Students will demonstrate success in the area of mathematics.
<b>Measure/Metric</b>	NWEA
<b>Target</b>	ECMCS will meet or exceed the district and state averages. The state goal for 2019 is 73.3% of all students will score at level 2 or above in the area of mathematics.
<b>Actual Outcome and Explanation</b>	69.1% of ECMCS students met or exceeded in the area of mathematics as compared to 49.3% of CCSD students. This is an area the school has has

	<p>been very intentional in front loading resources and professional development so students are able to continue to meet and exceed expectations. ECMCS has implemented an Ongoing Assessment Project across all levels and is the second year of implementation of Bridges mathematics. Year 1 started with 3rd graders and was expanded for 3rd-4th graders in 2019-2020</p>
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<b>Academic Goal 3</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	Students will demonstrate success in the area of science. Only 4th-8th graders are tested
<b>Measure/Metric</b>	There is no data to support this goal this school year.
<b>Target</b>	
<b>Actual Outcome and Explanation</b>	

<b>Academic Goal 4</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	Students will demonstrate success in the area of social studies
<b>Measure/Metric</b>	There is no data to support this goal due to COVID-19
<b>Target</b>	
<b>Actual Outcome and Explanation</b>	

<b>Academic Goal 5</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	ECMCS provides a quality education.
<b>Measure/Metric</b>	The SC Department of Education Parent Opinion Survey.
<b>Target</b>	
<b>Actual Outcome and Explanation</b>	

Academic Goal 6	
<b>Goal</b>	ECMCS Meets the needs of gifted learners as well as struggling learners
<b>Measure/Metric</b>	
<b>Target</b>	
<b>Actual Outcome and Explanation</b>	

#### 4. SCHOOL STAFF

In its discretion a charter school may hire non-certified teachers in a ratio of up to twenty-five percent of its entire teacher staff; however, if it is a converted charter school, it shall hire in its discretion non-certified teachers in a ratio of up to ten percent of its entire teacher staff. Part-time non-certified teachers are considered pro rata in calculating this percentage based on the hours which they are expected to teach.

Use the template titled “Instructional Staff Information Appendix” to provide the requested information. Save the completed template as “Instructional Staff Information Appendix” and attach it to this report.

4. School Instructional Staff			
Name	Certification #	Area(s) of Certification	Course(s) Taught
Alves, Angelica	207183	01-Elementary-NBC, G&T	STEM Teacher
Bamberger, Molly	271276	2k-Sp. Ed. Early Childhood, 85-Early Childhood, G&T	Lower EI Lead
Brandt, Melissa	228047	01-Elementary, 85-Early Childhood, G&T	Upper EI Lead
Chandler, Anna	194115	Elementary, Middle Level Language Arts, Middle Level Mathematics, Middle Level Science, Middle Level Social Studies, Social Studies-NBC, G&T	Middle School
Cox, Ann	219381	01-Elementary, 1E Middle Level Language Arts/ G&T	UE Teacher
Craig, Grace			1st Grade
Crook, Edie	285403	60-Media Specialist	Media Specialist
Dowdy, Cassandra	277655	07 - Spanish, R2S	Spanish Teacher
Dufresne, Scott	191422	Sp. Ed. - Learning Disabilities, Early Childhood,	Lower EI

		G&T	
Eargle, Sarah	228966	84-School Psychologist II, R2S	School Psychologist
Fecio, Jaime	284606	85-Early Childhood, R2S Literacy	Lower EI
Fleming, Taylor	274799	1E - Middle language Arts, 1F - Middle Level Math, G&T	Upper EI
Forsythe, Stephanie	301687	8C- Montessori Ele, 8D Montessori Ele	Lower EL
Garner, Kristin	230486	15-Chemistry, 1G-Middle Level Science, 1F-Middle Level Math, 10-Math, R2S, G&T	MS Lead Teacher
Getsinger, Anna	234278	01-Elementary, R2S literacy	Lower EI Lead
Gooding, Laughton			Physical Ed
Goodman, Jennifer	301036	01-Elementary, 7B-Tier 1 - Elementary Principal, 7C-Secondary Principal, 85-Early Childhood	Upper EI Lead
Hatch, Alexis	233942	54-Music Education	Music
Johnson, Lizabeth	281359	8C-Montessori Elementary I (gr 1-3), G&T	Lower EI Lead
King, Michelle	287344	1E-Middle Level Language Arts, 1H-Middle Level Social Studies, 1F-Middle Level Math, 1G-Middle Level Science, 2I-Special Education: Multi-categorical, 50 - Art, 5A-ESOL	Special Education
Kennedy, Margaret			First Grade
McCabe, Kendra	291667	8B - Montessori ECE (3k-5k)	Primary Lead
Moody, Nicole	229743	Elementary, Montessori Elementary I (gr 1-3), R2S Literacy Teacher, R2S Literacy Coach	Assistant Principal
Pagliaro, Allyssa	278961	01-Elementary, 2E-Sp. Ed. Multi-Categorical, G&T	Upper EI
Patterson, Krissie	282519	Montessori Elementary I (gr 1-3), G&T	Lower EI Lead
Peterson, Mackenzie	278577	5G-Literacy Teacher,	Lower EI Lead

