



FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

April 14, 2020

TRANSMITTED VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Mr. Michael Coykendall
217 W. Walnut St.
Hastings, MI 49058

Dear Michael:

Consistent with Governor Whitmer's **Executive Order 2020-35**, this letter shall serve as official notification that the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office has reviewed the Battle Creek Monterssori Academy (BCMA) *Continuity of Learning Plan* and it has been approved. Thank you and the entire BCMA team for your attention to this important matter.

Two important things now need to happen:

1. The full Board needs to hold a meeting to approve the plan, PRIOR to April 28, 2020. Since the Stay Home Order will still be in effect at this time, this meeting should be conducted electronically.
2. The approved plan (attached here with signature) must be placed on the academy's website.

These are unprecedented times in our country and the K-12 field, and it seems that every day brings new information, guidance, and requirements for all of us. As your Authorizer, we remain committed to helping our academies navigate these issues and to providing support to you and the academy staff in successfully enacting their remote learning plan. Please do not hesitate to contact Sharon Hopper (SharonHopper@ferris.edu) if you have any questions about virtual Board meetings, or me (RonaldRizzo@ferris.edu) if I can be of any assistance.

Thank you, take care, and remain safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. S. Rizzo'.

Ronald S. Rizzo, Ph.D.
Director

cc.

Ms. Jessica Eldridge, Headmaster
Mr. Stan Rathbun, Choice Schools Associates
Ms. Sharon Hopper, CSO
Mr. Art Willick, CSO

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Big Rapids, MI 49307



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Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan

Battle Creek Montessori Academy

April 2020

As a result of COVID-19 and the closing of school buildings for the 2019-2020 School Year, school districts must submit a Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan (“Plan”) in order to continue to receive state aid for operations. Although schools are closed and not providing in-person instruction, teaching and learning must continue. Michigan educators have been called to provide our students with continued learning.

There are varied states of readiness to provide continuity in learning among districts. Even within districts of multiple school sites, there are varied states of readiness. It is expected that schools will provide instruction at a distance using a variety of methods that meet local needs, including printed materials, phone contact, email, virtual learning, or a combination to meet student needs. We should avoid assuming that continuity in learning can only occur through online means.

While many educators have been providing distance learning opportunities, the Governor’s Executive Order ([EO 2020-35](#)) requires all schools to begin providing learning opportunities for all students no later than April 28, 2020. Districts who are able to begin their plans earlier are encouraged to do so.

Each District shall submit a single completed Assurance Document, Budget Outline, and Continuity of Learning Plan to its Intermediate School District. Each Public School Academy shall submit a completed Assurance Document, Budget Outline, and Continuity of Learning Plan to its Authorizer. A single Application should be filed for the district rather than multiple applications for individual schools within a district. The following items are required for the application which may be submitted beginning April 8, 2020:

1. Assurances Document
2. Continuity of Learning Plan
3. Budget Outline

Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan ("Plan") Guiding Principles

As Districts and Public School Academies complete the Assurances and Continuity of Learning Plans, they should consider utilizing the following principles to guide their work:

Keep Students at the Center

Intentional outreach to continue building relationships and maintain connections. Help students feel safe and valued. At minimum, plan to do the following:

- **Plan for Student Learning:** Build on each student's strengths, interests, and needs and use this knowledge to positively affect learning.
- **Develop a Weekly Plan and Schedule:** Offer routines and structures for consistency and for the balancing of think time, work time, and play time for health and well-being.
- **Contact Families:** Partner to support student learning through ongoing communication and collaboration. This will not look the same for every student and family—safety remains the priority. Provide translations as necessary.

Design Learning for Equity and Access

Plan and deliver content in multiple ways so all students can access learning.

- **Teach Content:** Set goals using knowledge of each student, content area standards, and of Michigan Merit Curriculum.
- **Deliver Flexible Instruction:** Consider how to deliver content depending on tools and resources accessible to each student. Alternative modes of instruction may include use of online learning, telephone communications, email, virtual instruction, videos, slideshows, project-based learning, use of instructional packets, or a combination to meet diverse student needs.
- **Engage Families:** Communicate with families about engagement strategies to support students as they access the learning. Families are critical partners. Provide translations as necessary.

Assess Student Learning

Manage and monitor student learning and plan what's next for learning including

the potential need for summer and supplemental learning.

