

**South Carolina Department of
Education**

CHARTER SCHOOL

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

TEMPLATE

**Charter School Submission Deadline to
Sponsor: December 31, 2019**

**Sponsor Submission Deadline to SCDE:
January 31, 2020**

School Name: East Cooper Montessori Charter School

Sponsor: Charleston County School District

Date of Submission to Sponsor: December 31st

I. INTRODUCTION

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

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. In the subject line include the **sponsor's name/school's name/2018 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 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

1. GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

1. General School Information	
Name of School	East Cooper Montessori Charter School
Year School Opened	2003
Charter Renewal Date	2025
Grade Level(s)	3 years old - 8th grade
School Address(es)	1120 Rifle Range Road Mount Pleasant, SC 29466
School Website Address	www.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	Kyle Murrell
Board President's Phone Number	843-822-3292
Board President's E-mail	kylemurrell@montessoricharterschool.com
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 2018-19	45-Day Count 2019-20
Pre-K	32	27	30
K	16	24	18
Grade 1	58	59	63
Grade 2	58	58	57
Grade 3	58	56	54
Grade 4	49	50	54
Grade 5	49	49	59
Grade 6	49	29	35
Grade 7	25	22	27
Grade 8	25	26	22

Grade 9	0	0	0
Grade 10	0	0	0
Grade 11	0	0	0
Grade 12	0	0	0
Total	419	400	419

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.

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Narrative:

Note: All goals taken directly from the 2015 agreement between East Cooper Montessori Charter agreement document and Charleston County School District as the authorizer and the South Carolina Department of Education.

East Cooper Montessori Charter School (ECMCS) was first chartered in 2003 and was composed of two classrooms and 44 students in grades 1-3. The school has grown both in population and academic offerings exponentially every year. ECMCS partnered with Charleston County School District in 2015 to move our program into an empty CCSD building to reduce overcrowding, provide comparable Montessori seats in District 2 and have a program in their building rated excellent on day one. In accordance with the 2015 Facility Use Agreement, CCSD has completed the interior renovations during the summer of 2019 making the classrooms and bathroom upgrades. The cameras are being upgraded currently and the much needed doors and locks project is expected this year. The school is also looking forward to the completion of the 2015 Facility Use Agreement with the completion of the extended carpool project moving the carpool traffic off the busy roads of Rifle Range and Myrick Rd. The community, ECMCS and CCSD is proud of the accomplishments of breathing new life into the physical space at 1120 Rifle Range Road and creating an excellent Montessori option for the families in District 2 and beyond.

ECMCS classroom teachers are required to be Montessori certified in addition to being SC State certified and highly qualified in the area taught. ECMCS also requires all lead classroom teachers to be Gifted and Talented endorsed as well as Read to Succeed endorsed. The Montessori model utilizes at least one lead certified teacher and one teacher assistant per classroom. The 14 classrooms served 395 students in grades PK-8 during the 2018-2019 school year and is serving almost 420 students in grades PK-8 in the current 2019-2020 school year.

There are many structural and environmental factors that influence the success of individual students in a Montessori environment and are outlined in the last part of this section. It is important to consider 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 use.

ECMCS was very excited to have the opportunity to support several new educational initiatives, including an emphasis in math, for the 2019-2020 school year and a continued emphasis in global education and Stem education.

The greatest investment a school can make is in the amazing teaching faculty. One educational initiative was to increase the ratio of Montessori educators to students. In the upper elementary, ECMCS moved to a full model of providing 2 lead teachers and one assistant in each upper elementary classrooms making the ratio of student to teacher and teacher assistant 1:16. The larger classroom size allowed the school to add additional students and educators which in turn allowed the teachers to become specialized in two curriculum areas instead of four areas.

An intentional instructional focus for the 2019-2020 school year is mathematics. The school made investments in materials and training for digital math supports and investments in staff to become trainers for OGAP and Bridges mathematics. ECMCS also invested, for the 3rd year in the Ongoing Assessment Project (OGAP) Mathematics Professional Development. Every ECMCS teacher holds at least 1 level of OGAP Professional Development training, and many hold 2 or more levels. This equates to 32-64 hours of Professional Development in Mathematics for every general and special education teacher at ECMCS. The school also hosted a "Montessori OGAP Math Lab" monthly for all Lower Elementary teachers, as well as teachers from other Charleston County schools. The aim for the math labs was to dig deep into the OGAP strategies and have meaningful, targeted discussions about math growth in their classrooms. Many teachers have chosen math as their SLO as well because of the school initiatives in math. Lastly, the school invested in the Bridges Math Program from the Math Learning Center for 3rd and 4th grades. This choice was made because Bridges most closely aligns with the OGAP philosophy, and the school was seeking additional math games, strategies, and resources for supporting students with learning math conceptually. The initiative is showing great results including zero 4th graders qualifying for math intervention!