		85-Early Childhood, 8C-Montessori Elementary I (gr1-3), R2S Literacy Teacher, G&T, NBC \$5k	
Ramsey, Sarah	225330	01-Elementary, 2G SPED Learning Disabilities, 80 Reading Teacher	First Grade
Reed, Alison	298239	01 - Elementary	Upper EI Lead
Rogers, Samantha	254039	50-Art, R2S	Art Education
Sandstrom, Kathryn	302074	8B-Montessori ECE (3k-5k)	Primary Lead
Sloan, Gabrielle	291503	01 - Elementary, 2I SPED: Multi-categorical	Resource
Smiley, Joy	300214	01-Elem, 04 English, 1E Middle LA, 1H MS SS, 20 SS, 2I SPED Multi Cat, 85 Early Childhood	MS Lead Teacher
Swanigan, Jody	210202	Elementary Principal, Elementary Supervisor, Early Childhood	Principal
Viscidi, Zac	253790	1E-Middle Level Language Arts, 1H-Middle Level Social Studies, R2S Requirement, G&T	Middle School
Wiljanen, Kaitlin	283568	01-Elementary, 14-Biology, 1G-MS science, 85-Early Childhood	Math Interventionist
Zepp, Shay	189972	Montessori Elementary I (gr 1-3), G&T	LE Lead

## 5. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Attach as appendices to this report:

- the school's audited FY2020 report on financial statements
- the FY2021 approved school budget

## 6. BOARD PERFORMANCE AND STEWARDSHIP

### 6.1. Board Member Information

Use the template titled “Board Member Information Appendix” to provide the requested information. Save the completed template as “Board Member Information Appendix” and attach it to this report.

<b>6.1. Board Member Information</b>					
<b>Name</b>	<b>Email Address</b>	<b>Background</b> (ex. finance, education, business, parent, etc.)	<b>Date Elected/ Appointed</b>	<b>Date of Orientation Training</b>	<b>Orientation Training Provider</b>
Abby Swanson Kazley	<a href="mailto:swansoj@musc.edu">swansoj@musc.edu</a> <a href="mailto:abbykazley@montessoricharterschool.com">abbykazley@montessoricharterschool.com</a>	Parent Member, Strategic Planning, Business	5/18	8/1/19	Robert Bohnstengel
DJ Barnhill	<a href="mailto:dj@mcguirecpa.com">dj@mcguirecpa.com</a> <a href="mailto:djbarnhill@montessoricharterschool.com">djbarnhill@montessoricharterschool.com</a>	Community Member, Finance	5/18	7/2020	PCSASC
Kristin Ormand	<a href="mailto:kormand@pattersonpope.com">kormand@pattersonpope.com</a> <a href="mailto:kristinormand@montessoricharterschool.com">kristinormand@montessoricharterschool.com</a>	Parent Member, Business	5/18	7/2020	PCSASC
Denise Runza	<a href="mailto:denise.runza@carolinaone.com">denise.runza@carolinaone.com</a> <a href="mailto:denise@montessoricharterschool.com">denise@montessoricharterschool.com</a>	Community Member, Business	5/18	8/1/19	Robert Bohnstengel
Abe Gutting	<a href="mailto:abegutting@montessoricharterschool.com">abegutting@montessoricharterschool.com</a>	Parent, Business, Lawyer	5/19		
Rob Varnado	<a href="mailto:robvarnado@montessoricharterschool.com">robvarnado@montessoricharterschool.com</a>	Community Member	5/19		
Merissa Ferraro	<a href="mailto:merissaferraro@montessoricharterschool.com">merissaferraro@montessoricharterschool.com</a>	Parent	10/20		

## 6.2. Board Compliance

In the table below, provide the information regarding Board of Trustee Compliance.

<b>6.2. Board Compliance</b>	
<b>Board of Trustee Compliance</b>	<b>Response</b>

Number of board members required per charter.	7
Date of most recent board election.	May 18, 2020
Link to the website where meeting dates, agendas, and minutes are published, if published online. If not, provide the address of the office where they are maintained.	<a href="#">Board Agendas and Minutes</a>
Number and name of active committees.	None at this time

**7. Accreditation**

Is the charter school seeking SCDE Charter School Accreditation? SELECT A CHOICE BELOW

*Please see*

<https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/school-choice/charter-schools-program/charter-school-accreditation/>  
*for more information*

Yes

No

Already have designation

Please indicate any and all accreditations that the charter school holds, if applicable:

*American Montessori Society*

**8. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED BY THE SPONSOR**

The Sponsor is permitted to request additional information as part of this annual report. Such additional information should be included in this section and submitted to the SCDE with the sponsor’s annual report.