- **Check Student Learning:** Use a variety of strategies to monitor, assess, and provide feedback to students about their learning.
- **Make Instructional Adjustments:** Use formative assessment results to guide educators' reflection on effectiveness of instruction and to determine next steps for student learning.
- **Engage Families:** Communicate with families about assessment results in order to inform next steps and the potential for supplemental summer learning. Provide translations as necessary.

**Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan
("Plan") Assurances**

Date Submitted:

Name of District: Battle Creek Montessori Academy

Address of District: 399 N 20th Street, Springfield, MI 49037

District Code Number: 13900

Email Address of the District: jessicaeldridge@choiceschools.com

Name of Authorizing Body: Ferris State University

This Assurance document needs to be returned to your Intermediate School District or, for Public School Academies, your Authorizing Body with your Continuity of Learning Plan and Budget Outline beginning April 8, 2020 to indicate that the District will adopt a plan to ensure continuous learning for all students through the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.

Districts should submit a single district plan that relates to all of their schools.

The applicant hereby provides assurance it will follow the requirements for a Plan for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year:

1. Applicant assures that all student learning will take place under the direction of a teacher of record for each student enrolled in the district.
2. Applicant assures that it will continue to pay school employees during the balance of the 2019-2020 school year under the same terms and conditions established prior to the school closure order period.



3. Applicant assures that the Plan was developed in collaboration with district administrators, school board members, teachers, and local bargaining units.
4. Applicant assures that food distribution has been arranged for or provided for eligible students.
5. Applicant assures coordination between applicant and Intermediate School District in which the District/PSA is located to mobilize disaster relief child care centers.
6. Applicant assures that to the extent practicable the District/PSA will in good faith provide students with IEPs/Section 504 Plans the opportunity to participate in learning consistent with existing plans.
7. Applicant assures that Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan, Assurance Document, and Budget Outline will be posted immediately following approval to the District's/PSA's website.

Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan ("Plan")

The goal of a Continuity of Learning Plan and COVID-19 Response Plan is to ensure that each District or Public School Academy is providing, to the best of its ability, each student with alternative modes of instruction to help them stay on pace in their learning. This application recognizes that there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution; multiple means of engaging students and supporting families may be necessary that may vary by grade level, school building, or student population served.

For the purposes of the Plan, "district" refers to school districts and public school academies.

Date Submitted: APRIL 9, 2020

Name of District: Battle Creek Montessori Academy

Address of District: 399 N 20th Street, Springfield MI 49037

District Code Number: 13900

Email Address of the District Superintendent: Jess Eldridge
jessicaeldridge@choiceschools.com

Board Contact: Mike Coykendall, Board President / Stan Rathbun, Board Liaison

Name of Authorizing Body: Ferris State University



In accordance with Executive Order 2020-35 a Plan must include all of the following parts:

- 1. Please describe the methods the district will use to provide alternative modes of instruction other than in-person instruction and a summary of materials each pupil and the pupil's parents or guardians will need to access meaningfully the alternative modes of instruction included in the Plan. If the Plan relies on electronic instruction, the Plan must ensure to the extent feasible that pupils have access to a connected device capable of accessing the electronic instruction and must not penalize a pupil for the pupil's inability to fully participate.**

“Alternative modes of instruction” means modes of pupil instruction, other than in-person instruction, that may include, without limitation, partnerships with other districts or intermediate districts or community colleges or institutions of higher education, use of vendors, use of online learning, telephone communications, email, virtual instruction, videos, slideshows, project-based learning, use of instructional packets, or a hybrid of multiple modes of learning that still promote recommended practices for social distancing to mitigate the spread of COVID- .

District/ PSA Response:

Battle Creek Montessori will be providing instruction online through use of Freckle and Khan Academy. Students and teachers will meet a minimum of once per week for virtual lessons. Families can access weekly work plans on our webpage, <https://battlecreekmontessori.com/online-continued-learning/>. Through information obtained from an “Access to Technology” Survey, Battle Creek Montessori Academy has identified students who will need a laptop or chrome book to be checked out from the school for home use. Families may also choose to have Michigan Standard Aligned packets mailed to them weekly, in place of the online learning platform.

- 2. Please describe the methods the district will use to keep pupils at the center of educational activities, including outreach to continue building relationships and maintain connections, and to help pupils feel safe and valued.**



District/ PSA Response:

Battle Creek Montessori Academy will use the Academy's website, social media, US Postal mail, email, amongst other avenues to continue communication with students and families. Battle Creek Montessori Academy staff will reach out to families at least once a week to provide guidance, assurance, and to nurture school-home relationships. Teachers will maintain regular office hours, in which they can respond to student requests. For students who have special education programs and services, we will be initiating a contingency plan, with parent input, to address the needs of each individual student. Students with IEPs will be provided with learning opportunities in the same manner as general education students. These learning opportunities will include accessibility options as well as materials that have been accommodated and modified. Teachers will be supporting students through virtual, social media, or phone contact.