Additionally, ECMCS made investments in the specialized needs of students, including having all primary teachers and special education teachers become endorsed Orton Gillingham educators. As a first year initiative we do not have data to support the results yet. ECMCS will continue to support the initiative in the future years.

In the science and technology areas, ECMCS continues to excel and provide deep and meaningful project based learning opportunities. Sample projects include students designing and creating weather buoys to be launched in the Charleston harbor through the EBOBS Project, students participating in the Seeds to Shoreline program, students testing and building their own wind turbines through the Kidwind Project, Poultry Genetics, a mock Shark Tank Invention week for middle school students, robotics through the Sea Grant Consortium, coding with Brushbots and Ozobots, Stop Motion, and so on. Three ECMCS staff members participating in the Buck Institute Project Based Learning training this past summer to become better equipped to offer rich and purposeful PBL.

ECMCS spent the past 3 years placing a strong focus and emphasis on English-Language Arts, and the data results support the positive outcomes of those initiatives and focus. One

hundred percent of 6th and 7th graders approached, met, or exceeded expectations in ELA on the Spring 2018 SCReady Assessment. In other words, 0% of 6th & 7th grade students did not meet ELA expectations. In 4th and 6th grades, over 80% of students met or exceeded expectations. This strong level of data feedback is what allowed ECMCS to shift focus from English-Language Arts professional development to mathematics.

Lastly the school continues to support hands-on, practical learning opportunities. Every 7th & 8th grade student completes a week long internship at a local business. Community service and service learning projects and interwoven into the educational experience, including Oyster Bed restoration, My Sister's House donations, I Heart Hungry Kids, and so on. Every child participates in a personal year-long service project as well as the multitude of school level projects. This is so critical to the education of the whole-child and allows for a community of learning, giving, and doing.

The research of Dr. Maria Montessori and her educational approach continue to guide the practices of ECMCS while also incorporating the latest research in curriculum development, child development and brain research. Students in the multi-aged classroom are able to have curriculum tailored to their exact developmental level and thus increased engagement. There are natural peer-to-peer learning opportunities and even peer tutors within the model. The extended time students spend in the same peer grouping also lends to safe and deep peer relationships rooted in trust and compassion also making way for a safe environment to take risks and embrace learning challenges. Montessori educators are experts of the three years of content and teachers are prepared to work with students socially and emotionally as they grow. Teachers have the same students for three years giving them incredible insight into the developmental needs and milestones of each student. The prepared environment lends well to exceptional learners and especially twice exceptional learners. There are thousands of pieces of material to relate to every learner. The GT training of teachers allows GT curriculum to be delivered within the Montessori environment while also supporting the needs of struggling students. The uninterrupted work time allows students to use the work plan to make a plan for the use of their time deciding which task to start with instead of being dictated by a teacher. Often materials are self-correcting allowing students to reflect on their mistakes and correct them giving Montessori students constant practice honing their executive functioning skills. While not an exhaustive explanation, these unique features and the fidelity of their implementation are important in considering any Montessori program.

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	
Goal	Students will demonstrate success in the area of English Language Arts.
Measure/Metric	2019 administration of the SC Ready Assessment in the area of English Language Arts.
Target	ECMCS will meet or exceed the district and state averages.
Actual Outcome and Explanation	

Academic Goal 2	
Goal	Students will demonstrate success in the area of mathematics.
Measure/Metric	2019 administration of the SC Ready Assessment in the area of mathematics.
Target	ECMCS will meet or exceed the district and state averages.
Actual Outcome and Explanation	

Academic Goal 3	
Goal	Students will demonstrate success in the area of science. Only 4th-8th graders are tested.
Measure/Metric	2019 administration of SC PASS in the area science.
Target	ECMCS will meet or exceed the district and state averages.
Actual Outcome and Explanation	

Academic Goal 4	
Goal	Students will demonstrate success in the area of social studies.
Measure/Metric	2019 administration of SC PASS in the area of social studies.
Target	ECMCS will meet or exceed the district and state averages.
Actual Outcome and Explanation	

Academic Goal 5	
Goal	ECMCS provides a quality education.
Measure/Metric	Teacher and Parent Surveys of all ECMCS families and staff conducted by ECMCS.
Target	80% Satisfaction from each group.
Actual Outcome and Explanation	

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.

