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To: infocso
Subject: First State Montessori Academy Major Modification Application Public Comment

Charter School: First State Montessori Academy

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Public Comment: Greetings!

Please accept the following comment for public review:

Montessori Education has been called many things: Pedagogical Anthropology, Phenomenological Engagement, Liberty in Education, Big Work, Early Social Justice, Education in Motion, and Spontaneous Concentration. These descriptions date from the early 1900s to the present, which ultimately is most telling: The Montessori Method hasn't changed. Sure, it's evolved and been applied to varying circumstances, but the principles of development--socially, culturally and academically--have remained the same for over 100 years.

In the current educational climate, where new legislation is passed almost annually, and the teachers and students must regain balance time and time again, I can't help but hold on to this constant—and a practical, moral one at that.

Scientifically speaking, longitudinal, empirical data from a diverse participant population shows that the crossroads presented during the Middle Years (6-8th grade), as universal as they are (braces, teasing, hormones, social hierarchy—oh, and academic proficiencies, too), are actually mediated by integrating the Montessori Method: intrinsic motivation increases, and the environment itself constitutes flow, defined as the combination of support, challenge, and motivation. Middle Schoolers guided by the Montessori Method were on average 16 % more likely to express insight, self-direction and salience when given both academic and non-academic tasks. Such principles are also being used in Positive Psychology, highlighting their accessibility and application to many arenas within lifespan development. This translates into higher emotional intelligence...

With both the humanistic and scientific side covered, I'll say it again: this unceasing force within the walls of First State Montessori Academy is quickly becoming an anchor not only for its educators and their students, but for the City of Wilmington and curricula development in the State of Delaware. I fully support FSMA's request to expand into 7th and 8th grade, and further their flow for Delaware education, creating one authentic, true-to-self citizen at a time.