3. Please describe the district's plans to deliver content in multiple ways so that all pupils can access learning.

District/ PSA Response:

Battle Creek Montessori Academy will use multiple resources to deliver instruction, in addition to Freckle and Khan Academy, teachers will teach lessons using Zoom. Packets will be mailed out to students on a weekly basis for those students who do not have access to technology or prefer packet work over online work. Families will receive weekly plans Friday afternoon for the following week, these plans are also posted online, <https://battlecreekmontessori.com/online-continued-learning/>. For students who have special education programs and services, we will be initiating a contingency plan, with parent input, to address the needs of each individual student. Students with IEPs will be provided with learning opportunities in the same manner as general education students. These learning opportunities will include accessibility options as well as materials that have been accommodated and modified. Teachers will be supporting students through virtual or phone contact.



4. Please describe the district’s plans to manage and monitor learning by pupils.

District/ PSA Response:

Teachers are encouraged to make a minimum of once per week of individualized contact with their students to provide assignments, discuss completed works, reassign activities that did not meet mastery, provide additional resources for learning, answer questions from lesson work provided, and check on their wellbeing. Students completing packets will share pictures of their complete work via photos, shared through Remind or email. Students and families are encouraged to also reach out to their teachers. This will allow the teacher to assess the progress and learning needs of the student. All teachers, upon the start of the 20-21 school year, will assess students’ pre-existing knowledge including the content from the final 19-20 school year trimester.

5. Please attach a budget outline estimating additional expenditures associated with the Plan and sources of revenue to pay for those expenditures.

District/ PSA Response:

Postage for mailing packets home	\$150 Weekly for 8 weeks	1,200.00 GF
Additional paper and ink costs	\$50 weekly for 8 weeks	400.00 GF
Stipend for internet/data staff	\$60 per month for two months, 20 staff members	2,460.00 GF
Grade level appropriate books	\$20 per student, 180 students	3,600.00 GF
Total		7,660.00



6. Please describe the manner in which district administrators, board members, teachers, and any representatives of teachers collaborated in development of the Plan.

District/ PSA Response:

School administration partnered with representatives from the educational staff, members of the management company, and other school leaders to create, discuss and provide input for the plan. The plan was then given to representatives of teaching staff to discuss and provide input, once feedback was received the plan was finalized. The Plan was communicated to the Superintendent who in turn, communicated the information to the school board for approval.

7. Please describe the methods the district will use to notify pupils and parents or guardians of the Plan.

District/ PSA Response:

Battle Creek Montessori Academy will provide the information on the plan to students and parents immediately upon approval. A formal letter will be written to our community outlining student and parent expectations, as well as access to the entire plan. This letter will be sent through MailChimp to parent contact information and via US Postal Mail. This letter will also be posted to our school Facebook page to ensure parents have been contacted. The plan was posted to our website and a message will be sent via School Messenger to parents to inform them of this location.

8. Please provide an estimate of the date on which the district will begin implementation of the Plan, which must be no later than April 28, 2020.

District/ PSA Response:

The district estimates that the Plan will be implemented no later than April 20, 2020.



9. **Please describe the assistance, to the extent feasible, to pupils enrolled in any postsecondary dual enrollment courses under Public Act of , as amended, MCL and Career and Technical Preparation Act, PA , as amended, MCL . to in completing the courses during the - school year.**

District/ PSA Response:

N/A

10. **Please describe how the district will continue to provide or arrange for continuation of food distribution to eligible pupils.**

District/ PSA Response:

Battle Creek Montessori registered for the School Meals Closure Program, and families were alerted by email, Remind, Facebook, and our website of the schools that provide a meal program (including Battle Creek Montessori). Families have also been referred to use the School Closure Meal Program (Meet Up and Eat Up) interactive map, or text FOOD to 877-877, to find meals in their immediate area. Families were also referred to local food pantries, via email, by calling 211 and through our school website's COVID-19 resource web page. Meals can be picked up Monday through Friday at Battle Creek Montessori Academy from 11:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. in our parking lot. Each child receives a breakfast and lunch.