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4. School Instructional Staff			
Name	Certification #	Area(s) of Certification	Course(s) Taught
Alves, Angelica	207183	01-Elementary-NBC	STEM Teacher
Bamberger, Molly	271276	2k-Sp. Ed. Early Childhood, 85-Early Childhood	LE Lead
Brandt, Melissa	228047	01-Elementary, 85-Early Childhood	UE Lead
Chandler, Anna	194115	Elementary, Middle Level Language Arts, Middle Level Mathematics, Middle Level Science, Middle Level Social Studies, Social Studies-NBC	MS lead
Crewe, Tara	222607	01-Elementary - G&T	UE Lead
Crook, Edie	285403	60-Media Specialist	Media Specialist
Dowdy, Cassandra	277655	07- Spanish	Spanish
Dufresne, Scott	191422	Sp. Ed. - Learning Disabilities, Early Childhood	Lower EI lead
Eargle, Sarah	228966	84-School Psychologist II	School Psychologist
Elingburg, Emilee	210150	Early Childhood	Lower EI lead
Garner, Kristin	230486	15-Chemistry, 1G-Middle Level Science	MS Lead Teacher
Getsinger, Anna	234278	01-Elementary	Upper EI Lead

Hardman, Margery	231141	Art	Art
Jenkins, Caroline	151847	01-Elementary, 8D-Montessori Elementary II (gr 4-6)	UE Lead
Johnson, Lizabeth	281359	8C-Montessori Elementary I (gr 1-3)	Upper EI Lead
Montgomery, Frances	196169	85-Early Childhood	LE Assistant
Moody, Nicole	229743	7B Elementary Principal, Elementary, Montessori Elementary I (gr 1-3), R2S Literacy Coach, R2S Literacy Teacher	Assistant Principal
Noren, Thomas	288157	Music Ed - Instrumental	Music
Pagliari, Allyssa	278961	01-Elementary, 2E-Sp. Ed. Multi-Categorical	Upper EI Lead
Patterson, Krissie	282519	Montessori Elementary I (gr 1-3)	Lower EI Lead
Peterson, Mackenzie	278577	5G-Literacy Teacher, 85-Early Childhood, 8C-Montessori Elementary I (gr1-3)	Lower EI Lead
Pogroszewki, Nadine	206685	2E - Sp. Ed. - Emotionally Disabled	SPED
Schultz, Polly	267702	8B-Montessori ECE (3k-5k)	Primary Lead
Swanigan, Jody	210202	Elementary Principal, Elementary Supervisor, Early Childhood	Principal
Taft, Virginia	248231	Elementary, Early Childhood, Montessori Elementary I (gr 1-3)	Upper EI
Thomas, Slayden	279399	01-Elementary	Upper EI
Shiple, Kira			Guidance Counselor

Viscidi, Zac	253790	1E-Middle Level Language Arts, 1H-Middle Level Social Studies, R2S Requirement	MS Co-Lead
Wiljanen, Kaitlin	283568	01-Elementary, 14-Biology, 1G-MS science, 85-Early Childhood	Math Interventionist
Zepp, Shay	189972	01-Elementary	LE Lead

5. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Attach as appendices to this report:

- the school's audited FY2019 report on financial statements
- the FY2020 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.

6.1 Board Member Information					
Board Member Name	Email Address	Background (ex. finance, education,	Date	Date of Orientation	Orientation Training Provider

		business, parent, etc.)	Elected/ Appointed	Training	
Kyle Murrell	kmurrell@smeinc.com kylemurrell@montessoricharterschool.com	Parent Member; Finance, Business	5/18	8/1/19	Robert Bohnstengel
Jennifer Graham	Jencgraham@gmail.com jennifergraham@montessoricharterschool.com	Community Member, Education	5/18	8/1/19	Robert Bohnstengel
Abby Swanson Kazley	swansoaj@muscedu abbykazley@montessoricharterschool.com	Parent Member, Strategic Planning, Business	5/18	8/1/19	Robert Bohnstengel
DJ Barnhill	dj@mcguirecpa.com djbarnhill@montessoricharterschool.com	Community Member, Finance	5/18	8/1/19	Robert Bohnstengel
Kristin Ormand	kormand@pattersonpope.com kristinormand@montessoricharterschool.com	Parent Member, Business	5/18	8/1/19	Robert Bohnstengel
Denise Runza	denise.runza@carolinaone.com denise@montessoricharterschool.com	Community Member, Business	5/18	8/1/19	Robert Bohnstengel
Kim Durst	Kimdurstpt@gmail.com kimdurst@montessoricharterschool.com	Parent Member, Business	5/18	8/1/19	Robert Bohnstengel

6.2. Board Compliance

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

6.2. Board Compliance	
Board of Trustee Compliance	Response
Number of board members required per charter.	7
Date of most recent board election.	5/2019
Link to website where meeting dates, agendas, and minutes are published, if published online. If not, provide the address of the office where they are maintained.	https://www.ccsdschools.com/domain/1399
Number and name of active committees.	7 Committees - Development, Finance, Diversity and Enrollment, Education, HR, Community Relations, Facilities

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:

(AdvancED, American Montessori Society, etc.)

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.