11. **Please confirm that the district will continue to pay school employees while redeploying staff to provide meaningful work in the context of the Plan, subject to any applicable requirements of a collective bargaining agreement.**

District/ PSA Response:

All employees are expected to participate in the approved Continuity of Learning Plan and may be asked by the school leader to work in a role different than what was in their original offer of at-will employment for the 2019-2020 school year. School leaders will take each employee's strengths and growth plans into consideration when making these assignments and will communicate them clearly in writing to each hourly employee assigned to a different role than what was stated in their offer of at-will employment.



Employees assigned to the Academy in the board-approved budget will be paid as outlined in their signed offer of at-will employment for the 2019-2020 school year. The offers of at-will employment for the 2019-2020 school year have not been amended due to circumstances surrounding COVID-19. If the school's spring break falls during the closure, hourly staff will be paid and will not have to use Paid Time Off (PTO). Teachers are required to provide their students with learning opportunities as outlined in the approved Continuity of Learning Plan and in accordance with the expectations of the school leader.

At a minimum, hourly staff will be paid based on the average number of hours worked during a normal week. The average hours of a normal week will not include overtime. If the school leader asks an hourly employee in writing and in advance to work beyond the average number of hours of a normal week, the hourly employee will be paid for those leader approved hours. Hourly employees will be asked by the school leader to help with tasks to assist with the continuity of learning plans.

12. Provide a description of how the district will evaluate the participation of pupils in the Plan.

District/ PSA Response:

If a student does not have access to technology, teachers will keep track of which students are completing the weekly instructional packets via parent and student contacts via phone, email, Remind, and Facebook. If a student has access to technology, teachers will use the instructional platform to monitor student wellbeing, engagement, and completion of assignments. Teachers will also keep a log of communication with students and families to ensure communication with parents and students. When completion and/or communication from students are inconsistent, staff will intervene to ensure a connection is made. A support team of staff members has been established for this purpose. If communication cannot be established following intervention by the support team, the school leader will collaborate with the teacher and develop a plan to connect with the student and family.



13. Please describe how the district will provide mental health supports to pupils affected by a state of emergency or state of disaster prompted by COVID-19.

District/ PSA Response:

As part of the communication with students, teachers will talk about questions, fears, concerns, and ideas that their students may have during this crisis. Below are resources to share with parents to help them talk with their student about the COVID-19 outbreak:

- [Talking to kids about the coronavirus – ChildMind](#)
- [Just for Kids: A comic exploring the new coronavirus – NPR](#)
- [Talking to teens and tweens about coronavirus – NYTimes](#)
- [PBS videos and resources](#)
- JED Foundation - JED exists to protect emotional health and prevent suicide for our nation's teens and young adults. Text "START" to 741-741 or call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
 - <https://www.jedfoundation.org/covid-19-and-managing-mental-health/>
- [Coping & Dealing with COVID via CDC](#)
- [National Association of School Psychologists](#)
- [Supporting students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and COVID-19](#)

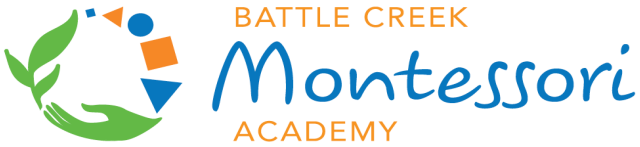
Additionally, the principal will hold weekly meetings with teachers to identify any additional students or families in need. If there are specific concerns shared by teachers, staff will reach out to families and students to assess any needs and provide supports for students and families.

Mental Health Help: 24-Hour Crisis Phone Number

Calhoun County

- 800-632-5449

14. Please describe how the district will support the efforts of the intermediate district in which the district is located to mobilize disaster relief child care centers as described in the Executive Order - or any executive order that follows it.



P.O. Box 1573, Battle Creek, MI 49016
Office: 616.558.2452 | Email: BCMAinfo@mi-choice.com
BattleCreekMontessori.com

District/ PSA Response:

At this time the logistical ability to allow for disaster relief child care was not an option. Parents can go to www.helpmegrow-mi.org/essential to find childcare.

Optional question:

15. Does the District plan to adopt a balanced calendar instructional program for the remainder of the school year? Does the District plan to adopt a balanced calendar instructional program for the - school year?

District/ PSA Response:

Not at this time

Name of District Leader Submitting Application: Jessica Eldridge Date

Approved: 4/14/2020

Name of ISD Superintendent/Authorizer Designee: Dr. David Eisler, President,
Ferris State University

Date Submitted to Superintendent and State Treasurer: 4/14/2020

Confirmation approved Plan is posted on District/PSA website: 4/22/2020